



BY ED BLANCHE

**Tape of
Beatles
before
stardom
could be
worth
millions**

"KING-SIZE" TAYLOR, an old buddy of the Beatles, has a 11-year-old tape of the lads from Liverpool he made when they were a group of unknowns playing for peanuts in a Hamburg dive. Music industry people believe it could be worth as much as \$20 million.

Taylor says he bought the rights to the tape from the Beatles for "the price of a few drinks." Now he hopes to get them to market it and make him a fortune.

One writer who heard it, William Marshall of the Daily Mirror, said: "The financial potential is tremendous. There's enough material for two albums.

"It's one of the most exciting sounds I've ever heard from them. Their hard-driving rock 'n' roll from the golden period of 1962 is all there and more."

One show biz source commented: "There doesn't seem to be any chance of the Beatles getting together to record again in the near future, so the stuff on this tape would be a surefire bet. It's historic."

Taylor, who led a band that played alongside the Beatles in their early days, made the tape during the hard winter of 1962 at the Star Club in Hamburg. The group, short-haired and living in a squalid apartment with no heat, was just

starting on the road to stardom with 12-hour sessions on stage for a few dollars a night.

Taylor, now a butcher, offered the tape soon after he made it to the late Brian Epstein, then the Beatles' manager. Epstein, who engineered the group's rise to stardom, told him it had no commercial value and offered him 20 pounds for it, or about \$48 then.

Taylor said no. The tape lay forgotten in a cupboard in his home until a few weeks ago.

"I was thinking about this rock 'n' roll revival going on and suddenly remembered I had this tape from the old days," he said, "and I reckoned it must be worth something."

Taylor took the tape to Alan Williams, the Liverpool club owner who was the Beatles' first manager. They plan to approach Apple, the Beatles' company, about releasing the tape. Taylor wants \$250,000 down and a percentage of the royalties. But the Beatles would have to agree to release of the tape.

Williams, who broke with the Beatles over money before they hit the big time, said, "It would really be ironic if I made some money out of these boys after all these years."

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