

STREET CRACKS

Walkoe: Fast talk pays off

By Bob Sadler
special writer

The first thing you notice about Tim Walkoe is that he talks very fast.

More than very fast. This guy talks really fast.

He talks as fast as he thinks Michigan people drive. "Two hundred miles an hour," he said.

"I keep a good clip," Walkoe said in what could be one of the city's biggest understatements. "That's just my rhythm. I have to go with what my rhythm is. If I slowed down, my hour show would take 90 minutes."

What about his audience? Do their ears work as quickly as his mouth? "If they can't keep up with me, I don't need them," he said with more than a note of sarcasm. "They're supposed to be paying attention."

Reached at his hotel room in Bloomington, Ind., where he was doing still another one-night stand, Walkoe, 40, is another in the long list of comics who have made the transition to comedy from other show

business careers.

A musician by trade, he played bass guitar and sang lead vocals in a rock group known as the Eddie Roy Band, which recorded for MCA before breaking up in the late '70s.

A COUPLE of Walkoe's bandmates stayed in the music business, one playing lead guitar with Jimmy Buffet and another writing songs for artists like Linda Ronstadt and the Pointer Sisters.

So in 1978, Walkoe decided to look into comedy — back when it was starting to come to the forefront again.

"THERE REALLY was no humor in the late '60s when I grew up," Walkoe said. "Except for maybe (George) Carlin. Everyone was more serious, and they wanted to rock out. Rock'n'roll was just the thing to do back then. Now, it's comedy."

Walkoe joined an improvisational ensemble in Los Angeles known as the "L.A. Connection" for about a year. From 1979 to 1981, he joined

Dick Monday to form the touring comedy duo of Walkoe & Monday. Then Walkoe went solo.

"It took awhile before I finally had the guts to try it myself," he said.

Moving from Los Angeles back to his hometown of Chicago in 1983, Walkoe fine-tuned his material and delivery in the Windy City's many clubs until another unique opportunity came his way — morning radio.

He worked as a comedy co-host at WRRX, a classic rock station, before it got hit by "The Wave." That format change moved Walkoe up to Minnesota, where he co-hosted a morning show at KDWB, a Top-40 outlet.

"I learned a lot from it," Walkoe said of the latter job, "but I just ran out of Debbie Gibson and Tiffany jokes."

Morning radio was a tough transition for a guy used to performing in clubs. "Get up at four in the morning!" Walkoe lamented. "I used to get home at four. How am I going to get up?"

Walkoe doesn't plan on doing any

morning shows soon, but is currently working on a comedy talk show pilot for Chicago's WGN radio. He plans to combine interviews with comedy records from the past and present for the show, which he is priming for national syndication.

IN THE future, Walkoe would like to see how his latest radio project pans out, do some more television (he has appeared on HBO, Showtime and George Schlatter's syndicated "Comedy Club" show) and hit the road a few times a month.

Reflecting on his diverse experiences in show business, Walkoe put his past 20 years into perspective.

"It's been a major attempt to go through life and not hold a real job."

Tim Walkoe will appear Thursday through Saturday at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Plymouth Hilton, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. Show time is 8:30 p.m., with additional 10:30 p.m. shows on Friday and Saturday. For reservations, call 454-4680.



Tim Walkoe, 40, is another in the long list of comics who have made the transition to comedy from other show business careers.

COMEDY CLUBS

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

• BEA'S KITCHEN

Tim Butterfield will perform along with "Downtown Tooty" Brown and Michael Blackman on Friday and Saturday, June 23-24, at Bea's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Showtimes are 9 p.m. and 11:15 p.m. For information, call 961-2581.

• CHAPLIN'S EAST

Van Gaster will appear Wednesday-Saturday, June 21-24, at Chaplin's East, 34244 Groesbeck, Fraser. Showtimes are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8:30 p.m. and

10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 792-1902.

• CHAPLIN'S PLYMOUTH

Tim Walkoe will appear Thursday-Saturday, June 22-24, at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Plymouth Hilton, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. For information, call 454-4680.

• CHAPLIN'S WEST

Ric Schrader will appear Tuesday-Saturday, June 20-24, at Chaplin's West, 18899 Telegraph, south of Six Mile, Detroit. For information, call 533-8866. Shoemaker will be appearing in a special engagement Friday and Saturday. Tickets cost \$10 those nights.

• COMEDY SPORTZ

Comedy Sportz at the Heidelberg will have improvisational comedy at

8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The club is at 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. Showtimes are 8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. For reservations, call 995-8888.

• JOEY'S

Lowell Sanders will perform Wednesday-Saturday, June 21-24, at Joey's Comedy Club, 36071 Plymouth Road, west of Wayne Road, Livonia. Showtimes are 9 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday. Thursday is no-smoking night. For information, call 261-0555.

• LOONEY BIN II

Michael Blackman will perform Friday-Saturday, June 23-24, at The Looney Bin at The Roxy, 1-94 and Haggerty. Showtimes are 9 p.m. Fri-

day and 8 and 10 p.m. Saturday. There's a \$5 cover charge. For information, call 699-1822.

• MAINSTREET

Judy Teenta will perform Tuesday and Wednesday, June 20-21, and Jeff Allen Friday and Saturday, June 23-24, at the Mainstreet Comedy Castle, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Showtimes are 8:30 and 11 p.m. For reservations, call 996-9080.

• MISS KITTY'S

Dan Ballard along with John Bowman will perform Thursday-Saturday, June 22-24, at Miss Kitty's Comedy Club, Long Branch Restaurant, 995 N. Lapeer Road, Oxford. Showtimes are 8 p.m. Thursday; 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 628-6500.



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1989 Cool Notes Summer Schedule

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June 24 Wendy Zeng
June 25 Mary and the Ditties
June 26 Mary and the Ditties
June 27 Mary and the Ditties
June 28 Mary and the Ditties
June 29 Mary and the Ditties
June 30 Mary and the Ditties

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For more details contact:

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