

# Patong Beat

By TT Hun

The opportunity to get out and about presented itself when a friend arrived from Bangkok on a weekend off from work. With both the wives in Bangkok and my friend with only memories of his last visit twenty years ago, we set off to catalogue the changes.

Soi Bangla was the first stop, with all the bars blaring out music trying to outdo each other. A female tailor told me my suit was ready, although I don't remember ordering one and despite the crackdown on pirate CD's there seemed to be plenty still available. We had only just arrived but the tuk-tuk drivers were trying to take us away again.

One thing that raised a chuckle with my friend was that

someone would not only call a soi Eric, but that they would make a huge sign to advertise the fact. What seemed an innovative idea a few years ago, where all the bars operating in the soi are playing the same music, has made the place quite successful. It was the only soi where you hear yourself think and has become popular with tourists. And when that starts to happen, more girls turn up to work the bars thus bringing in more tourists. I think the idea is finally catching on as several other sois are starting to do the same.

It hasn't happened in Soi Gonzo as many bars are stubbornly resisting the idea. Many of the bars at the back of the soi have been trying to make it happen but with no success so far. My

friend and I only stayed for one drink in the soi as the competing blasts of music coming from three other bars in the vicinity was starting to give us a headache. It was also the least busy place we journeyed to that evening, maybe that was the reason why.

It was also good to see (hear) live music emanating from a few more places around Patong.

With the recent quiet quiet period, most establishments cut back on entertainment. There are some good bands around at the moment; we're not going to say which ones we think are the best as musical taste is a

personal thing. Half of the fun anyway, is discovering them for yourself.

We also applaud establishments that make the effort to add a bit of value to a night out. Even if the quality of the music is not up to your standards, have a drink while making up your mind so the publican will keep putting on live music.

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## BEERGARDEN

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