

SIR 303 Irving The Hobo

vocal by: Al Stevens

Release Date: (vinyl) 1986 / 12 (MP3) – 2002 / 01

Singing Call MS-50

Original artist: Country Roads

Hanhurst's Best Seller listing
(December 1986) – unplaced

Original Music Details: Writers: Country Roads
Publishers: Copyright Controlled

Country Roads were a very talented Swedish group that enjoyed performing, as well as writing and producing Country Music. When Stefan and Ingvar set-up their second recording session (the first in the Music Mill studio) the session players were mostly members of the group. After carefully listening to a Country Roads album, it became obvious that there were several original tunes, written by the group, that we could use as Square Dances; this is one of them.

Al Stevens is one of the most well-known American callers in Europe. Al has lived in Germany for several decades and is well respected as an excellent caller. This was Al's first, of several recordings, for Sting. As the musicians were playing music that they had originally written, it was no great task for them to produce a first-class track. This is a ballad about a guy with nothing to do but "drift", it's a bight and breezy song that is easy to sing and is always well received by the dancers!

Additional Lyrics:

I woke up this morning with the sunlight in my eyes
The Mockingbird was singing from the clear blue sky
I jumped into the water – took a swim around the creek
So happy that I've found the life so many people seek

I've found so many friends along the countryside you see, Irving the Hobo that is me

I've never got no trouble – I've got only me to blame, Irving the Hobo is my name

I pick up my harmonica and play myself a tune
My biggest fan and listener is the bright and shiny moon
I walk across the country and I live on nature's gift
A man who lives the way I do, is always on the drift

Unfortunately, I no longer have access to a copy of the original of this tune, so I cannot give you all the lyrics. Country Roads who were our session band and who played on most of our early releases wrote this.

Where, When and Who produced the music:

In 1986, Bengt "Bula" Ericsson, from Katrineholm in Sweden, joined the Sting team. Ingvar Pettersson and Stefan Sidholm asked Bula to assist them with the production of the second batch of tunes and he remained an essential part of the Sting and Snow production-process for many years; this was one of the four tunes recorded, as part of the second batch.

Stefan and Ingvar, together with Robert Björk, were very fortunate to locate a studio in Kumla, Sweden – by the name of the Music Mill - who were prepared to take on the task of helping us to produce music for Square Dancing.

Using the players of a first rate Swedish Country band, called "Country Roads", we set about creating new Square Dance music. All the players were of the highest standard, amongst these were Thomas Haglund, (on Fiddle and Mandolin); Thomas has often been referred to as the finest Fiddle Player – outside the U.S.

Over the years Sting and Snow spent quite a lot of time in the studio. This particular tune was recorded towards the end of our association with the Music Mill.