

**'NOT SEXY ENOUGH'...**

# PURDEY TO GET SOME FRENCH APPEAL

**FROM TV WEEK'S LONDON BUREAU**

**PURDEY**, *The New Avengers* girl, is going back to the drawing board because the TV program's French backers say she is not sexy enough.

They want Joanna Lumley, who plays Purdey, to put on a sexier act and dress in more sultry creations by top French designers.

For Purdey's clothes in the last series were dull and drab, say the backers, who put up £4 million to help British production chief Brian Clemens.

When *The New Avengers* was announced last year, Clemens said: "Purdey will be strictly a stockings and suspenders girl — giving glimpses of lots of thigh."

But in the series — which reached tenth in the English ratings then dropped off — the stocking-top shots were brief and occasional as the high-kicking heroine felled her enemies with karate.

So in the next 13 episode series to be filmed later this year, Joanna, 30, will be dolled up in her new French gear.

And we'll be seeing a bit more of what's underneath.

Film executive Rudolph Roffi, one of the syndicate of backers, says: "We feel that Joanna would come over better if she was like one of Charlie's Angels.

"Much more sexy. There should be more titillation.

"Though we're happy with what we've seen so far, we have certain reservations. To us, Miss Lumley's clothes are dull and drab.

"We would like to see her in top French designs, like those of St. Laurent, which should attract everyone, but especially Frenchmen when they see the shows in France.

"I think in general terms the series can be sexier, more violent also, and still remain sophisticated."

But Joanna — the first *Avengers* girl to kick off cat suits and leather gear to wear feminine-looking clothes — feels she is sexy enough.

She says: "We don't want to



see bottoms and breasts, do we?"

"I think the public have had quite enough of that on TV and everywhere else.

"Aren't people bored with actresses who lick their lips trying to be sexy?"

"It will be such a pity if *The New Avengers* has to jump on the bandwagon because of influences from other programs.

"As an actress, I believe improvements can be made. But I've never thought I look dowdy.

"My own dress designer is considered to be sexy and sophisticated by the French.

"But we did have problems with the first batch of shows because, after the first four, it was a rush to get the right

clothes. This time, more thought has gone into it.

"From my own visits to Paris and Rome, they do certainly have a way with women's fashions so there will be a French selection when the series comes back.

"I just do as I'm told. If they say more leg, then that's it, I suppose.

"But as for Charlie's Angels, they make me fall asleep. They're very bad and very boring."

Brian Clemens agrees with Joanna. "Those girls look like plastic to me," he said.

"I admit that the French have it when it comes to fashion, but give me English



● **ABOVE:** Is she dull and drab? That's what the French claimed about Purdey in early episodes of *The New Avengers*.

● **LEFT:** This is the sexier Purdey image viewers will be seeing in the second series of *The New Avengers*.

girls every time.

"Joanna will definitely have more of a French look, and the viewers will think they are seeing a lot more of her minus her clothes."

And Purdey's guardian angel, Mike Gambit — played by Gareth Hunt, 33, — will get a collection of dollies all to himself.

Clemens says: "His character will be developing."

But he adds: "We're not disappointed with the viewing figures at all.

"We know that if all channels screened us in the right slot, we would be right up there in the top five all the time." #