

THE AVENGERS GET A FACE-LIFT BUT STEED REMAINS UNCHANGED



• ABOVE: Steed (Patrick Macnee) looks as dapper as ever in the new series, but Purdey (Joanna Lumley) and Gambit (Gareth Hunt) are in for some changes.



• ABOVE: Steed and Purdey take cover during a tense moment in *The New Avengers*, combating high-powered espionage and corruption.

THE NEW AVENGERS are in for some changes. But they won't alter the basic flavor of the series.

Joanna Lumley has been given a completely new look for her role of Purdey in the new 13-part series of *The New Avengers*, premiering nationally on ABC-TV on Monday, January 23, at 8.30 pm.

The French co-producers thought her image in the original series was too dull and drab and arranged for her to be dressed by top French designers.

Her hairstyle has also been modified by hairdresser John Frieda, husband of British pop singer, Lulu. The style is shaggier and wilder, but still retains the distinctive Purdey fringe.

Producer Brian Clemens agrees that the French have a special way with fashion, but says that he prefers English girls every time.

Purdey is named after the most revered and expensive shotgun in the world. Made in Bond Street, London, a Purdey has been described as beautiful, sensuous, magnificent, incomparable and a thing of joy.

All of this applies too, to Joanna's Purdey; she is also sexy, liberated and feminine. And she fights well. An ex-ballerina, she relies on the strength in her thighs and feet to destroy a dozen villains.

Her fighting style is unique, based on the old French martial art of Panache, although occasionally she can lash out with a smart right hook.

In *Obsession*, a forthcoming episode in the series, Purdey is seen as a ballet dancer in a flashback.

Gambit, played by Gareth Hunt, has also changed somewhat. No longer will he be endlessly pursuing Purdey with little hope of success. In future, he will have his own array of gorgeous chicks.

He is a 1980s man: he dresses quietly in order to blend easily with the high-powered world of espionage and corruption he moves through.

Gambit was once an army man, a major in the paratroopers as well as a mercenary. He used to wrestle crocodiles... until he decided to take up more exciting work.

But the third member of

the *New Avengers* — John Steed (played by Patrick Macnee) — remains completely unaltered.

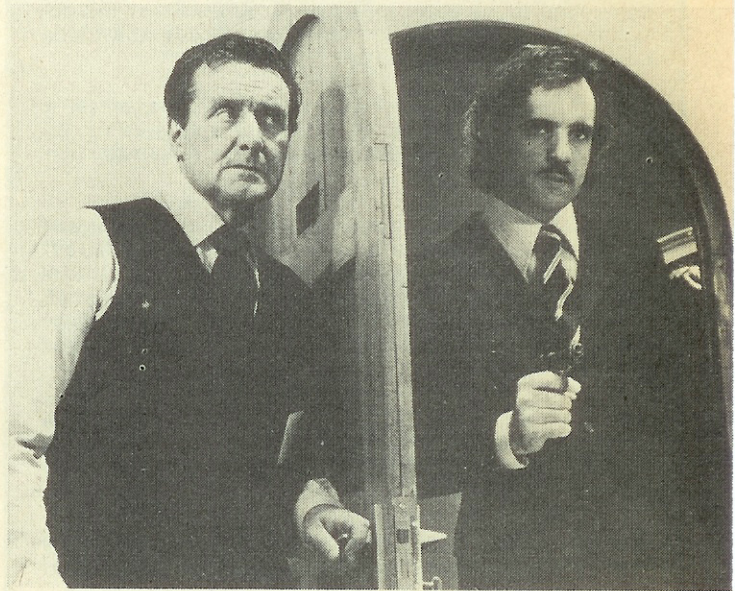
His rolled umbrella, curly-brimmed bowler and swordstick, his immaculate and impeccable Savile Row suits remain urbane and unchanged.

He still appreciates the better things of life — a good brandy, a 1928 claret, Royal Ascot and the click of leather against willow. He is sworn to defend Britain from her enemies.

The new series will have more action, more thrills and more adventure, and it will not take place solely in England. Seven episodes of the new series are set abroad — three in the chateau country around Paris, and four in Canada.#



- **ABOVE:** After a plane crash, Gambit and Purdey strap Steed's broken arm into a makeshift sling.
- **RIGHT:** Steed waits for the right moment to pounce on a professional killer (played by Michael Latimer).
- **BELOW RIGHT:** Purdey employs her martial arts skill against a gun-wielding assailant, Martin Shaw.



- **ABOVE:** Impeccably dressed as ever, Steed assists Gambit in a rooftop chase.

