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CAMERON ADAMS

### > ringo's different drum

*NEIGHBOURS* star Sam Clark has taken a three-month break from his role as Ringo Brown.

But it's no holiday for Clark. He's using his time off to launch his music career.

Clark hasn't gone the easy option. His debut single, a commercial pop-rock track called *Broken*, is released independently.

He's already battling the instant preconceptions that come from following the "well-worn path" from Ramsay Street to recording studio.

"Everyone gets judged in advance anyway these days, no matter where they get their start," Clark says.

*Broken* was written by Melbourne songwriter Paul Wiltshire (Delta Goodrem, Backstreet Boys). But Clark has co-written the bulk of his album, due next year.

Clark cites everyone from Karnivool to Temper Trap, John Mayer and Texan musician the Rocket Summer as influences.

"It's quite a mix on the whole album," Clark says.

He has negotiated a six-month contract when he returns to *Neighbours* next year after being written out following "heavy" relationship issues.

"Who'd have thunk it, relationship drama on *Neighbours*," Clark jokes. "But this issue becomes public. Ringo decides he needs some space, so he leaves. But he comes back in a really nice way — stronger, grown-up, he's almost a new man. And he's got a guitar on his back, he's joined a band while he was away."

Clark hasn't ruled out a Delta Goodrem-style crossover between his music and his acting to launch himself via *Neighbours*.

"We've talked about it, I'd be keen to do it if it's done right."

With his future on *Neighbours* still a wait-and-see proposition, he's preparing for a string of instore signings and acoustic performances this week.

His band are also plotting a bonding ritual of matching tattoos on their first interstate tour.

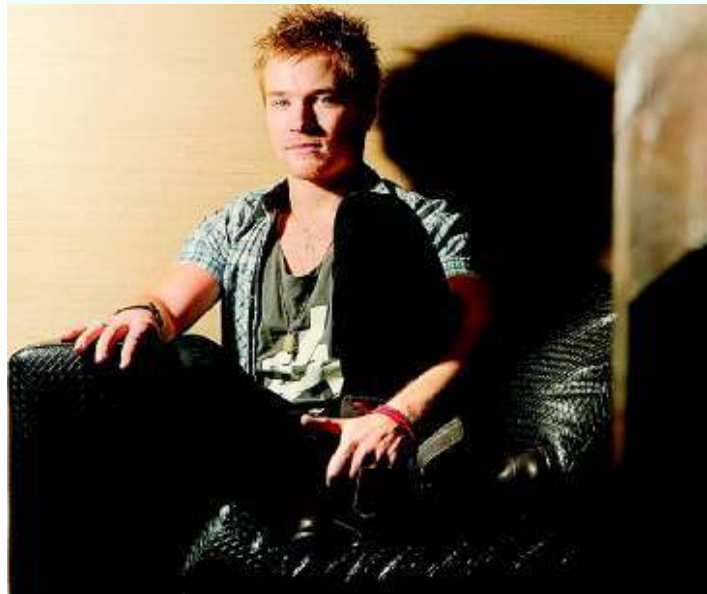
Clark already has a tattoo on his wrist — covered up by his watch

while on set. Visible tattoos are a no-no on most soaps.

"It's funny, on soaps it's frowned upon to have tattoos," Clark says, "but in music everyone thinks you should have tattoos."

**See > Broken (MGM) out now.**

**See > Sam Clark instores — Sanity Victoria Gardens, today 4pm. Sanity Knox City, tomorrow 4pm. Barwon Heath Gala Day (band performance and instore) Geelong Waterfront Skate Park, Sat, 1.45pm, Virgin Megastore Chapel St, Sun 1.30pm.**



**Sam's plan:** *Neighbours* star Sam Clark will hit the road as a singer and plans a tattoo bonding ritual with band members. Picture: NICOLE CLEARY