

Bad news for Daleks as the doctor is reincarnated

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

DOCTOR WHO is to be resurrected to the small screen with Paul McGann as the latest incarnation of the Time Lord. The 36-year-old star of *The Monocled Mutineer* saw off Sting, Simon Callow and Alan Rickman to become the eighth incumbent of the role since 1963.

He will star in a two-hour film to be made for television, produced jointly by BBC Worldwide and Universal Television in America. Filming is due to start in the next couple of weeks in Vancouver, and if the film proves popular there are plans for six more two-hour adventures.

Doctor Who was last seen on television in 1989, but ratings slumped to four million viewers and the series was axed. The new production has a £3 million budget and will be broadcast in the United States and Britain later this year.

McGann said yesterday: "I loved *Doctor Who* as a kid — William Hartnell used to terrify me. My favourite was the



McGann: preferred Yeti to the Daleks

Yeti, but the Daleks never did it for me — they couldn't run upstairs. Sylvester McCoy [the last actor to play the Doctor] is a friend so he's told me everything I need to know."

One fan of the series welcomed the news. Alexandra Loosely-Saul, owner of a Dr Who shop in East Ham, east London, said: "I am absolutely delighted. Paul McGann has just the right,

silent, mysterious quality that *Doctor Who* needs. There is no way it will seem outdated. All it needs is good writers, good actors and new technology, and now we've got all that. I can't wait."

Doctor Who was first screened on November 23, 1963, with William Hartnell in the title role. He was followed by Patrick Troughton (1966-70), Jon Pertwee (1970-74), Tom Baker (1974-82), Peter Davison (1982-84), Colin Baker (1984-87) and Sylvester McCoy (1987-89).

□ Britain's last remaining police box — the model for *Doctor Who*'s time-travelling Tardis — is to be restored. The blue box was one of scores found in the capital until 1969, when they were scrapped by the Metropolitan Police. The surviving example is at Hendon Police Training College. Plans to introduce a new version of the police box are under discussion.

□ The makers of *Coronation Street* are in negotiations with the Cadbury for a sponsorship deal believed to be worth £10 million a year.