

Top Roxxie becomes top dog 'for the moment'

By Matt Burton
Senior Reporter

Red Alert! Top Roxxie is on the streets.

Local rock band Top Roxxie is taking an unusual approach of getting the word out. Instead of playing a lot of gigs in the Lincoln area, they have pounded the pavement downtown, sporting Walkmans and hoping to find prospective victims.

Top Roxxie includes Todd Briar on lead guitar, Dave Garlick on vocals and guitar, Mike Wright on bass, Eric Layman on guitar and vocals, and Matt Ba on drums.

The band has something to say.

"We decided to go the obnoxious route, rather than playing bars and saying, 'Top Roxxie is playing here tonight. Check 'em out,'" Briar said. "We decided to hit the streets. We played our acoustics. We were obnoxious there. We've stood on the streets in front of people and held up fliers and said, 'This is Top Roxxie. Check us out. Just give us a chance.'"

"It's just a matter of time before something like this starts taking off." Layman agreed.

"For a little while, people were recognizing us from playing on the street," he said.

Top Roxxie released a self-titled tape in October 1989. The effort was rough, and the product wasn't perfect, but it "was a real brave effort because we skipped the bar scene, the cover scene, and all that, and put out the tape," said Garlick, who also works as a KFMQ radio personality.



Joe Heinzie/Daily Nebraskan

Top Roxxie members talk with sound engineer John Leverett before a recording session.

Top Roxxie is in the process of recording another tape. The songs are better, and they are using a better recording studio, the band said.

A single, "Hot Lil' Babe," will be premiered on KFMQ's 11 o'clock News, a new-music program on Sunday nights. Topp Roxxie is the first

local band to be featured on the program, Garlick said, and host Joe Skare now welcomes material from local bands.

Topp Roxxie likes the fact that they are leading the local radio scene, and are "top dogs" for the moment. Their name should spell that out.

Contrary to what it may seem, the name "Top Roxxie" is not a cross between ZZ Topp and Roxy Music.

"We were talking about music, as in rock n' roll and something that rocks, and I just thought 'ROXX,' and I just said Roxxie, and it was Top

Roxxie," Briar said.

For the most part, Top Roxxie draws on heavy metal for their influences. George Lynch, Dokken and Kiss are favorites, but Garlick also grew up with more melodic, pop music such as Barry Manilow, Night Ranger and Journey.

"I got a lot of a different style than these guys, which is why our music sounds like it does. When we write, everyone throws in their various aspects into the melting pot, and we come up with what is uniquely Top Roxxie," Garlick said.

Top Roxxie takes pride in their policy of playing no cover songs.

"We just started with the idea of doing nothing but all original, no real compromise, pushing the idea to say, 'Hey give us a chance. Listen to us,' and I think you'll like what you hear," Briar said.

"In our opinion, if you want to hear Bon Jovi, buy the tape," Garlick said.

Despite their enthusiasm for getting an audience, Top Roxxie has played only a couple charity shows. One was for Amnesty International at the Commonplace, 333 N 14th St., and another at Goodrich Junior High School, 4600 Lewis Ave., for a canned food drive.

Top Roxxie, however, wants to change the situation and hopes to play at the Concert in the Park in the spring.

"We feel Top Roxxie fills a niche," Garlick said. "There is no original rock in Lincoln. There is original college music and thrash, but no rock."

in brief

NEWS

Christian group Higher Ground to rock union

It's not the Red Hot Chili Pepper's latest single, but it is an entertaining show.

The group Higher Ground, a Christian music ministry from Rochester, N. Y., will perform a free concert in the Regency Suite

of the Nebraska Union at 7:30 tonight.

The ministry's appearance is sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. The nine singers and ten studio musicians study at Eastman School of Music.

D.R.I. set to bring 'hard-core' show to Omaha's Ranch Bowl

By Michael Deeds
Senior Editor

Since its formation in a family bedroom in 1983, D.R.I. always has been called the fastest band in the world.

Dubbed "dirty rotten imbeciles" by those fortunate enough to survive their sonic assault, the foursome quickly released "The Dirty Rotten LP," a collection of hard-core sonnds.

Now, the band is worshipped in the midst of the thrash scene as the forefathers of a generation. Their faces can be seen on the glossy covers of music magazines reaching far corners of the world; the band has toured North America, Europe and Australia. But nothing has slowed D.R.I. down.

The band just kicked off its first tour in more than a year, this time in support of the recently released "Thrash Zone." Spike Cassidy, Kurt Brecht, Felix Griffin and John Menor will attack Omaha's Ranch Bowl, 1606 S. 72 St., Sunday night.

Bass player Menor, 23, is the only member of D.R.I. that wasn't part of the original lineup. He joined the band less than a year ago, and this is his first real tour. In a telephone interview from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Menor philosophized a little about the band, the music and the Super Bowl.

Q: How did you become a part of D.R.I.?

A: Well, I'm from Connecticut. I'd heard of them, but I didn't have any of their tapes. But when I moved to San Francisco, I lived with the bass player from Death Angel. I heard about the audition and I got it. I couldn't believe it.

Q: Had you been into speed metal and hardcore?

A: Oh, yeah. That's why I'd heard of them. Where I'm from -- Connecticut -- it's real remote. There's nothing there for musical influences -- just blues and reggae. That's why I had to get the f-- out of there.

Q: What distinguishes D.R.I. from other bands?

A: A lot of people feel we pioneered hard core. A lot of magazines put us above -- the "hard-corest," the fastest. We're fast. We love to play fast.

Q: What do you see as the future of thrash?

A: The thrash scene is progressive. We're going to be unique in our own style. Metallica, they're a great band. But we're going to do all right. We've already sold a lot of records without even touring.

Q: Are crowds mellow here in the Midwest?

A: No. Never. When we come to a town, they're ready. A lot of people have been telling us they've been waiting for this to happen. It gets really hairy.

Q: Do you have a lot of security at shows?

A: We don't f-- with security. A lot of them get all hyped to beat people up.

Q: So how do you keep the fans off the stage?

A: We tell them to come on stage. The other night, we kicked the bouncers off the stage. They were punching people in the front row for no reason. We want contact with our fans. We just don't want our equipment trashed, like on New Year's night.

Q: What would you be doing if you weren't in D.R.I.?

A: Well, I feel very lucky, very fortunate. I'm a painter by trade.

Q: D.R.I. writes songs about some pretty political stuff. What do you think of George Bush?

A: (Laughter) I think what he's doing about the drug scene -- cocaine, heroin -- that's pretty cool to stop all that s--- because I don't do drugs. But leave us alone, I want my weed.

Q: Do you guys take it pretty easy on the road?

A: We take care of ourselves. The guys told me they already went through that wild stage.

Q: Do you keep up on the world around you? The Super Bowl?

A: The 'Niners, they're our team. They're my team. I've been a 'Niner fan all my life, and now I live 10 minutes from Candlestick.

Q: Are you looking forward to the tour?

A: Oh, yeah. I've been waiting, just sitting at home, hanging out. All my other friends are on tour... Exodus... Metallica -- they just got back. I'm glad to be going.

Tickets for D.R.I. are \$9.75 in advance and \$10.75 the day of the show. Doors open at 5 p.m., and the show starts at 6 p.m. Opening will be Nasty Savage. All ages are welcome.

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Chicago- and Texas-style blues band from Lincoln, featuring the voice of Annette Murrell, will play Wednesday at the Zoo Bar.

Thursday, Fusion Force will play jazz music at Julio's Restaurant, 132 S. 13th St., and Oliver Riley and the Blues Notions will play at the Zoo Bar.

Oliver Riley and the Blues Notions was voted top Kansas City blues band in 1989

by the Kansas City Blues Society.

Rock:

Tonight and Saturday, Bobby Curious will play at Bash Riprock's, Upper Level 238 N. 12th St.

A renowned and unmedicated maniac, as well as a perennial favorite Lincoln cover band, Bobby Curious has added some original songs to it's playlist.

Tonight and Saturday, J.J. and the Blaze will play at Chesterfield's.

Tonight and Saturday, Finest Hour will play at Oscar's, 800 O St.

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