

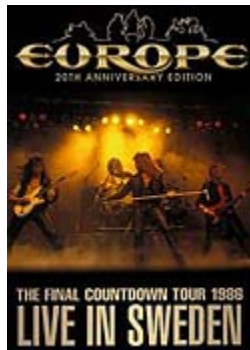


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DVD REVIEWS



'Europe: The Final Countdown Tour, Live in Sweden'
(Europe / DVD / NR / 2006 / MVD)

Overview: To celebrate the 20th anniversary of EUROPE's "The Final Countdown" album and tour, this 13-track live concert from Solnahallen in Stockholm 1986 has been remastered in Dolby Digital and restored in widescreen format. The DVD features interviews with the band from 2006, and an extensive gallery with never-before-seen photos from "The Final Countdown" tour.

DVD Verdict: Europe's 'The Final Countdown' is one of those albums that brings me back to a very specific time and place in history. The year was 1986, and I had recently broken up with a supposedly long term girlfriend. I was distraught. I was unhappy with the music on the radio at that point. But then, deep into that year, 'The Final Countdown' exploded on the world, and was suddenly well received in the hair-metal-worshipping land of young boys and girls!

I had already heard the album's title track on the radio enough times for the song's infamous keyboard riff to become permanently ingrained into my skull, and the ballad "Carrie" was starting to get tons of airplay as well. I never really thought enough of the music to actually buy the album, but after hearing the entire thing at a party one night, it became clear that The Final Countdown was one hell of a catchy pop metal album, worthy of further consideration. This excellent DVD celebrates the 20th anniversary of Europe's The Final Countdown album and world tour, with two concerts that were filmed on the 26th and 27th of May, 1986, at Solnahallen in Stockholm, Sweden. The two shows were edited together to appear as a single, one-hour concert.

'The Final Countdown' has been used for everything from the closing ceremony of the 1988 Summer Olympics, to the Detroit Pistons' game opening theme song. It also makes for one hell of a rock concert opener in 1986, and that is exactly what Europe did on the tour. You can imagine how pumped up the home town crowd must have gotten, when the lights went out and the strains of their new anthem filled the arena. From there, they proceeded to play seven of the ten songs from the new album, along with four songs from their previous one, Wings Of Tomorrow.

Along with the title track, three other songs from The Final Countdown made the Billboard

- Neil Sedaka
- Taking Back Sunday



Hot 100 list during 1987; "Rock The Night", "Cherokee", and "Carrie". The power-ballad "Carrie" made it all the way to #3, and drained the fuel from many lighters that night. These performances were the obvious high points of the show, but the two-song encore of "Stormwind" and "Dance The Night Away", from the harder edged Wings Of Tomorrow album, really allowed guitarist John Norum to strut his stuff and show that Europe could rock with the best of them. Well, "them" being 80's hair metal bands. The encore was even concluded with a short reprise of "The Final Countdown" - and they wonder why people got sick of the song.

The concert is only a measly one hour in length, which is disappointing considering that two shows were filmed. The overall production quality is quite good for a 20 year old recording. The video was restored into widescreen format from its original source, and I am not sure if any of the original picture was sacrificed from this endeavor. The picture was restored nicely and was surprisingly clear and colorful.

Bonus material includes interviews with all of the band members from 2006, a picture gallery, a biography, and the band revisiting the Final Countdown recording studio in Switzerland. The interviews, in particular, were quite fascinating because each of the guys talked candidly about their rise to fame, dealing with the sudden and incredible success, John Norum quitting the band at the height of their fame, and their eventual fall from grace. At a generous 34-minutes in length, longtime fans should be very pleased. This is a Widescreen Presentation (1.85:1) enhanced for 16x9 TVs and comes with the Special Features of:

20th Anniversary Interviews with Band Members made in 2006
Picture Gallery
Biography
The Band revisiting The Final Countdown recording studio

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