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The blues forum » [Review Squad](#) » [Blues cd reviews](#) » [Dudley Taft - Left For Dead](#)

« pre

Pages: [1] [Go Down](#)

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**Dudley Taft - Left For Dead**

« on: 13 January 2012, 16:31:37 »

The name Dudley Taft is probably not familiar to many of us. In fact, it is not known to me, which means something. Still this man is part of the musicbusiness for quite a long time. Born in 1966 in Washington DC and growing up in the Midwest of the USA he moved in 1990 to Seattle. He was part of bands as Sweet Water and Second Coming. And he played with friends from Alice In Chains. He is coming from a family who is successful in business and law, but Dudley chose for music. A bad choice? Let's listen to him.

The album "Left For Dead" was already released in the USA in 2010, but rereleased by the German MIG-label. Taft is accompanied by bassist John Kessler and drummer Scott Vogel.

From the first tones of the opener "Ain't No Game" the direction is clear. Namely relentless, straight, 'take no prisoners'-like bluesrock. Evidently on Texas Blues, while he plays like Robert Johnson's hellhounds are on a trail. This is followed by the Willie Dixon song "Back Door Man", covered many times, but I gather never as rough as done here. With "Broken Down" they are getting a bit more nimble. The hornsection, although evidently gene

by a keyboard, provide a funky edge. With Freddie King's "Have You Ever Loved A Woman" a heart rending bluesballad is provided. That it does not be loud Taft proves with this and the following song, the titletrack "Left For Dead". With composed singing the rough edge is smoothed and the guitar a rounder and fuller tone. Especially the grunting slideguitar gives the album a "When Your Water Gets Dark" a lonely and sinister feel.

The dragging "Devil's Crown" is a genuine rock song. The pounding accompaniment remains firm while the guitar solos try to draw it ahead. Notable is the second solo, where Taft plays both guitar parts and he sings with himself. Real dark is the follow-up to the title track "Long Way Down For Dead Pt. II)". A few minutes of peace and quiet follow with the jazzy "Lady". Musically a fine song, too bad that the vocals remain somewhat flat. We return to the blues in Fleetwood Mac's "Drifting". A touching shuffle, vocals and fiery guitarwork. That's how we like it. "Seventh Son" of Willie Dixon is more powerful, but the rhythm takes care it remains more playful than most of the songs. With "If You'll Come Home" and "When The Level Breaks" we have reached the end of the album. Last mentioned song is a bonus track, which only appears on the European edition. The pumping rhythm with a major part for the slideguitar provides an almost hypnotizing effect comparable to Led Zeppelin's version, but where Jimmy Page stops Dudley Taft takes it a bit further.

#### Conclusion

I can be short about it: a good album. Dudley Taft is clearly inspired by like Jimmy Page and Peter Green and by bands as ZZ Top. Put these ingredients together, shake them and you get: Dudley Taft. He still does belong to the absolute top, but he is able to move around in the upper ranks.

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« pre

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