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Eyeballin'

Coachella Before Coachella: The 1983 US Festival

By Bob Ruggiero Tue., Feb. 18 2014 at 3:30 AM

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**US Festival 1983: Days 1-3**

Directed by Glen Aveni

MVD Visuals, 135 minutes, \$19.95

In 1982, flush with cash, Apple Computer co-founder Steve Wozniak wanted to throw "a big party" and create an '80s version of Woodstock that would combine a music festival with displays and demonstrations about emerging technologies, with a not-surprising emphasis on computers. The first US Festival did well enough that Wozniak went for a repeat on Memorial Day weekend the next year — single-handedly dumping \$10 million of his own cash to fund it.

This new DVD features highlights from that weekend, 23 songs from 14 acts booked on "New Wave Day" (Divinyls, INXS, The English Beat, Stray Cats, Men at Work, the Clash), "Metal Day" (Judas Priest, Triumph, Scorpions), and "Rock Day" (Berlin, Quarterflash, U2, Missing Persons, Stevie Nicks).

And while the relationship of some acts to their ascribed description is sometimes tenuous, it's interesting that Wozniak sought to include so many genres into one festival. (A "Country Day" was held a week later.)

Interspersed with shots of the crowd in sunny, 100-degree San Bernadino — shirtless men, impossibly well-built women in bikinis — are some interesting visuals: the Stray Cats' suited rockabilly cool, Judas Priest's leather and studs, Dale Bozzio of Missing Persons' spandex and plastic bra, and the shawls

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and heels of Stevie Nicks.

The DVD is also of some historical importance, as the Clash's "Should I Stay or Should I Go" shows the last performance of co-founder Mick Jones before he was booted from the group.

Other performances stand out as well: INXS on an energetic "The One Thing"; Brian Setzer ramming through the Cats' "Rock This Town" and "Double Talkin' Baby"; and the Priest on two of their biggest hits, "Breakin' the Law" and "You Got Another Thing Comin'."

And, of course, it's easy to see how powerful a group U2 would become with Bono perfecting his front-man moves...and an Edge with hair!

Story continues on the next page.

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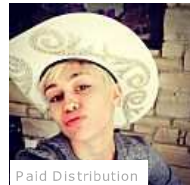
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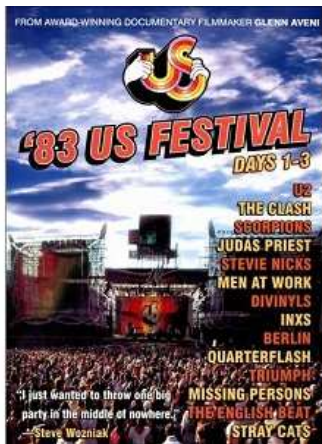


budnickto

Feb 18, 2014

My brother and I watched Heavy Metal Day dozens of times on a VHS tape we had. Highlights aired on a pay service called IT TV that we had in Michigan at the time. So it had at least a few song from every band except Motley Crue. Thankfully the Crue performance is now on YouTube. This was THE legendary festival show from when I was a kid. There's even some Heavy Metal Parking Lot-type scenes between the bands that we used to quote all the time.

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