



March 24, 2014

'83 US FESTIVAL: DAYS 1-3 (DVD) - MVD VISUAL 60/100

The 1983 version of the Us (the pronoun not the initials) Festival was the second (first was the labour day weekend the previous year) long weekend festival that occurred on memorial day weekend at Glen Helen Regional Park in San Bernardino, North of Los Angeles. The three - plus fourth day the following weekend - day event was set up by Steve Wozniak of Apple Computer fame. He describes the event in the opening montage simply as his wanting to throw a big party and explicitly mentions high Apple shares as a catalyst. The first day, May 28th, featured Divinyls, INXS, The English Beat, Stray Cats, Men At Work and The Clash. Others that performed but are not featured on this DVD were A Flock of Seagulls, Oingo Boingo and Wall of Voodoo. The third day, May 30, featured Berlin, Quarterflash, U2, Missing Persons and Stevie Nicks. David Bowie, The Pretenders and Los Lobos were others that were there but are not seen here. The second or metal day features Judas Priest with Breakin The Law and You Got Another Thing Coming; Triumph with Lay It On The Line, Fight The Good Fight and A World Of Fantasy; and Scorpions with The Zoo and Can't Get Enough. Van Halen, Ozzy and Quiet Riot round off some of the names not seen. Filmmaker Glenn Aveni has added some documentary features that include brief audience snapshots, interviews with band members and other trivia and commentary by Mark Goodman of MTV fame and Wozniak himself. Attendance over the four days was pegged to top 2 million with the metal day attracting a good chunk of it and having the local mayor fearing riots. Wozniak had also taken the chance to showcase software at the event and there are claims that water sprays or 'outdoor rain' - to cool the audience in the intense California heat - really took off or even debuted at the Us Festival. This DVD clocks in at 135 minutes but the rolling credits seem to take too long and take away a bit more of that time that one might expect! - Anna Tergel

LAST SHOP STANDING: THE RISE, FALL AND REBIRTH OF THE INDEPENDENT RECORD SHOP (DVD) - CONVEXE 60/100

This is an interview filled documentary based on the book by Graham Jones. It takes a look at the rise and rapid fall of independent record stores in the UK. It features around 20 stores whose owners, young and old but mostly old, reminisce about the rise of the vinyl and LP. One of the early stories is of one owner talking about first seeing an advance version of an Elvis album and expecting it to be just 'another' American country singer. The interviews are mostly restricted to store owners and the emphasis is on the role of the physical store in the booming past and its fall in the digital, big business age. Another of the more interesting trivia is store owners recalling how their sales were used to compile sales charts and how those were nudged or manipulated by pushing specific albums. The fall of the independents is mostly attributed to the introduction of the CD - its marketing that included claims of 'unbreakability' - the Napster phenomenon and non-music stores or supermarkets deciding to stock and sell music. The final segment is about a resurgence or revival of sorts, of both vinyl and brick and mortar stores, with the surviving stores adapting to the times, benefiting from new demand, selling not just records but any music related item and using the internet to find new music and promoting themselves. The main film is 50 minutes long but Last Shop Standing is complemented with over 70 minutes of extras expanding on the same topics with extended interviews with the likes of Johnny Marr, Billy Bragg and others. - Anna Tergel

BRICK AND MORTAR AND LOVE (DVD) - MVD VISUAL 60/100

This is a limited budget documentary that was partially funded by an Indiegogo crowd funding campaign. It is made by Scott Shuffitt who takes an inside look at the recent years of the X-tacy independent record store in Louisville, USA. After 25 years of selling albums the business is looking not so rosy but it manages to stay open. The tagline of the documentary, Indie Record Stores Are Not Just A Place To Buy A CD, tries to paint a picture of the importance of X-tacy, and other stores like it, to their community. It features interviews with its owner, John Timmons, and others in an attempt to paint a picture of the state of the small record store in America. Musicians, local people and employees are featured trying to do their part in rescuing the store and talk about what has gone wrong with the music and retail industry. The inevitable mini-revival optimistic story becomes a theme with tales of record stores staying afloat, even if barely so. However, this 70-minute film is mostly focusing on the business struggles of X-tacy and while it does offer some insight on the general state of the industry it has a somewhat limited scope. It struggles to be anything more than a singular story of one store with a unique place in its community. - Anna Tergel

ALL ACCESS EDITION: HARD CORE LOGO INCLUDES HARD CORE LOGO 2 (Blu-ray) - VSC

60/100

Hard Core Logo starts with a brief German introduction during the opening credits. Made by Canadian filmmaker Bruce McDonald, Hard Core Logo is the story of Joe Dick and his band Hard Core Logo setting up a reunion tour and benefit concert for the shot punk rocker, the legendary Bucky Haight. The band tours