

RECORD COLLECTOR

Albert Collins & The Icebreakers

In Concert Inalustik INAK 6540-1 DVD * * *

The Iceman burneth

Given that commercially available live footage of vintage Albert Collins isn't exactly thick on the ground all connoisseurs of the Iceman's instantly recognisable crystalline guitar sound and his idiosyncratic playing style will be heartened by the arrival of this German TV recording from 1985. Shot in the Baden Baden TV studios of long running German music programme Ohne Filter in front of a New Year's audience seated around tables in classic kazz club style, this DVD features the self-styled 'master of the Telecaster' and his regular backing band the Icebreakers wowing the locals with their infectuous mix of uptempo funky shuffles and, on the other side of the coin, downtempo slow burning blues excursions. It's on trademark meandering slow burners like If Trouble Was Money, The Highway Is Like A Woman and Magic Slim's The Things I Used To Do that the Iceman really shines. Then, mid set and as if nowhere, Southside Johnny steps up harp in hand to make a special guest appearance on Brick with the Iceman generously content to temporarily play second fiddle. No chance of that on the lively uptempo finale of Frosty the Iceman's perenial show closer where he goes on walkabout among a bemused crowd even pausing to sit himself down on a vacant seat while still riffing away in full flight. On the down side the footage is blighted by way too many shots of the ill at ease looking mid 80's audience but this is a minor quibble when, after all, the DVD boasts 60 precious minutes of the Iceman in such blistering form.

Grahame Bent