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THE METAL MINUTE

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 08, 2007

DVD Review: Rat Skates - Born in the Basement

Rat Skates - *Born in the Basement*

2007 Kundrat Productions, LLC

Ray Van Horn, Jr.



Though Overkill is lately, in the grand scheme of today's metal heirarchy, a cult thrash band, just about everyone into this music knows who they are. Elder statesmen supreme, Overkill, like Motorhead, Slayer and Megadeth, just keep on coming no matter what the times throw in their way. Though Overkill never reached the pinnacle of worldwide fame of their aforementioned peers, there's no doubt that Overkill has always commanded a large respect in the business. Reliable with each album they've churned out, the remaining core of the band, DD Verni and Bobby "Blitz" Ellworth are content with their identity as speed metal lions.

What has remained a virtual secret--until now--is the untold story of Rat Skates, original Overkill drummer and founding member. Rat's behind-the-scenes narrative is so seclusive that many metal journalists forget to include him, some to the point of insult (AllMusic.com is especially lax on the band's history, all the way to the inexcusable one sentence write-up of Overkill's seminal *Taking Over* album). Sadly, the point of reference for many Overkill fans is the *Under the Influence* album as "Hello From the Gutter" became a trash-thrash classic on *Headbangers Ball* and was for many, a first time exposure to Overkill, despite MTV playing "In Union We Stand" fairly often through 1987 prior.

On *Born in the Basement*, Rat Skates gives the *true* Overkill fans a friendly wave hello as it's been practically two decades since we last saw him. What is revealed on this fascinating DVD

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