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[Born in The Basement](#)

Rat Skates

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Artist: Rat Skates
Title: "Born In The Basement"
Label: Kundrat Productions
Release Date: 5/12/2007
Genre: Documentary

Rating: 4/5

Written By: Ken Pierce (copyright 2007) for PiercingMetal.com

Drummer Rat Skates founded Overkill in the early 1980's just as the Disco movement was waning and the NWOBHM was becoming a rising force in music across the pond. The Thrash Metal scene that this inspired would be a mixture of these teachings from the UK and the Hardcore Punk scene that was going strong in the States. The DVD film "Born In The Basement" is the story of how it began for Skates during these formative Metal years and it takes you on a very interesting and educational journey from the musician's perspective. Skates himself came from the Punk background and it was his creative visions and determination that would forge the beginnings of one of the most influential bands in Thrash Metal history. The film should prove quite the learning experience for any performer who seeks to jump into the fray that is called the Music Business. So many people are focused on the likes of American Idol type competitions and having Internet resources such as MySpace, and Friendster to help them along to "success" that none realize the exact amount of work that actually goes into it and how hard you truly need to work. Throughout the DVD Skates is interviewed and his commentary and demeanor are very candid, and above all honest. He lines out how they would stay awake entire weekends when they were not paying to make their own T-shirts, and demo tapes. Tape Trading was a big deal and it seemed like the bands didn't mind back then since this was helping get the word around and to the most people possible. Since there was no record deal in the beginning for the guys, the copying and passing around of these tapes and selling five dollar homemade shirts would help make the band more popular than many of their peers of the day. The vintage footage alone is worth the price of admission to this movie as with Skates being a founding member he is able to share all of these images with us. Would you believe that Overkill was originally a Hardcore Punk band called The Lubricants? Or that in the beginning of life as Overkill that they all wore makeup and had a strong horror theme to their stage show? Well, all of this is presented for your enjoyment and believe me it was a trip down memory lane for me since the clubs they discussed I had visited or played a lifetime ago myself.

One of the best quotes Skates offers during the interviews as he recalls situations was that "failure was not an option", and this should really be something that the younger set of musicians who might watch best learn. The music business is the business of music and it's not pretty. For years these guys made their own costumes, stage lighting and props as well as made the music and by the time the sainted recording deal came through they saw just how tough this was going to be. Focusing on the end result before the main piece of getting the music to the fans that build and strengthen your cause is not the way to go. Skates shows just how important it is to get into peoples heads and have them remember you for what you do. This film is also loaded with some vintage interview segments when Overkill didn't even seem old enough to have facial hair and when they flip to the stage shots you see just how professional level they always were. One of the bonus segments is from "Rock Pipeline" circa 1984 and that is just an incredible find to have as far as footage goes since you would probably not see this anywhere else. The band performs like a juggernaut and it's that dedication and drive that has made them legendary and while Rat would choose to move on to do other things in life before the band would achieve this status - it is safe to say that without his efforts that the band truly would have never even existed. This is a highly recommended DVD and it's available at the link to Rat's homepage. Thanks for sharing your most fascinating history with us Professor Skates - now class let's get on that homework of making your own Metal destiny. It's due immediately.

Official Web Site: www.ratskates.com



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