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Interview with **Stemm**



Posted on **24 April 2009** | Interviewer **Scott Stewart**

Planet Loud hooked up with UFC approved head-wreckers Stemm to find out more about their awesome Blood Scent album.

Planet Loud - The production on "Blood Scent" is brutal, absolutely mind blowing. It's on par with the likes of Pantera's masterpiece "Vulgar Display of Power". Can we talk about how that was achieved?

Stemm - Mike Hatalak guitarist for It Dies Today is our producer, he recorded Blood Scent. We rang him up and talked a bit, sorted out the details and he basically moved all of his recording gear into our studio, rehearsal space and tracked everything right there. We worked with him for nearly two months going back and forth from DWS studios to our studio. Mike's amazing, that's what he does, he just got through producing It Dies Today's new record. He's a killer up and coming producer.

Planet Loud - How did STEMM hook up with the UFC?

Stemm - There's another rock band out of Niagara Falls called Klear, the guitarist for that band, Bruce Wojick is a really good friend of mine. Bruce is friends with the music producer for the Ultimate Fighting Championship. Anyway, one day I was at a Klear gig hanging out and he asked me to get him a promo package for STEMM. Klear had submitted some music to the UFC, but they said it wasn't heavy enough. Bruce is a good cat and looked out for us, he said get me a promo package and I'll shop it, no promises. So he sent it out and about two weeks later

it was a wrap, we've been working with the UFC ever since.

Planet Loud - That's excellent.

Stemm - Absolutely, I remember getting a call out of nowhere saying they wanted to use some songs, so they started using a few songs on regular television programming, then three months down the road we had a conference call with Lorenzo and the whole music production end of the UFC, and at that point they wanted a song that was going to introduce UFC 40, a historic fight with Ken Shamrock and Tito Ortiz. They wanted a song that would set the tone for that fight, define it, so we sent them a few new songs we were working on. A week later they flew down to Buffalo, NY and put us in Audio Magic, and for three days we tracked the tune and UFC 40 was the first time "Face the Pain" was ever aired. Six months later they said congratulations "Face the Pain" is now the official theme song for Ultimate Fighting Championship", and it's been the theme song ever since.

Planet Loud - Didn't they debate on switching songs, there was some experimenting going on, essentially trying to come up with a replacement for "Face the Pain"?

Stemm - The story is, a few years after using Face the Pain they wanted to dabble with something different, maybe use a different song and all of these freak occurrences started happening when they tried to change the song. Tim Sylvia broke his leg before a fight and Chuck Liddell got hurt, then Ken Shamrock got sick, so all of these things were going down, and a lot of the fans started complaining that the song wasn't being played anymore and they wanted it back. So they put it back on and it ended up being one of the best fights that they'd had in months. So out of superstition, they said that's it, leave "Face the Pain" as the song. We got really lucky with that man, it wasn't supposed to be as big as it turned out to be, the UFC people didn't even anticipate it going the way it did. It was supposed to be just a little novelty thing and now it's turned into the theme tune.

Planet Loud - There's a show on the FOX network called UFC Wired that Joe Rogan hosts and they're using "House of Cards" off the Blood Scent album as the theme song, correct?

Stemm - Yeah, UFC Wired is a totally different beast from the UFC, when they broadcast fights it's to something like 48 different countries, so "Face the Pain" is getting heard by an unfathomable amount of people.

Planet Loud - That's staggering..

Stemm - I agree, we've played some new markets and there's always a good chunk of people that come out and recognize us as the UFC band and they want to hear "Face the Pain". Ya know, FTP to us is probably starting to get like "Enter Sandman" for Metallica. We play it for the fans because they like it, and we do dig playing the song still, it's just the oldest song in our catalogue.

Planet Loud - Awake the newest video is stellar, how did that come about?

Stemm - It's a conceptual video and we shot it for like thirteen dollars and some change.

Planet Loud - Beer Money

Stemm - Actually, we returned beer bottles to fund the video. *laughing* The concept for the video came from Alex and Steve, it was based on a guy who made some really poor choices in life and decided it was time to check out. So he shoots himself in the brain. *laughter* I've got issues, anyway during the video shoot I got covered in blood and hamburger meat on a number of different takes, trying to get that perfect splatter effect.

Planet Loud - Sounds like a GWAR show, fake blood and hamburger, nice.

Stemm - It was good times...you can see the Awake video on our Myspace page, and also check out tour dates, and tracks from the Blood Scent album there as well... **Planet Loud - Awesome, thanks for your time..**

Stemm - No problem.

Interact - <http://www.myspace.com/stemm>

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