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Blood Sweat & Tears: Spinning Wheel review

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**Blood Sweat & Tears: Spinning Wheel**

★★★★★

Label: Cherry Red  
Released: 2007



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By the time 1980's *Nuclear Blues* was released, Blood Sweat & Tears changes then Spinal Tap had drummers, or the [Red Hot Chili Peppers](#) had guitarists. The *Spinning Wheel DVD* features that 1980 lineup and a less than 60-minute concert recorded in the U.K.

The sound is horrible, the visual style dated, the hair and clothes look really, really bad and instead of giving the hits like "Spinning Wheel," "You Make Me So Very Happy" and "And When I Die" the time and treatment they deserve, the band blasts them off in a medley with about a verse and a chorus of each.

Other than that, how did you like the play, Mrs. Lincoln?

Singer David Clayton-Thomas (clad in cuffed jeans and a Members Only-like personalized Blood Sweat & Tears jacket) focuses on *Nuclear Blues* material like the awful, awful cover of [Jimi Hendrix's](#) "Manic Depression." At one point, after they rush through the hits and before he introduces an instrumental including a painfully long bass solo (the second bass solo of the night), Thomas remarks that the hits were the old, 1970's Blood Sweat & Tears, and the new material is the 1980's version of the band. Bring me back to the 70's, please!

For the uninitiated, Blood Sweat & Tears featured horns and some fusion-influenced arrangements with their [pop songs](#); they are akin to Chicago, but don't have as deep of a catalogue. In 1980, it appeared as if Clayton-Thomas wanted to distance himself from the material that established them as hitmakers and tried to focus in a new, more fusion-oriented direction. "Spanish Wine" starts off with a very interesting Spanish guitar solo before morphing into a mess, complete with the aforementioned dreaded bass solo. The song goes on for a long time with plenty of solo work for everybody, from the horns to the keyboards. Where is Chick Corea when you need him?

It is hard to watch. The video quality is bad, and it isn't easy to listen to because the [sound quality](#) is bad; the choice of music isn't even what you would expect from a DVD called "Spinning Wheel." Go grab Sony's *The Collection* and you'll have the all the Blood Sweat & Tears you need. For the BS& T freak who appreciated all the jazzy arrangements and the fusion influence, Columbia's *What Goes Up: The Best of Blood Sweat & Tears* is a double-disc set of all the album versions of the [songs](#) with the long jazzy solos and arrangements that were clipped from the radio versions. This is one you can skip -- if it was an unearthed treasure, they should put it back in the ground and cover it with dirt.

~ R. David Smola  
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