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Final 24: Sid Vicious

2007

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The explosion of punk rock produced a number of influential acts coming from both the United States and the United Kingdom. The Ramones, The Clash, The Misfits and of course The Sex Pistols all were among the many artists that many thought would never last and yet three decades later they are still as relevant now as they were then. The Sex Pistols might be something of the oddity out of these however. Unlike The Ramones who produced numerous releases or The Misfits who are still together (though without Glenn Danzig), The Sex Pistols only released one studio album and a handful of singles and yet they are considered to be the cornerstone of the genre.

When you mention The Sex Pistols, the first name that will come up for most fans is none other than Sid Vicious, the bands bassist and most know of the controversy that surrounds him. On October 12, 1978 Sid was found in his Chelsea Hotel room, his girlfriend Nancy Spungen dead, and Sid was put in prison for murder. After being released on bail and then on February 2, 1979 Sid Vicious was found dead of an apparent heroin overdose, though some have claimed that this wasn't an intentional overdose and in fact, it might not have been done by his own hand.

The first episode of the Canadian investigational program *Final 24* looks into the life and death of The Sex Pistols notorious bass player. John Ritchie, who fans would later know as Sid Vicious, wasn't quite the person that many of us might believe that he is. Despite his stage name and trying to live up to it, Sid Vicious seems to have been a very mellow person, quite the contrast of what we are normally believed that he is. The documentary features interviews with other members of The Sex Pistols such as Glen Matlock and John Lydon, better known as Johnny Rotten, as well as close friends and even Sid's attorney.

As with other episodes in the series, this isn't just about the details surrounding the death of a legendary figure, but it goes into the origins, what brought them to success and fame. Curiously, there's never any mention of the fact that Sid couldn't play bass, but I guess that's something that most fans already know. More important however in this case is Sid's eventual relationship with Nancy, a union that many attribute to the band eventually imploding and breaking up. One detail I never knew however is that Sid's own mother was one of the people who supplied him with drugs.

There have been films and books written about Sid Vicious and his death, something that has always been shrouded in mystery as far as what really happened. *Final 24* however attempts to finally put that to rest. According to a confession by Sid's own mother as well as testimony by an officer that was on the scenes after his death, the claim is that his mother intentionally had given him an overdose. If this is true or not will never be known as she died of an overdose herself in 1996.

There are no extra features on the disc, something that I see as the trend with these releases having reviewed another prior to this one.

No matter what you believe about The Sex Pistols and Sid Vicious, this episode of *Final 24* should shed some new life into what you thought you believed. It may not give a definitive answer to exactly what happened but does show the tragic life of a punk rock star who potentially could have become more but was taken from the music scene and the world far too early.

-mike-

Directed by:
Paul "Stan" Griffin

Written by:
Gregory Sinclair
Philip Trippenbach

Narrated by:
Danny Wallace

DVD Features:
Aspect Ratio: 1.33:1
Audio: English Dolby Digital 2.0

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