

DVD REVIEWS

Northwest Dirt Culture II Grubworks Media Productions By Ryer Star



Northwest Dirt Culture II is an action-packed romp into the dirt and mountain biking world. This is the second edition of the DVD series produced by Grubworks Media and filmed all over the Pacific Northwest, including Idaho, California and B.C. It features hardcore footage of the best downhill, freeride, and dirt jump mountain bike action at all the major events throughout the year. As an added bonus, it also includes local freeride sessions from some top local riders. The riders prevail through mud and dust, and some of the wipeouts in the film are as interesting and jaw dropping as the sport itself.

One of the DVD's highlights is the soundtrack, with music from popular artists such as the acoustically driven Dylan Brewer, rock outfits Rally Car and Freebase, and the industrial toned Maticulous. Other highlights include The Gathering, which is an indoor dirt park competition, as well as the best race footage from various competitions including downhill races at Beacon Blowout, NorthShore CBC Ripper, Bear Mountain Challenge, and Silverox Mountain Bike Festival. My favorite was our own local Mt. Hood Skibowl series. Overall, if you are into extreme dirt biking, this will be a collector's item for you. If you are new to the sport, this could easily satisfy your curiosity.

METALMANIA 2006 MVD Distributors By David Svendsen



This DVD represents the next best thing when you can't actually be there – the Poland MetalMania Festival. Professionally shot, multi-camera angles, killer sound – the full works. The performances are blistering and sweaty. While it does seem to be part of the European black metal scene, the face paint and the Slayer-style nail arm guards appear a bit played out at times. Appearances aside, each band that appears on this DVD puts on a scorching performance. Yet as is the case with a lot of the genre today, many bands simply didn't stand out but blended in throughout the show. Skull-crushing drums amid swirling two-edged guitar riffs is enough to get your head bobbing, but then most vocals were lost within the mix or simply couldn't be understood. Hell, some bands I couldn't even tell if they were singing in English or their native tongue. While that may not be an issue in their homeland, I could see it being a problem for mass-market appeal.

A couple of the stand-out performances on the DVD are from Nevermore and Hunter. "Final Product," "The Heart Collector" and "Enemies of Reality" show Nevermore in peak form. The crowd erupts between each song with loud chants of, "NEVERMORE! NEVERMORE!" Clearly they were one of the night's favorites. Hunter, a Polish metal band, added a unique element of the violin into their set, quite interestingly providing a new component to their performance. Overall, this is a very solid DVD of metal performances from a metal festival most of us don't get to attend.

Les Claypool *Fancy* Prawn Song By Robin Steeley



"Every now and again we all need to get a little fancy"...Les Claypool

With his endearing strangeness and renowned bass capabilities, Primus's legendary frontman Les Claypool has become more than a cult phenomenon. With the release of *Fancy*, a collection of footage shot by fans and shown from their perspective, they were able to capture that energy that Claypool and his band exude at every performance. The dark ambiance and the thumping bass lines incorporated with a number of horns and other accompaniments make this something you want to watch on a big screen with the lights out in a smoke-filled room. There is some truly amazing instrumentation included by the varied players with marimba, vibes, sax and alternate forms of percussion throughout.

Recorded live during the band's 2006 summer tour, the DVD was released in support of Claypool's *Of Whales and Woe*. It also includes music from previous album *Purple Onion* and his Interscope release *Les Claypool and the Holy Mackerel*. My favorite is when he annihilates a stand up bass for the songs "Long In The Tooth" and "Vernon The Company Man." The entire DVD glorifies everything a jam band is all about; this is the perfect example of jamming at its finest. *Fancy* is his first ever live DVD and I'm sure will soon become a collector's item for anyone who has ever been a fan of his music.

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