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MUSIC DVD | STEVE MORSE

Charms documentary offers rock and woes

For anyone who still dreams of rock stardom, the path has never been harder. That's the lesson learned by the Charms, a local band that has battled through many obstacles to break out of Boston. They're a tenacious group trying to do it the old way by touring and making videos, but they could use the help of the psychologist who kept Metallica together during rough times.

The illuminating documentary "**Easy Trouble**" is a testament to the Charms' indie-rock, DIY ethic. It follows the five-year-old, still-existing group through the highs of being supported by Bruce Springsteen guitarist Little Steven Van Zandt's "Underground Garage" radio show (which named the Charms' CD "Pussycat" the top disc of 2005), to the wrenching lows of intra-band squabbles that have seen many members leave. Only singer Ellie Vee and guitarist Joe Wizda have stayed the course. Luckily, they're the songwriters and thus the Charms soldier on with their super-energized, garage-rock revival sound.

This DVD is an adrenaline rush for Boston rock lovers. Director Ben Oliver, who also directed one of the Charms' videos, does a fantastic job of combining live footage with band interviews and clips of the road woes during a 52-city tour in 2005. Group members are shown arguing in their van and occasionally at the gigs, as frustrations build up and manager Steev Riccardo has to come out and do damage control. Various fights, a flat tire, and a broken volume pedal don't help matters, but the shows are dynamic and Vee's charisma pours off of the screen. "The Charms are getting bigger one fan at a time," says Oliver. But, as Vee later concludes, "It's not easy to find people who are really dedicated and who really understand what it takes to make it."

Extras: An interview with Little Steven, who says, "I don't care if there are 10 people at a gig or 10,000, the Charms will win them over." (MVD Visual, \$14.95)