



KNOCKOUT DROPS

MANCHESTER NIGHT & DAY CLUB, April 1, 2004

By Billy Glew

Frontman Chris Campion is glad to be in the UK as they allow smoking in the bars, unlike his native New York. Considering he chain smokes his way through the set, this is a pretty crucial factor in keeping his roughly hewn voice in fine fettle.

It appear that back home he requires "A nicotine patch on my balls" to allow the seemingly Cash/Springsteen./Country tinged effect to be maintained

Mind you, NY does have other advantages in that the Drops are able to stumble amongst the back drop of the incumbent deviant denizens which are used as back drops for their raucous energy laden tunes such as "Viscous Friends". Campion has a natural raconteur style approach, which he uses to get a reaction from the crowd.

Totally un-PC, he wears a t shirt with "I love Chicks" emblazoned upon it, and seemingly wants our advice/reaction upon their attempts to score with the hotel waitresses, a confrontation style developed during a residency in NY that led to opening slots for artists such as the Violent Femmes.

It's the last night of the tour and there's a gleeful exuberance in their performance - perhaps they're making the most of the cigarettes and hotel women, or possibly the boys in a toyshop called rock'n'roll syndrome, with all the trimmings of sex, drugs and music is still having the attraction it first did.

"Wasted" from the album "Killed by the Lights" is positively brimming with snarled vocals and the frantic axemanship of Tom Licameli as his fingers dance over the guitar strings.

When the pace is fast they're at their best, and over the course of the 45 minute set, numbers such as "Freeze Dried" and "Hell Ride" give plenty to think over. I guess they'll be ordering a large batch of patches for tomorrow then.