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VISITING ACT | Who Knows why?

Hoobastank is still a popular rock thang

BY SHAWNTE SALABERT



Stankin' up the place: Singer Doug Robb (right) and th' Hoobas

Hoobastank was a stumper. Somewhat irrelevant on my music radar, I at least knew that the lead singer, Doug Robb, had a propensity for static-cling hair and that the trio sounded a bit like a band careening between Incubus and ... uh ... Incubus.

But, really – what's up with that name? I would have assumed it a career-killer, akin to christening your band Santorum or Smegma (if you don't get the references, you're probably better off). Yet here they are, half a decade later, still crankin' out the tunes with their new 13-song disc *Every Man for Himself*, giving dudes fist-pumping karaoke fodder and making barely legal girls everywhere wet their panties.

Tired of press clips and PR flak drivel, I decided to head to the best information source: drunk people at a bar. Who better to weigh in on the California-born Hooba-phenom than people whose inhibitions are too low to

be guarded against any sort of possible embarrassment?

Playing the intrepid reporter, I sidled up to the bar and asked its tender what his take was on the 'Stank. "Uh, I don't really remember anything they do," he said. Hmm. The swarthy cook was making his way back to the kitchen, so I blurted, "Hoobastank, pro or con?" He hissed, "Con, very, very con."

But wait! The frat boy to my right would have the answers. "Oh! I met their tour manager once! He was really nice." He thought for a minute. "I think their name is some Mayan thing."

Perhaps I should have planted myself outside of the MTV Store in Times Square instead.