

A conversation with Don Dokken's new guitarist John Norum

by John Glynn
Staff Reporter

Following many legal battles over the group name Dokken, Don Dokken has fought through all the adversity and found a new record label and assembled a new band under the new name "Don Dokken." His first special find was Billy White, a hot rod guitar player from Texas. Then, after hearing guitarist John Norum's solo album (the 1989 "Total Control"), Don asked John (who had departed his former band Europe) to come in from his native Sweden and play on a couple of songs for Don's new solo album.

John's trip to L.A. turned into something more and the solo project turned into the new Don Dokken Band. Following White and Norum were drummer Mikkey Dee (formerly of King Diamond) and bassist Peter Baltes (formerly with Accept). The newly formed band then released "Up From the Ashes" on Geffen Records and now are all set to go on a headlining tour. I recently spoke with John Norum about the new band members, the tour and anything else that popped up.

When and where does the tour start and how long will you be on the road?

The tour starts Nov. 8 in Ventura, California and then we

move on to Las Vegas. We expect to be on the road for a six week period and get a feel for the road in the U.S. Then most likely we will go to Europe, Japan and any place else we can play.

What can we expect from the band musically on the tour?

Well, about 80 percent (of what we'll be doing is) new material and 20 percent (is) old Dokken hits and videos such as "Into the Fire", "Alone Again" and "In My Dreams." Those songs are ones that Don helped write in Dokken. Mainly, the new album will be promoted.

With Don still using his name for the band, did you or the rest of the guys feel that you would fall into the "old" Dokken sound?

Actually, Don was the only one who wanted to change the name. We all wanted to stay with Dokken and with Don and his legal battle we only changed it a little to Don Dokken. We tried names like Dokken II and Dokken's Army but they all sounded really silly. He helped to build his name so why should we start from scratch and spend time trying to build on another name?

It was all a big mess but now we have everything set. I really liked the old Dokken sounds so I was glad that we followed in those



Don Dokken

roots. We didn't want to change the sound.

How was it working with another guitarist?

Billy was great. I think a problem might have existed if I had grown up in America, but being from the European school of rock, we got along fine. I grew up with the likes of Ritchie Blackmore, Gary Moore and Michael Schenker. He grew up with Texas blues around him. Our different styles only made it better for the band and we respect each other for that.

What is the big difference between the European rock scene and the American scene?

Speaking only for myself and not the band, I think too much is put on image here in America. In Europe, the people don't see what the bands look like very much and image is not a big factor. A person like Gary Moore is big in Europe but he does not have long blond hair so it has been hard for him to take off here. I don't mean to be hard on blond people (busting with laughter) but image is a

big minus for me. Being here in L.A. for two years, I have seen quite a lot of the music scene and I am glad I did not have to go through it.

I know it is a little early to ask, but what can we expect from the band in the future?

I go about it as one day at a time and do not look far into the future. As a band, we will have to bind together through the bad times, but hopefully we will have more good times.

University Forum Lecture Series November, 1990

The Strip: The Development of Las Vegas' Road to Glory
(A slide-illustrated lecture)
Thursday, November 8, 1990
Susan Jarvis, Librarian
Special Collections
UNLV
7:30 p.m.
Beam Hall Room 241
Sponsored by the UNLV Foundation

The Home-School Movement: Doing It Their Way
Thursday, November 15, 1990
Maralee Mayberry, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
UNLV
7:30 p.m.
Beam Hall Room 241
Sponsored by the UNLV Foundation

The End of Apartheid and

South Africa's Prospects for Democracy
Tuesday, November 27, 1990
Robert Bigler, Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
7:30 p.m., Wright Hall Room 116
(Co-Sponsored by Phi Kappa Phi and the UNLV Foundation)

In Search of Shangri-La (A slide-illustrated lecture on the Himalayas) Wednesday, December 5, 1990
Felicia Campbell, Associate Professor
Department of English
UNLV
7:30 p.m.
Wright Hall Room 116
(Sponsored by the UNLV Foundation)

Awards winning University Jazz Ensemble to perform

The award-winning University Jazz Ensemble will perform at 2 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 11, in the Judy Bayley Theatre at UNLV. The following week the Ensemble will be recording a compact disc for Seabreeze Records, announced Frank Gagliardi, director of the band.

The 18-piece jazz group already has several albums to its credit, including "Live in Europe, Live in Japan, Live Behind the

Iron Curtain, and Live in South America." This will be their first compact disc.

The ensemble has toured extensively, including Europe, Poland, South America, Spain, Portugal and Japan.

Tickets, or further information, are available at the Performing Arts Box Office, 739-3801, in the Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.

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