

Tommi Johnson Wins National Budweiser Showdown



Tommi Johnson and his back-up band, "The Ingrams," were named the winners of the Fifth Annual Budweiser Showdown held recently in Universal City, California. Five bands from around the nation competed in the Budweiser Showdown, which was co-hosted by "Soul Train" host Don Cornelius and singer Thelma Houston. Shown announcing the winner are

(left to right) Bill Brooks, area manager, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.; Cornelius; Houston; Johnson; Henry Brown, vice president-marketing development, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.; and John T. Stevens, special field markets manager, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

(LOS ANGELES) — Tommi Johnson, a versatile performer who has appeared in a backup role with the likes of Patti LaBelle and Al Green, finally made it to the big time, winning the 1987 National Budweiser Showdown Finals and a recording contract with Capitol Records.

Five groups from throughout the country won the right to participate in the live Budweiser Showdown Finals competition. The finals were hosted by Don Cornelius and Thelma Houston, who will also serve as hosts for the television special.

In addition to the Capitol Records contract, Johnson won the opportunity to appear in a Budweiser "This Bud's For You" television commercial, more than \$10,000 in Fender Musical Equipment, and other prizes.

The 30-year-old Johnson sang "You For Me" during his winning performance which captivated the sellout audience at The Registry Hotel in Universal City, California.

The four other groups which earned the right to compete in the Budweiser Showdown National Finals were "Rob and Dana" (Robert Lowery and Dana Cappillina) from Charlotte, N.C., the Buffalo-based "Erskine," the "Superstars" from Little Rock, and "Side-by-Side," who are from San Diego.

The judges for the National Budweiser Showdown Finals were Wayne Edwards and Howard Geiger of Capitol Records, Walt Love of Radio & Records, Leonard Richardson of Screen Gems, producer Ron Kersey, and Fred Alexander of Lakeside.

The Budweiser Showdown, now in its fifth year, is the nation's premier rhythm and blues talent search program and is conducted in association with radio stations in 36 cities throughout the country.

The local winners in each of the 36 markets are judged by the participating radio stations, often time through live competitions. The winning song of the local winner is played over the airwaves, and each winning act receives Fender Musical Equipment.

The local Budweiser Showdown winners are then judged against the other winners in the respective regions with the five select groups advancing to the Budweiser Showdown National Finals.

The winner of the 1986 Budweiser Showdown National Finals was "Grand Staff," a Chicago-based group which was recently signed to a major recording contract with Warner Bros. Records, with its first release set for June, 1987.

The Budweiser Showdown National Finals was filmed by Bud Sports, a division of Anheuser-Busch, Inc., responsible for the production and syndication of various entertainment and sports properties.

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