THE KINGS OF RAP ARE "TOUGHER THAN LEATHER"

by Stephanie F. Pettit

"Tougher Than Leather" seems to describe many things these days, including RUN DMC's 1988 summer concert tour, a fourth album, their second feature film, and their exciting Las Vegas concert at the Thomas & Mack Center.

As headliners for this summer's tour, RUN DMC will be supported by three young rap acts. Public Enemy will perform their hits "Bring the Noise" and "Rebel Without a Pause." Everyone knows the popular new single "Parents Just Don't Understand" by D.J. Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince. And fans can look forward to hearing J.J. Fad's major hit "Supersonic."

On June 19 at 8 P.M., this montage of rappers will come together at the Thomas & Mack Center to give Las Vegas a concert that is definitely "Tougher Than Leather."

"We're trying to give Las Vegas a taste of real rap-and-roll music," says Las Vegas promoter Mike Minggia. "This concert should be the hottest thing to hit Las Vegas this summer."

Long since established as the "kings of rap," RUN DMC is also known as one of the most powerful visual acts in the country. The group has been an MTV favorite since the release of their first video, "Rock Box."

The group's latest album entitled "Tougher Than Leather" was the rapper's first attempt at producing. It deems hit songs like "Run's House" and "Going Out Like That" which portray messages of the group's most urgent concerns — anti-drugs, anti-gangs, and pro-education.

The movie, entitled, like the album, "Tougher Than Leather," is a Clint Eastwood-like tale of mystery, murder and revenge. "It's not Hollywood," says Jam Master Jay, "it's Holliswood!"

Hollis (in Queens, New York), of course is where the trio of 23-year-olds grew up. Rappers Run (Joseph Simmons) and DMC (Daniel McDaniels) were classmates through the eighth grade. Run and deejay Jam Master Jay (Jason Mizell) became friends in fourth grade as teammates on the school basketball team.

After all three graduated high school in 1982, they started off their professional career by recording 'It's Like That/Sucker MC's."

Nearly five years later the group still manages to appeal not only to inner-city kids but also to middle-class kids—with whom its members really have more in common.

Minggia, a 1979 Rancho High School graduate, is particularly proud of the group's over-all appeal. "These guys have a way of delivering a message that makes everyone stop and listen, regardless of their race, creed, or age."

Yet for all of their accomplishments, it appears as if the best is yet to come for the "Kings from Queens." But more specifically, the best is yet to come for Las Vegas when the powerfully exciting "Tougher Than Leather" tour comes to the Thomas & Mack Center on June 19. For ticket information call 739-3900.

D.J. JAZZY JEFF AND THE FRESH PRINCE, appearing with Run DMC at Thomas & Mack on Sunday, June 19.

PUBLIC ENEMY, appearing with Run DMC at Thomas & Mack Sunday, June 19.

ROWE

From Page 8

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