

Dr. Dogg, Wilco wow the crowd

BY PHIL JARRETT
Index Staff

The inebriated fans waved their beers from the rooftops, calling out to their friends below on the closed-off streets of downtown Columbia, Mo., Sept. 19. The concert, Dr. Dogg and Wilco, was the climax of the Blue Note's Summerfest 2007.

To the dismay of many, Dr. Dogg was neither a DJ nor a banjo-yielding grandpa. Despite having what is arguably the dumbest name for a band, the group was able to woo the crowd with a bizarre blend of hillbilly rock and some kind of Frankenstein genre where barbershop doo-wop vocals cover the Beach Boys in a jazz club. Alternating between two vocalists, the songs ranged from mediocre to pretty good, the pretty-good songs associated with the second singer who had a voice like whiskey and the fickle decision between filtered and unfiltered cigarettes.

The opening set had a decent amount of diversity but hardly contained anything original. The group's attire and sound made them a good pairing with the main act, but the stage setup literally dwarfed the group

with Wilco's drum set. I resisted the notion to entirely dismiss Dr. Dogg after they name-dropped themselves in one of their tunes. I instead opted to subtract 100 cool points.

Wilco took to the stage for a staggering 25-song set of near perfection, instilling in me profound empathy for religious scholars who have wrestled for centuries to transcribe a metaphysical experience into words. Thus, setting eloquence aside, I would like to quote Lance, a Kansas City dweller who has been to every Wilco concert in a 400-mile radius in the last four years. Overwhelmed by passion and Budweiser, he spotted my notepad, grabbed me by the shoulders and said,

"This is the best concert I have ever been to. Put that in your article!" This one is for you, Lance.

Wilco was dressed in street clothes, a fittingly modest wardrobe for music that refuses to dwell upon how incredibly talented it is, although one's ears may tell otherwise. From lead-singer Jeff Tweedy's unique voice to

Nels Cline's blistering guitar solos, the likes of which would cause carpal tunnel in any mere mortal, Wilco makes it all look easy. Not only this,

"From lead singer Jeff Tweedy's unique voice to Nels Cline's blistering guitar solos, the likes of which would cause carpal tunnel in any mere mortal, Wilco makes it all look easy."



Photo by Phil Jarrett/Index

Wilco Drummer Glenn Kotche jams out at the September 19 Blue Note Summerfest concert in Columbia, Mo.

but they make it look fun.

Finding the golden mean of live performance, Wilco played an interesting mix of old and new, providing enough deviation from recorded versions of songs to establish the air of an unrehearsed jam session. Still, they were able to maintain enough structure for every diehard in the audience to sing along, providing the feeling that you and the 2,356 others in attendance were taking a summer joyride in a car full of friends and blown out speakers. Feeding off this enthusiasm and constantly gaining momentum, the band performed 15

songs before its four-song encore. A second encore of six tunes ended with the nine-minute musical riot that was "Spiders (Kidsmoke)."

Memorable moments include a version of "I Am Trying to Break Your Heart" ending with a hard-rocking cacophony that sounded like a piano being dragged down a staircase by a motorcycle gang, a broken guitar string and an unphased Tweedy in "War on War." The song "Impossible Germany" from the band's new album was particularly spectacular — the guitars sounded like sirens calling each other to paradise, which,

apparently, is in Germany. "Shot in the Arm" lived up to its name, and after sharing some flattering words about the city of Columbia, Wilco ironically played its new song "Hate It Here." The highlight of the evening was "Via Chicago," a song Tweedy said was intended to depress an upbeat crowd. The low-key tune was occasionally overwhelmed by guitar noise and raging drums, while Tweedy and the acoustic guitar continued to play without any change — a striking metaphor for a band that is still able to keep focus and create beauty over time.

Madden fails to score with fans

BY FRANKLIN CLINE
Reviewer

There are not a lot of good things to say about EA Sports' latest edition of the Madden series, but it's the only officially licensed game in town, so unless you feel like playing with rosters that are outdated by two years, you have no choice but to pick this one up.

It's not to say that the game is all bad. EA has cleverly utilized Wii's motion sensor controls by creating two separate game modes: Family Play, which only involves the Wiimote, and Advanced Play, which requires both the Wiimote and the Nunchuck. Family Play is pretty boring because it was clearly designed for those who know very little about football or playing videogames. In Family Play, the computer controls the actual

movement of the selected player, and all the gamer is responsible for is minutia like spins or stiff-arms on offense and swatting at balls or tackling on defense. I suppose this would be more fun for those who are unfamiliar with the game or younger kids, but I found it unexciting.

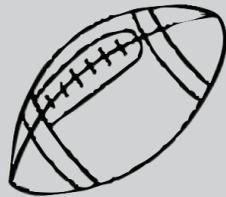
Advanced Play provides a sharp contrast to Family Play in that its controls are much more, well, advanced. Hiking the ball is done by sharply moving the Wiimote upward, throwing requires a speed-appropriate forward motion of the Wiimote (fast for a bullet, slow for a lob) and catching a ball really feels like catching a ball because you place both hands upward. As in any good football video game, timing is everything. Go for a catch too late and the ball will sail gracefully over your receiver's shoulder and maybe into the hands of a defender.

There are two serious downsides to Madden 2008. The first is the overly arcade-style gameplay, especially when contrasted with the version for the Xbox 360, which is much closer to an actual simulation. It's very easy to break free using draw plays in this game, and it's difficult to see differences between individual players, with the exception of a few superstars (i.e. Michael Vick runs just as well if not better than LaDainian Tomlinson or Reggie Bush). Also, there are not nearly as many different types of plays available, which makes the game frustratingly limited.

The second downside to this version of Madden is that there is no support for the Classic Controller, which means you're always forced to use the motion controls. That gets old, moreso with this game than any other game I've played on the

console. I've been playing football video games for about 15 years now (ever since John Elway Football on the NES), and I've never been as frustrated with the controls as I was with this game. It wouldn't have taken much for EA to implement Classic Controller capability, and it would have added an extra dimension to the game, allowing those who don't feel like physically throwing, catching, juking and tackling to take a break and just use their thumbs. Though I applaud EA's ingenuity in their mostly accurate motion controls, it gets old.

Game Review



Gameplay: **3/5**
Graphics: **3/5**
Sound: **2/5**
Value: **3/5**
Originality: **4/5**

"Madden 2008"

Platform: Nintendo Wii
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Electronic Arts
Released: July 28

Overall Rating

Wiimote: motion-sensitive and activated primary controller for the Wii.

Nunchuck: Wii accessory which attaches to the Wiimote, it's also motion sensitive.

Classic Controller: attaches to the Wiimote and functions as a standard non-motion sensitive controller.

Black Lips full of blues, country



BY JONATHAN STUTTE
Reviewer

The Black Lips deal in devilish blues and garagey country, fever fits and dusty handclaps. "Good Bad Not Evil," the band's fifth album, doles out each of these with plenty of aplomb and a little inconsistency to make for good, fun pop.

The Black Lips — Cole "Old King Cole Younger" Alexander on lead vocals, guitar and harmonica, Joe Bradley on drums, Ian "I.S." St. Pe on lead guitar, and Jared "Hondo" Swilley on bass — hail from Georgia, from whence they derive their bluesy drive and southern accents (it's gotta come from

somewhere, right?).

To get a shallow sense of what this band sounds like, take Pavement's early lo-fi groove and a few southern rock bands (My Morning Jacket and the Bottle Rockets), and ideas form about how these guys spin music out. Maybe consider rolling in tar and subsequently lassoing ponies, and further ideas should form as to how one should listen to the Black Lips.

"I Saw a Ghost (Lean)," the leadoff track from "Good Bad Not Evil," is the odd man out here with coal-blend distortion-noise making up the center and a sinister blues riff rounding out the edges. It's a rowdy track, as is most everything

here, but it doesn't contain the fun or the energy that subsequent tracks do. The track is comparably more downbeat than the rest of the album, and the distortion (although it's nice) is far too nasty to contribute to the fun.

"O Katrina!" and "It Feels Alright" are more typical of the energy this band can carry, exhibiting frenzied '60s-style garage. But as much as the band pulls from '60s garage and early '90s lo-fi, it unexpectedly takes cues from the Rolling Stones. "Lock and Key" is the best example with its bluesy rhythm section and the drawling, scrawling "aaaaawww-willright" 10 seconds in, like

Music Review

Black Lips
"Good Bad Not Evil"
Vice
Released: Sept. 11

Rating

a prepubescent Mick Jagger doing his first show.

The Black Lips also appropriate spaghetti western country into their garage. "Navajo" should close out the credits to "The Lone Ranger" with its bouncing guitar and trotting rhythm. The lyrics concern a man who wants an Indian woman for his wife even though he doesn't know to which tribe she belongs ("could be Cherokee, Inuit, Etowa, Navajo, Sioux ... "and the list goes on). "Navajo" is fun and catchy while "How Do You Tell a Child that Someone Has Died?" is catchy but tasteless in humor and tone. This problem of tone pervades sections of the album and leaves the shambling songs ramshackled together, making the album feel like several recording sessions rather than one.

Initially, "Good Bad Not Evil" is clever and fun, but some songs become forgettable, and the album's mess of style just doesn't cohere. In other words, it's a fantastic first date, but that's it.

What's on your iPod?



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