

ARTS

Sauce Funky ready to stage unique style

Up-and-coming band set to play Hot Rod's Wednesday

By Stephanie Thiessen
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

It's a typical performance for the Mic Lordz and Sauce Funky.

Milton resident and guitarist Matt Lalonde is jamming on stage with the rest of the band, while appreciative fans rock to the music. The atmosphere is electric and the excitement palpable.

It's a different sort of music that's emanating from the stage. Two hip hop artists — the Mic Lordz — front the group, while backing them is a three-person funk group known as Sauce Funky, which includes 18-year-old Lalonde.

"This style of music is non-existent," Lalonde said, explaining, "(Funk) hasn't been coupled with rap (before)."

It's a style that seems to be working, if getting quality gigs is any indication.

On Wednesday, the Mic Lordz and Sauce Funky will play at Hot Rods on Chisholm Drive, starting at 9 p.m. The cost is \$5 at the door.

Lalonde, a former E.C. Drury student who's currently attending University of Windsor and living on campus, said he's looking forward to seeing some familiar faces in the crowd.

"I moved there (Milton) when I was four days old and I've lived there all my life," he said.

Show-goers can expect a lively concert, to say the least.

"It'll be a really upbeat, interactive, awesome performance," Lalonde assured.

Performing alongside Lalonde will be rappers AlerG and Boots, drummer Charlie McKittrick, bassist Johnny Rodgers and 'DJ Smooth'.

They range in age from 18 to 24.

"I'm the baby," Lalonde joked.

Also performing at the Hot Rods show will be heavy rock group Sledgehammer and two Milton rock bands, Clubs and Spades and Sokey.

The Mic Lordz have been together about five years, and recorded their first album — entitled Family Tree — last year. It can be found in mainstream music stores across Canada.

They were joined by Sauce Funky in October.

Lalonde said he was excited about being asked to play with them.

"They've got a good reputation," he said.

Their gigs so far have included a memorable show at the Rivoli in Toronto.

"It was pretty awesome to look down and see so many people crowded together," Lalonde said.



MAKING THEIR OWN BEAT: Blending hip hop and funk, the Mic Lordz and Sauce Funky, who include Milton's Matt Lalonde (back row, centre), eagerly await performing for the hometown crowd next week.

Their songs are almost all original, written by group members.

Being in a band's not all fun and games, though. Behind each performance is hours of practising, Lalonde said.

Another challenge is getting exposure. It isn't easy performing in a town where nobody's heard of them because they have no radio single, said Mike O'Phee, otherwise known as AlerG.

But judging by the group's recent past, its future looks promising. In March, it'll be playing the Canadian Music Festival in Toronto, which is quite an honour.

"It's the biggest music weekend in Canada for the year," explained O'Phee. "We're going to have to try to prove our-

selves because there'll be lots of industry people there."

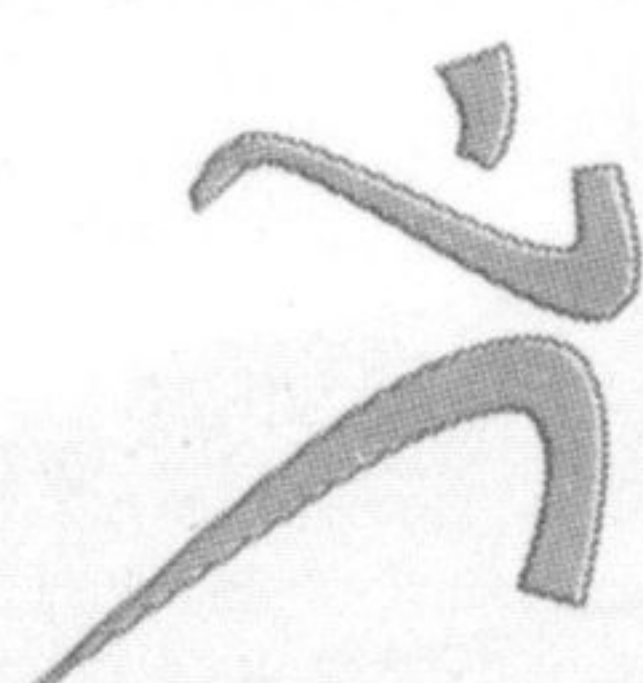
In the not-too-distant future, the guys will be heading back into the studio to record an album, the first for the combined Mic Lordz/Sauce Funky.

It helps the group's dynamics on-stage to be such good friends off-stage, Lalonde noted. Members can anticipate what the others are going to do musically, and "play off each other," he said.

All in all, it's been a memorable past few months, and an experience Lalonde doesn't expect to end anytime soon.

"I hope I'll be playing with these guys for so long."

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