

SEEKING SOLACE

by Jamie Manser

Gearing up for a six-week tour with national act Built to Spill and in the process of recording their first full-length CD (set to come out this fall), The Solace Bros. are all about making it happen.

The catchy power pop, punk rock trio, comprised of keyboardist/vocalist Dan Naiman, baritone guitarist/vocalist John Polle and drummer Justin Donaldson, has an ultimate goal "to create a living by doing the band," Naiman said.

Donaldson interjected, "It's not up to us if we sell records."

"No," Naiman protested, "it is up to us!"

"Well, as far as a record deal," Donaldson explained.

"But we've got to make that happen!" Naiman stressed. "The goal is to create a sustainable career and see what happens. A career that we love, along with our passion."

The upcoming tour may be a determining factor to the band's future. It will be their longest to date, and tours are notoriously hard on bands.

These guys, however, should come out unscathed and better for the wear - and exposure.

Taking their show on the road will most certainly garner the brothers more fans. It's unimaginable that it wouldn't because these lads seriously rock.

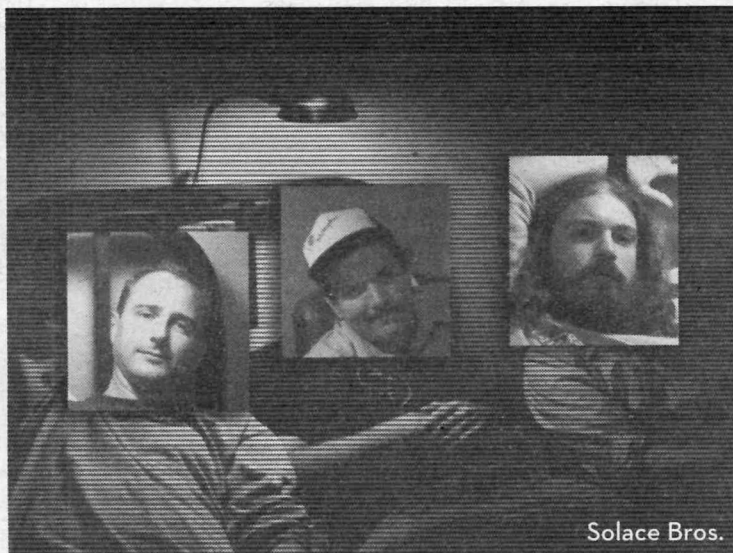
A recent show at Congress had gals and guys alike hitting the dance floor with fervent energy. While they played the Sex Pistols-esque "Reaction," one was compelled to head nodding and body rocking that is inspired by drum-fueled, hard driving beats. Grip your middle and ring fingers with your thumb, extend your index and pinky fingers, and raise your arm in the universal sign that says: "This band ROCKS!"

Their style of rock is a combination of their backgrounds. "We all bring something different to the table in terms of influence and style," Naiman said.

The Jesus look-a-like continued on. "I like jam bands, John likes punk and Justin is into 70s and 80s pop."

"And marching bands too," Donaldson said smiling.

photo Jamie Manser



Solace Bros.

The genius behind the songwriting is a joint effort. Naiman said that "John or I will bring in a song that's almost finished and Justin and I will add the arrangement. John and I will write together and iron out lyrics."

Most of their songs are created from - basically - messing around.


"We'll create songs on the spot. We'll be warming up and making stuff up or do an improvisational thing" that eventually develops into a song, Naiman said.

"Our writing process is a transient thing. We'll say - 'Hey, keep playing that.' It's not a real precious thing - like 'I wrote this and it means a lot.' It's just fun."

It was in this format that initially got Naiman and Polle together. Naiman is a sound engineer who has a studio adjacent to Jim Waters' Waterworks recording studio. Polle was interning with Waters and the two musicians started writing "some real similar ideas. We would layer the stuff and ended up having a few songs and then called Justin to do gigs," Naiman remembered.

The Solace Bros. first gig was in February of last year, opening for Nick Luca Trio at Club Congress. In the following ten months, the band would gig around town another 12 times.

This year, they have played over 30 shows in eight different cities and will be playing 37 shows in 29 different cities during their jaunt with Built to Spill.

Naiman said their favorite part of touring is "sharing beds and the gas - and farting in the van. It's fun to always be moving and getting feedback from the audience and getting the exposure." 

The Solace Bros. kick off their tour with Built to Spill at Club Congress, Wednesday August 20. Call (520) 622-8848 for more information or log onto www.thesolacebros.com.



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