

## EAST COAST FUNK FESTIVAL (AUSTRALIA)

The 1st Annual East Coast Funk Festival  
Brisbane, Australia  
From a Hip-Hop Point of View  
by Bevan Jee

When I picked up the flier for this event sometime in late May, which boasted the following I was quite sceptical if the event was ever going to happen.

**Live Acts:** Towering Inferno, Recipe 4 Disaster, Da Masta, Warcry, Taxi, Elevation and Easybass.

**Breakin':** The original B-Boy All Stars, Defwish

**Aerosol Art:** interstate guests Atome, Dephy, Defwish, Unique & local artists.

**DJ's:** Katch, Frenzy & Jigsaw

**Market stalls** selling Records, Mix tapes, T-Shirts, Magazines, Fat caps etc.

**July 1, 1995, 12pm-8pm**

**Cost: \$10.00 All ages**

Well it happened and in my eyes it was one of the largest events of it's kind to happen on the East Coast of Australia, for quite some time. Although given such short notice, everyone was well prepared and had their shit together.

When the day of the festival came and I made my way down to Festival Hall, a large hall in the middle of the city capable of holding thousands of people, Public Enemy, Ice Cube, Ice-T & Cypress Hill have all performed there before. The stage was set and sound checks were in effect. I was busy inside getting a stall ready for The Bomb selling Magazines, Shirts, Tapes and other Hip-Hop goodies. Midday came and there were lots of people outside and across the street, waiting to get in. It looked like there was going to be a good turn out, about 500 people turned up to the event, which is considerably good for an event of this nature in a city like Brisbane.

Headlining the festival from Brisbane was local act Towering Inferno (MC Lazy Grey & DJ Damage) who performed a few songs. But because the sound check was not on point, they didn't sound as good as they should have. Following The Inferno was local act Recipe 4 Disaster who performed a few tracks and was well accepted by the crowd. Next up was Da Masta who is also from Brisbane who took on the role as a DJ while MC'ing, quite a tough task. His performance came off well but the crowd didn't seem to appeal to the G-Funk flavoured tracks that he performed on the day, although the track "Lipstick Bitch" is funny as hell and should be up there with "Bitch with a Perm" by Tim Dog. After Da Masta were Warcry, a crew from the Gold Coast which is about one and a half hours south of Brisbane. They took the stage with members of Defwish Cast and The original B-Boy allstars (featuring Broke and Seiz from Hype Magazine) b-boyin' on the ground below them. The crowd bum rushed the stage in a matter of seconds and gathered in a ring to witness a performance from some of the best breakdancers and rappers in the Australia. After Warcry the time was around 7:30pm and a lot of people left because they thought it was over, but about 100 people stayed around to witness the headlining act Easybass.

Easybass is promising rap crew, consisting of a few rappers out of Sydney (which is the next state south of Brisbane). The crew has various styles and sound a lot like Blakalicious, Pharcyde and Saafir rolled into one (every rapper has taken a style and manipulated it to adapt to their own style), they performed well on stage and took to the mic with confidence. They are the closest thing that Australia has to offer to American hip-hop. Some people would think this crew was from America because of the sound that they create. Best rapper in the Crew is Sleeping Monk, check for this kid, along with rapper Apex who took the trip up the east coast to drop a rhyme.

Funk bands Taxi and Elevation also performed during the event as well as skateboarding demos. This helped round out the event and made it a multi-event instead of a strictly hip-hop concert.

The Aerosol Art on the day was fresh, Dephy and Atome both rocked their flavour of style on the boards, with a large crowd of onlookers. The boys from Defwish Cast - Unique and Defwish made a masterpiece, along with the local writers whose shit was dope too.

All the DJ's on the day provided a funky dosage of underground, commercial, old school & new school hip-hop, along with funk and jazz beats to keep everyone happy. They all performed well and done a great job between acts!

The market stalls were cool. Besides the Bomb stall there were stalls selling old school and funk records (I came across everything from Parliment originals to MC Shan), a graffiti video by local lads 183 productions, and quite a large range of spray paint tips and graffiti/hip-hop related items, Oh yeah, the food was good too!

Because the event was an all age's event I anticipated a lot of immaturity and fighting but everyone that went was enthusiastic and kept busy during the day. If they were not watching the piecing or breaking, they were skating or doing something else, which was good to see. Not one fight that I know of broke out on the day. Hopefully, next year the event will happen and be larger and better organised.

Although there are a lot of positives, after this event, I concluded Hip-Hop in Australia still has a long way to go. The event in my eyes came off well but in the eyes of others it didn't. I hope a lot of the younger generation (The Next School) who went will be inspired to grab a microphone or a can of Krylon, get on the 1200's or learn how to b-boy, because without them, our Art form cannot survive.

Much thanks to all who helped me working at the Bomb stall and to those who bought merchandise, thanks for the support.

Before I go, I want to send a message to everyone in Australia reading this; To keep hip-hop alive in Australia we all need to stop backstabbing, speaking shit and kill the attitudes otherwise the perpetrators will ruin both their success and their reputation - like so many have done and are in the process of doing. No one is a superstar and all the suckas are going to play their self, and learn the hard way! Peace.

