



LORDS OF THE RING

Seconds out: on a one-band mission to make nu-prog sexy, **Cave In** are ready to rumble with their no-holds barred match-up between brains and brawn

Text: Richard Purvis Photography: James Looker

Look, forget all this. Pretend you haven't seen the wrestlers. Cave In are standing under a big tree or next to an old garage, wearing black, looking a bit moody, a bit nerdy and very cool. Definitely no wrestlers. There, now put the new album on, ask yourself if this band might be about to do for rock what Radiohead did for indie, and we might start getting somewhere.

You can only just hear the PA, but there's still something uncomfortably powerful about the sweeping guitar maelstrom that the mad old ladies are being subjected to. The talking stops. "Hey, that's us!" yelps one of the Americans.

Everyone is giggling as we run down miles of pink corridors in search of the stage, just like Spinal Tap. And then finally, someone in a blazer beckons Robbie and his entourage into the light.

Cave In come from Methuen, Massachusetts, the town with the biggest Burger King in America. They've been together for eight years, since they were 15, starting out as metal-core shriekers. Since then they've toured a lot, mellowed a bit, supported the Foo Fighters and signed to a major label. The first fruit of that deal is 'Antenna', an epic album in every sense which is sure to make them massive.

So what are Cave In? Post-post-hardcore? Progressive emo? They do sound a bit like Trail Of Dead, but the tunes are catchier and some of the songs go on for eight minutes. Let's just call it post-emo-nu-prog-death-geek-spacecore.

"I just think of us as a melting pot of rock," shrugs singer/guitarist Steve Brodsky.

They have no time for nu-metal

("garbage"), emo ("piss-poor") or indeed Trail Of Dead ("they do a good Sonic Youth impression"), but they like Radiohead ("a great band"), My Bloody Valentine ("those guitars are fascinating") and pigeons ("strong little fuckers").

How about the Foo Fighters? Were they nice to tour with?

"They were very friendly," nods Steve. "And their drummer got our drummer into some old Genesis records."

So the prog rumours were true?

"Oh, I just listened to the Mahavishnu Orchestra on the way here," he smiles, shamelessly.

"Look at my belt buckle, man!" says Adam, standing up, even more shamelessly. Cave In's

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Steve Brodsky

You're still thinking about the wrestlers, aren't you? Oh, alright then. You join us backstage at Colston Hall, Bristol, where the auditorium is full of mad old ladies and the dressing room is full of huge oily men. Robbie 'Wildcat' Brookside, a Scouse grappler with schoolgirl hair, is psyching himself up to take on WWE veteran Gangrel in the next bout. He has four American friends with him, and they're planning their grand entrance. Then the music starts.

Cheers drench the 'Wildcat' as he enters the arena, looking mighty tough in his Cave In T-shirt. The music is 'Stained Silver', the opening track from brand new album 'Antenna', and the four lads flourishing the Union Jack behind him are the band who created it. Hello England.

"This is going to be the best NME story ever!" laughs guitarist Adam McGrath as the 'fight' gets underway. Can this really be the heavy Radiohead?

Cave In fly the flag for the prog/wrestling crossover



guitarist has prog merchandise two inches from his penis. It's a Yes belt buckle celebrating the '70s band who wrote 12-minute songs about wizards. This is serious.

"I'm into Yes more than (squeaky-voiced Canadian prog-metallers) Rush these days, I don't know why," muses Adam.

"Yes rules," agrees bassist Caleb Scofield, confirming that the whole band has been infected. "They blow Rush out of the water."

"People think prog is just a bunch of math nerds with guitars," argues Steve. "But one of the things we like about those bands is that, underneath all the noodling and hobbit lyrics, there's a groove that you can bob your head to. If there's anything that we derive from prog, it's that."

Maybe we should give them the

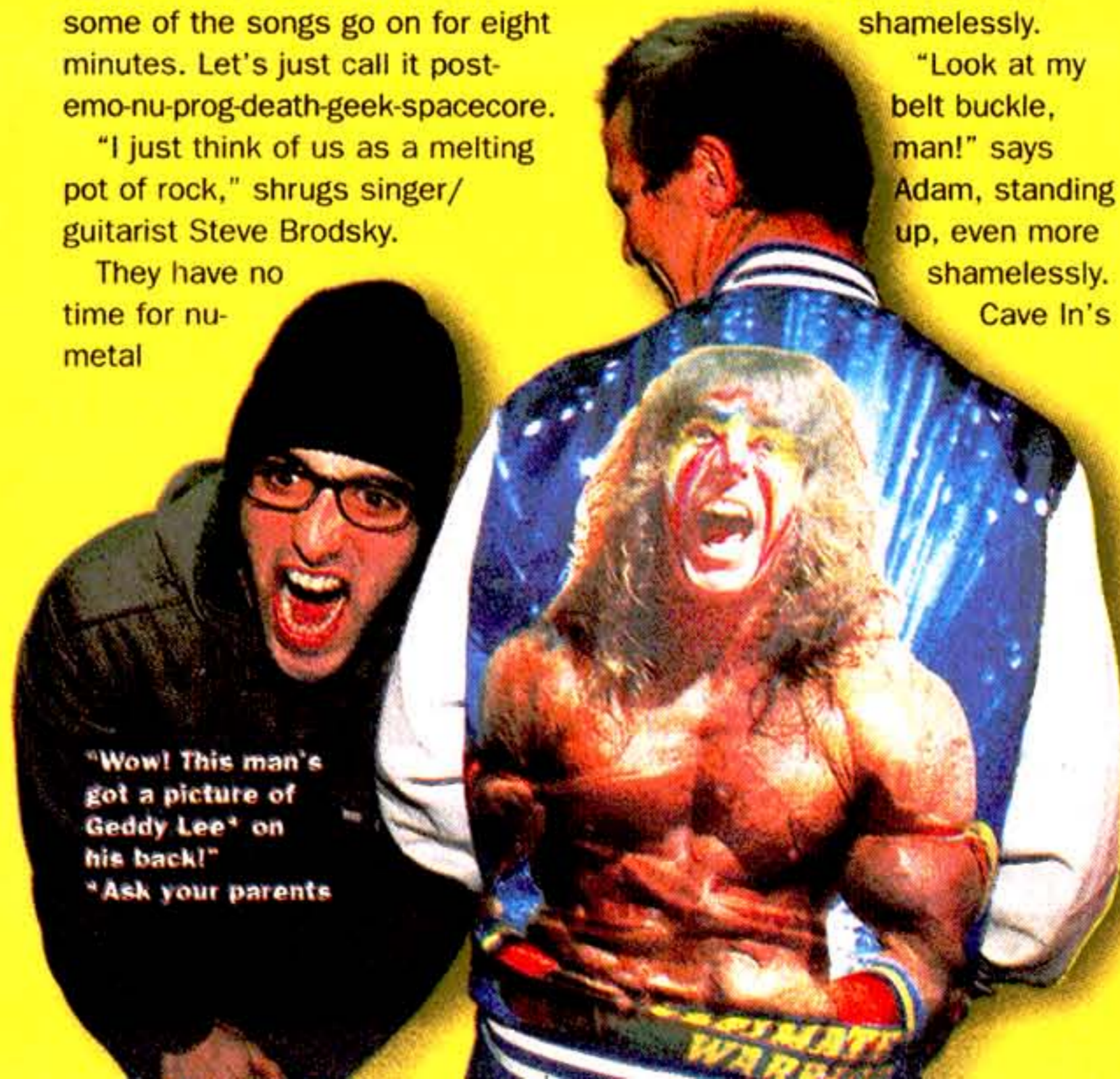
benefit of the doubt. They are about to release the most important rock album of the century so far, after all.

Gangrel wins the bout by the way, but is promptly disqualified for cheating and Robbie (who, in case you were wondering how this whole sweaty affair came about, is a mate of Cave In's tour manager) is declared the victor. Do Cave In like a grapple themselves?

"Oh yeah, all the time," says Steve. "I have some video footage of (drummer) JR and Adam wrestling. Usually JR gives up after about 30 seconds, but this time he found the fire inside."

And that, essentially, is why Cave In are *not* the heavy Radiohead. Why fanny about wrestling inner demons when you can wrestle each other?

"Wow! This man's got a picture of Geddy Lee* on his back!"
*Ask your parents



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