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Still spreading the message



South bound: The Original Wailers promise to recreate musical history as they continue to spread the message of *One Love*.

Despite his death 28 years ago, the music of Bob Marley still reverberates around the world. His backing band the Wailers, two incarnations of them, are still spreading the vibe. The Original Wailers guitarist and singer Junior Marvin talks to **Dave Williams**, ahead of their New Zealand performances.

JUNIOR MARVIN and Al Anderson toured and recorded with Bob Marley until his death in 1981. Now The Original Wailers, with Marvin handling lead vocals, promise to recreate musical history as they continue to spread the message of *One Love*. So goes the promotional material, but let's get one thing out of the way.

The Original Wailers, who are coming to New Zealand, are not to be confused with the Wailers, which includes other members of the original band and has been performing since 1981. "I don't think there's any competition," says Junior Marvin of his new band, speaking on the phone from Portland, Maine. "We take pride in the standard of the music we play and we let everybody make up their own minds."

The Original Wailers, which formed about a year ago, is part way through a "world tour" which takes in the United States, Australia and also the small islands off the east coast of Africa; Reunion Island, Mauritius and Mayotte Island, which is off Madagascar. Keyboardist Earl "Wya" Lyndo is apparently getting his passport sorted out so he can also join the band and should be playing on the New Zealand leg. The tour is pushing the 1977 album *Exodus*, which rocketed Bob Marley into superstardom. It was voted Time Magazine's album of the 20th Century. "We are very proud of it, and will definitely be playing something from it," Marvin says. *Exodus* was Marvin's first album with Bob Marley and The Wailers. He joined the band after also being asked to join Stevie Wonder's band. His schoolmates and musician friends told him to chose Bob Marley.

He played on all Bob Marley and The Wailers albums since then. Marvin says a lot of work went into the albums. They were fortunate to have the finance so they could book a studio for three to six months and use it every day. "There was a lot of effort behind each song, behind the recording and the actual mix of the production. It wasn't actually just like a quick job. It was really well thought out, rehearsed, and orchestrated and we are very proud of the way they turned out. You can hear it in the work. "We (the Wailers) all, equally, put a bit of ourselves in there. Sometimes lyrically, sometimes musically, but together we always came up with a formula, with a chemistry that there was a lot of work. We spent time with each song before we actually recorded it."

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Year of the Stag



MATE
Mark Wilson

AS the icicles in Hell slowly melt this week following the Capital finally putting down the Stamping Stags and derailing our chances to fill the trophy cabinet further, I have had a chance not only to rest my poor liver but to reflect on what can now – for once, after years of hoping – be called the year of the Stag.

Sure, for the fourth straight year we failed to turn qualification for the playoffs into silverware. However, it was not for lack of trying and this year we emerged with a historic prize that has escaped our grasp for so long.

As a Southlander growing up in the 1980s there was little to cheer about in my early days as a Stag supporter.

We battled through the late '80s and early '90s with great valour but little reward.

It seemed Southland Rugby was not cool in the eyes of many.

Despite a few great battles in the mid-'90s and victories in Division two it was only a hard core group of individuals who would openly travel north to declare their undying love of Southland Rugby to the land.

I started Otago University in 2000 with the Stags' perennial battlers of Division one and savoured each win with more satisfaction than when you build your first fish smoker in metal work.

There were mock parades through the Octagon with Stags heads and loud hailer as well as the odd bit of good-natured Stag Humour which involved a couple of posters (or maybe a few hundred) plastered around the Dunedin streets.

Heroes of the new era started to emerge both local and adopted, your Ben Herrings, Hale T-Poles, Paul Millers, Clarke Dermody and Jimmy Cowans emerged to replace the Culhanes and Hendersons.

It may not have been main stream but Stag Rugby was growing a voice again and resilience had developed among a die-hard bunch of young and old alike that was rekindled like the morning camp fire for burning the rubbish.

Stag Days were started by the Verses and trips, both home and away to support the Stags in full Maroon, became as much part of winter as hard frosts and long nights.

We were laughed at for years "look at those cute Southland supporters, their team may have no chance but aren't they passionate? Bless their little cotton softs".

I placed bets that inevitably ended in naked runs or other forms of embarrassment each time we were defeated.

However, I never lost faith though – starting each year thinking this will be the year of the Stag. I'm proud to say after quite a few false starts, many an agonising defeat and after being robbed more times than a 24-hour dairy the Stags finally roared powerfully enough to justify the call "year of the Stag".

The Stags are now arguably New Zealand Rugby's strongest brand, an example for others according to Steve Tew and NZRFU, you can't buy Stags merchandise for all the computer chips in Taiwan. We have the shield, the supporters and the spirit back in the south.

What a ride to be part of for the last 28 years – long may it continue.

Stag Rugby, this is living!

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