

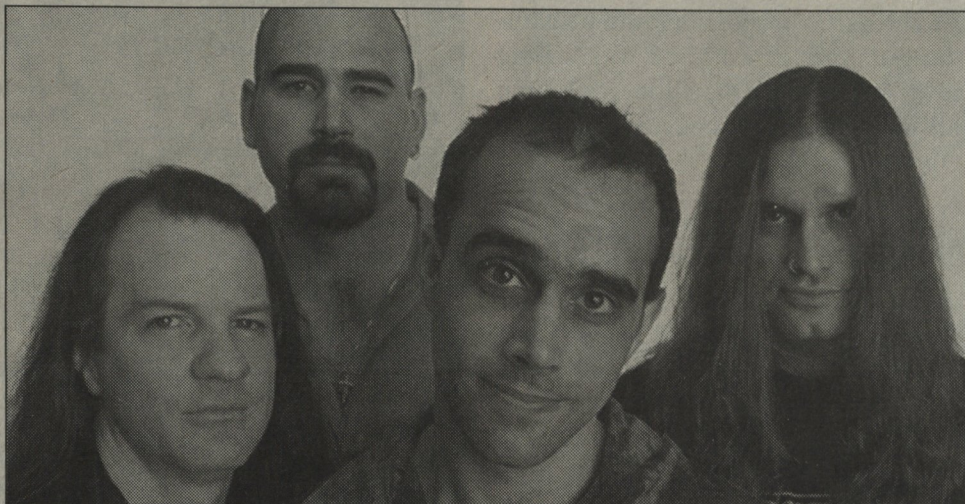
Awards Show + Alcohol = Entertainment: Exhibit A—The Brit Awards

by Marianne DOWLING

Remember a few years ago at the Grammy Awards, when a skinny, shirtless man ran onstage and started dancing during Bob Dylan's set? Or how about when Ol' Dirty Bastard wobbled to the mic during Shawn Colvin's acceptance speech to express his disgust over losing to Puff Daddy? (I hear you O.D.B.: Wu-Tang really *is* for the children.)

Although these unplanned events *do* add some spice to a usually very boring event, they pale in comparison to the hooliganism and tomfoolery that occurs annually at the televised circus, the spectacle of all spectacles known as The Brit Awards.

Where most awards shows would see the actions of O.D.B. and Bob's dancing partner as small glitches in an otherwise well-orchestrated event, The Brit Awards are usually one big glitch with a few moments of calm at the beginning while the Gallagher brothers wait for the Guinness to kick in. But from that point on, the Brit Awards lives up to its reputation as one of the most out of control, insane, and ridiculous award shows in the Western world.



Sweet Tooth were never there.

The reason for this madness? Egotistical, cocky, British rock, pop, and hip-hop stars given endless rounds of beer, champagne, and hard liquor. Here are just some of the results:

1996 Brits: A drunk Jarvis Cocker of Pulp runs on stage with Michael Jackson, accidentally bumps into a small child in Jackson's chorus, moons the audience, is tackled by security, and hauled off to spend the night in jail.

1999 Brits: One-hit wonders Chumbawumba pour a cooler full of ice water over a British politician in protest for the layoff of English "dockers."

2001 Brits: Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones is ambushed by a drunk audience member who shouts at him and tries to throw his beer on him.

Once again, these are only some of the highlights I've selected to illustrate my point. There are, of course, just too many drunken/stoned

acceptance speeches, disses, and rude gestures to mention in one article.

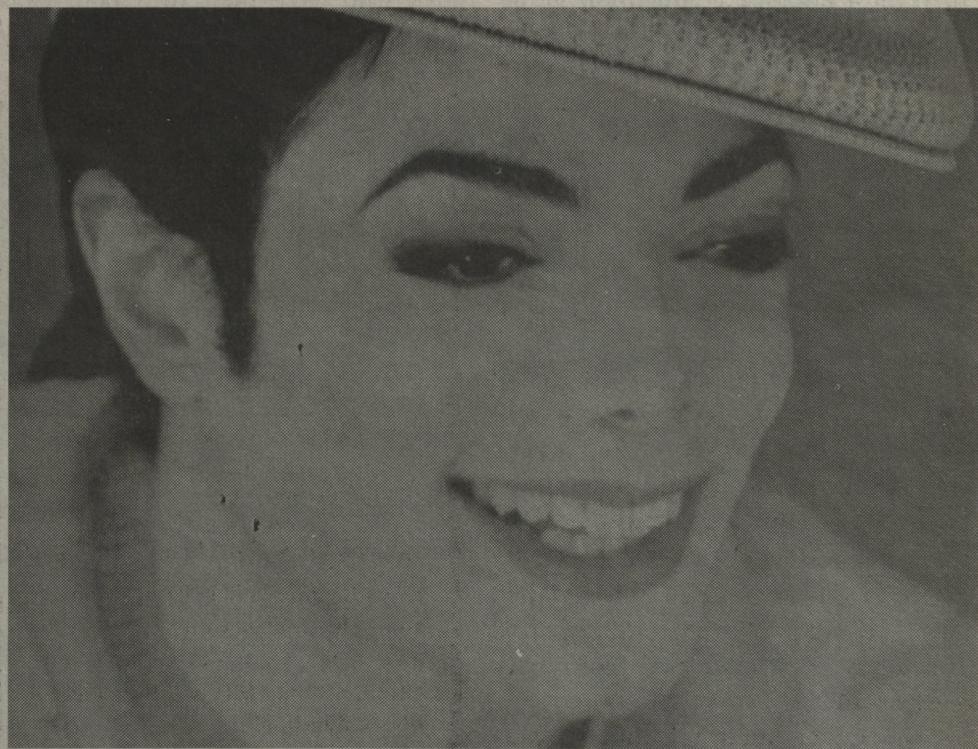
I suppose, as a Canadian, The Brits fascinate me. I'm more accustomed to the proper, slow-paced award shows that keep dragging on for hours, where Jennifer Lopez's dress is the highlight. I dread awards shows normally, but when the Brits come around I, well, I watch them. True, they're rude and shameless, but they keep me entertained from start to finish—no small feat.

My advice to the organizers of the Grammys, American Music Awards, People's Choice, Billboard Awards, and Junos? Stock up the alcohol and distribute it generously. It may be scary to see Faith Hill and Celine Dion drunk off their asses at first, but after you see your ratings, you won't want to have it any other way.

I heard that last week, at the 2002 Brit Awards, members of Westlife got into a scuffle with some other band. I don't really know with whom, but I don't care. It's just nice to know that the tradition continues.



Westlife were there in 2002.



Jacko was there in 1996.