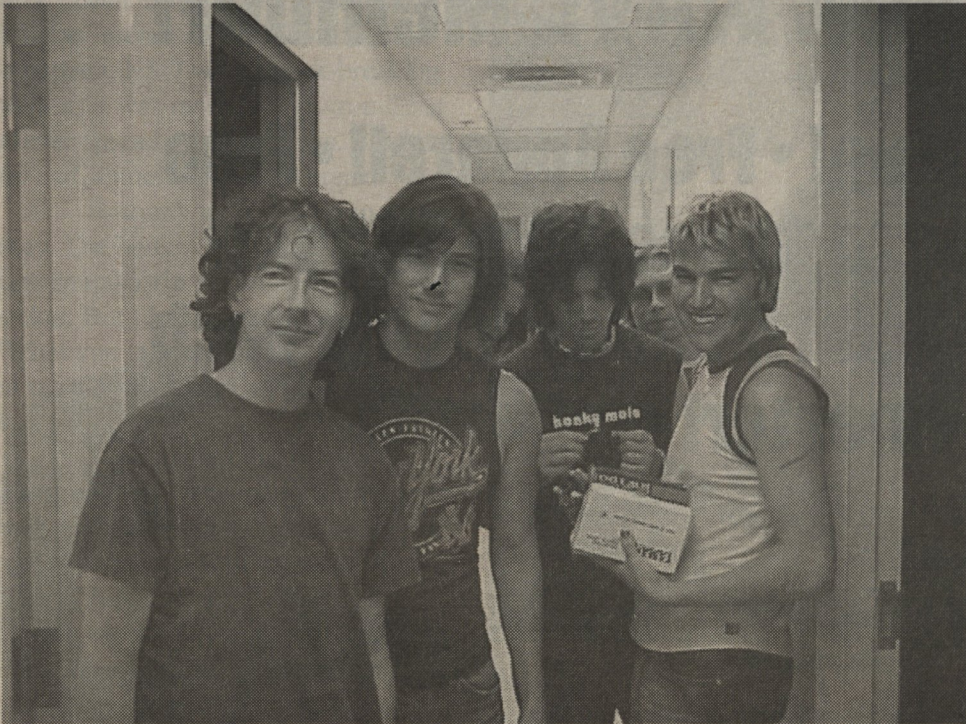


# David Usher and the Mudmen Play the New Student Centre

By Brodie MacRAE



**New Student Centre already infested with Rock stars**



**The David Usher. Always waiting for the camera.**

**Rock Out With Your Cock Out!\* (\*Actual backstage quote of a member of Usher's band, directed toward the Mudmen)**

On the evening of Thursday the fifth of September, the new UPEI Student Centre welcomed the Mudmen and David Usher to play the stage at its opening official pub. Relatively new to the Canadian music scene, the Mudmen have been steadily growing in popularity across the country since the release of their self-titled debut last year. David Usher, on the other hand, is well-known to Canadians as the former front man of Moist and as the recent recipient of two Muchmusic Video awards for his popular single "Black Black Heart."

The Mudmen are a Toronto-based rock band whose music is driven by Celtic bagpipes (no, no, I'm quite serious). The band features the Campbell brothers, Rob and Sandy, two of the country's most talented bagpipers who

decided many years ago that they wanted to do for the pipes what Ashley MacLissac did for the fiddle. Both their skill on the instrument and their energy onstage is impressive, considering the power required to play their instruments. Of course, it helps that Rob and Sandy were both former strongmen competitors and are really, really big. The band's tough and energetic sound is also derived from the raspy vocals of Zoy Nicholes, whose lyrics such as "drink and fight, drink and fight" ends any prospects of serious music.

Despite the animated performance of the Mudmen, the crowd wasn't terribly responsive towards the band. A number of things could have been responsible. The incredible loudness of the band was imposing to some. As Scott Robinson noted, "When you have trouble hearing two bag-

pipes with microphones in an enclosed space over the rest of the band, something is wrong." More than likely, though, the reason was the crowd was waiting to hear David Usher. Both the audience and the band knew it, resulting in a number of good humored comments on the fact by the lead singer. (Nicholes even suggested at one point that UPEI should name a residence after Usher.)

After 40 minutes of the Mudmen, David Usher took to the stage. Initially, he seemed awkward and nervous, but became much more comfortable as the night went on. The crowd seemed to double in size for Usher, nearly filling the room and even engaging in some drunken crowd surfing from time to time. The band played an number of favorites, from old Moist hits to recent tunes like "Black, Black Heart" and even a

cover of Pink's "Get This Party Started." Despite Usher's occasional bad pitch, the set went smoothly and was fairly well received.

The night received mixed reviews from audience members. Some were pleased with the performances, reacting with responses such as "It's super" and "He's good." Others, however, were annoyed by the loudness of the Mudmen and the fact that Usher only played for one hour. David Usher's viability as a rock-star was also commented upon, some stating that Usher is nothing special as far as rock musicians are concerned and that perhaps leaving Moist was bad for his image. As Tammie Rose relates, "Five years ago I thought he was super sexy, but now, he's just not as sexy."