

Buckle Up, In-Flight Safety is Taking Off

By Alec O'Hanley, A & E Editor

(Curtains open. John Mullane, lead singer of In-Flight Safety (opener for the Trews) stands just outside a crowd of rabid would-be groupies who surround the Trews' drummer. A girl strays from the crowd and approaches John.)

Girl: Will you sign my ticket?
John: (eyes light up) Sure, I'd be...

Girl: Are you from Newfoundland?

John: No, I'm actually from New Bruns...

Girl: Sean, your drummer, is from Newfoundland.

John: Actually, no, Sean is the drummer from the Trews. I play in In Flight...

Girl: I'm from St. John's. You know, Newfoundland. JUST LIKE SEAN!

John: Uhh...

(Girl runs over to Sean, forgetting her ticket. John looks to the heavens for a sign. He finds nothing. Exeunt.)

Opening for a popular band is a tough job. You get paid less, you're lucky if the venue sets you up with a place to stay, and you're often playing for somebody else's crowd. Needless to say, Halifax band In-Flight Safety had their work cut out for them when they came onstage at UPEI.

The real show started around 10:30 when In-Flight Safety took the stage. Though their brand of mid-tempo rock was somewhat mismatched with the Trews' riff-heavy guitar rock

aesthetic, IFS have done well on their current maritime university tour. "All the shows are packed with frosh eager to rock out," says frontman John Mullane.

The UPEI show was no exception. There was no mistaking the band's presence on stage. Kids who were pressed up front to get a good spot for the Trews ended up being treated to a show the likes they hadn't anticipated. PEI is more reputed



for its partying crowd than its listening crowd, but IFS adapted to this well and responded with a high-energy performance.

"The Trews are giving us a lesson in how to make five hundred people shake it," laughs John.

Their mid-tempo rock filled the student center with a warm glow. IFS specialize in well-crafted tunes that build to towering heights. There are definite hearts and minds behind this band's songs. And what a full sound! Mullane's signature reverbed guitar lines highlight gorgeous layers of rhythm and

piano.

In-Flight Safety flew out to Vancouver earlier this year to record their upcoming album with Matt Good producer Warren Livesy. His production influence can be seen in the form of a tighter and more compact delivery with fewer instrumental breaks.

After their stint out west, their long-time pianist Jon Sheen amicably decided to leave the band for personal reasons. Before leaving, Sheen was considerate enough to work with the new keys player (Danny Ledwell) to ensure the band would be able to quickly pick



up where they had left off.

When asked what frustrates the band in the record industry, John replies, "It's discouraging to not be able to get [your] songs finished the way you want them finished without having to go through a bunch of people. It's not discouraging to not be on a major label because in the end it'll come out one

way or another... it's more discouraging waiting around for people to make stuff happen."

Though one of In-Flight Safety's main goals is to secure a major record deal, the band is at least equally focused on getting extending their fanbase. "A lot of people come to see us play in Halifax, Moncton, Sackville, and even Toronto, but I still want to focus on building a grassroots following..." explains Mullane.

IFS may have had a slight edge in getting a crowd out here on the Island - half of In-Flight Safety are homegrown PEI kids. Drummer Glen Nicholson

grew up in Summerside and new keyboardist Danny Ledwell has strong Charlottetown ties.

I hope John, Brad, Glen, and Danny don't have to wait too much longer to get their new album out because many more UPEI students will be keeping their ear to the ground for it.