

Vans Warped Tour at Central Florida Fairgrounds

Friday, July 29, 2011 and a trip to the Central Florida Fairgrounds takes nearly 45 minutes to get from Orange Avenue into the fairgrounds and then more waiting to park. What is causing all this traffic at 11:30 a.m.? The [Vans Warped Tour](#) is in town and Orlando is fortunate enough to still be a stop on the Tour after the Warped Tour has had many successful years. With crowds near 12,000 per city, Orlando plays host to around sixty bands and many out-of-towners for the day. Attracting people from pre-teens to even a few in their sixties, the Warped Tour offers a variety of music from reggae blends to punk rock and everything in between. This year they featured seven stages with music from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

From the time the doors opened at 11:30 a.m. the fairgrounds were packed with people decked out in their best to support the bands, even if that meant pants and boots despite the heat. The intense 95 degree heat didn't seem to put a damper on anyone's day. Though the stages were in full sun that didn't stop fans from dancing or moshing to the music of their favorite bands. Something about many of these bands brings a sense of release for the crowd. Whether you are pre-teen with hormonal angst or a disgruntled adult who has come to the realization that the world is not your oyster, some of these bands have a message and some are great for just shouting nonsensical lyrics.

One of the standout bands for the day was [Passafire](#) who brings a reggae-rock-progressive-dub feel and positive vibes. Starting early in the day with their set from 12:35 to 1:05, a four-piece band with roots in jam music, Passafire got the crowd warmed up and jumping up and down despite the heat. Ted Bowne, Will Kubley and Nick Kubley have been playing together since 2003 with the newest member, Mike DeGuzman, adding a nice element on the keys. Just a minute listening to them and their energy and music make it obvious why this band appeals to a variety of people and festivals. Though Warped Tour is certainly not a tour based in jam style music and much of the music has a heavier edge to it, there were plenty of happy, dancing fans enjoying the show by Passafire.

So if you wanted a taste of those nonsensical lyrics [Pepper](#) is a great band to see. For example with their long-time favorite "Give It Up" (aka "Dirty Hot Sex") Pepper plays up their ability to still maintain a youthful attitude and image. Not to say that they are all fun and games or immature banter because this group has managed to stick around a long time while putting out successful albums as well as continuing to gain fans from all age groups. Playing other favorites like "Take A Ride", Pepper kept the crowd moving into the evening hours.

Another band who brings a fun set is [The Expendables](#). Seeing them on stage you can tell they must have a great relationship considering they have been on a bus together all

summer, play a great set and appear to be having a mustache growing contest (which undoubtedly brings lots of teasing from one another). They played a variety of their surf rock grooving songs and faster paced (more on the rock side) music to introduce those unfamiliar to The Expendables.

While many other bands were present at the Orlando Vans Warped Tour, they do not all travel along for the whole tour. [Black Square](#), a band from Hawaii was in Orlando for their first day with the Warped Tour. Formed originally as a hardcore punk trio in 2002, they have added members and re-worked their sound into something of a reggae ska blend with a more intense sound. Focusing their lyrics on something more than just love and heartbreak they try to bring some issues they are focused on to light.

No matter what band or style of music you go to Warped Tour to see, there is a great variety. And there are also opportunities to get memorabilia signed or even talk with the band members for a little. When Warped Tour comes along next year, get your ticket early and don't get caught in the hour long drive down S.R. 50!



Crowd at the Pepper Show

Credits:

Zach Kauffman