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March Madness

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Greatest WATERSHED
Song Ever 2009

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- 9 I'm Getting Ready
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- 13 Wreck It
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- 7 Superstressed
- 10 Get Over Me
- 3 Suckerpunch
- 14 Barnburner
- 5 Half of Me
- 12 Little by Little

To enter, fill out the brackets as the top 64 WATERSHED songs go head to head. The results will be tallied and WATERSHED will play the "Sweet Sixteen" at their Skully's show on Saturday, March 28th. Submissions should be; emailed to brackets@watershedcentral.com, or mailed it to PO Box 82092, Columbus, Ohio 43202, or dropped off in person at Colin's Coffee (Golden Bear Center @ Fishinger & Riverside, Open Daily 7AM - 2PM). If you correctly choose the "Sweet Sixteen" we'll dig up some sort of prize for ya. Wagering is encouraged.

Results will be posted at watershedcentral.com.

Meet the Field of the 2009 Watershed March Madness Tournament

Album Legend:

(3C2) = *Three Chords and a Cloud of Dust II* (Idol Records, 2007, Produced by Mike Landolt)

(5) = *5th of July* (Idol Records, 2005, Produced by Tim Patalan)

(H/W) = *The More It Hurts The More It Works* (Idol Records, 2002, Produced by Tim Patalan)

(SV98) = *Star Vehicle '98* (Thunder Creek Records, 1998, Produced by Frank Aversa)

(SV) = *Star Vehicle* (Thunder Creek Records, 1997, Produced by Frank Aversa)

(SLX) = *Still Love Xmas* (B-Minus Records, 1998, Produced by The Consortium)

(T) = *Twister* (Epic Records, 1995, Produced by Jim Steinman)

(3C) = *Three Chords and a Cloud Of Dust* (Epic Records, 1994, Produced by Frankie LaRocka and Peter Denenberg)

(CC) = *The Carpet Cliff* (Palas Records, 1992, Produced by Bruce Helmink)

(W) = *Watershed* (B-Minus Records, 1991, Produced by Willie Phoenix and Kosmos)

Additional details available in the "Permanent Record" section of watershedcentral.com

#1 Seeds

Can't Be Myself (H/W, 3C2): A regional hit that still gets played at Ohio Stadium during OSU football games. Led *Hurts* into Columbus Soundscan top ten back when that sort of thing was still possible.

Anniversary (H/W, 3C2): Defending champion of 2002 Watershed March Madness. Somehow manages to be wildly commercial and completely not commercial all at once, making it the consummate Watershed song of all time. Joe and Colin sing lead at the same time. "I can't remember a show where we haven't played it, not counting the shows when I can't remember anything," says Mark "Pooch" Borrer.

Black Concert T- Shirt (SV, 5, 3C2): Any power pop fan worth his hooks knows this underground gem. Big Star meets Cheap Trick played by The Replacements. No time to run for the bathroom during this one.

Obvious (5, 3C2): The lead single on *Fifth of July*. Heard on MTV programs like *Date My Mom* and *Made*. "It's only a little bit about making out with young girls," says Joe.

#2 Seeds

The Best Is Yet To Come (5, 3C2): Used by the State of Ohio for their 2008 tourism campaign, nudging out Rascal Flatts and Bow Wow. Featured in numerous T.V. shows, including *Laguna Beach*. A live rave-up.

5th of July (5, 3C2): Dave Masica goes Keith Moon. It wasn't the first single but it got the video. "The title was only a little bit stolen from Silo the Huskie," says Joe.

Wallflower Child (CC, H/W, 3C2): John Speck covered this song with his band Hoarse, put a tattoo of it on Joe's arm, and introduced the band to Tim Patalan who made us re-cut for *Hurts/Works*.

Sad Drive (T): The highest seeded *Twister* song almost got left off the CD. Written on an all night drive down the Gulf Coast.

#3 Seeds

Star Vehicle (SV): Title track and, for a few months in 1998, a Midwestern alt-radio fav. Kinks-y guitar riff. Dream Police-y ending. Frank Aversa got his big drum sound.

How Do You Feel (CC, T): Jim Steinman overheard his driver playing an early cassette version of this song and convinced Epic Records' President Richard Griffiths to sign the band. The closest thing to an actual hit in the tournament. Was the # 2 song in Chicago ("Lightning Crashes" by Live was #1) the week Epic dropped the band.

Mercurochrome (H/W, 3C2): Has a studio track ever differed so wildly from the live version? Only reference to Charles Atlas in a rock song that we know of.

Suckerpunch (H/W, 3C2): “For some stupid reason I wasn’t big on this song at first so Joe cut a demo with John Speck on guitar and Vinnie Dombroski (Sponge) on drums,” says Colin. “It sounded so good we left it that way on *Hurts*. That’s Dave, Pooch and me on 3 chords 2.”

#4 Seeds

Small Doses (5, 3C2): A single that never got to be a single. Tim Patalan added a subtle time change that really screwed us up. Dave did like 87 takes on drums to get it right. “The bridge nicks something from ‘Chinese Rocks,’” says Colin. Five bucks if you can hear it.

Slowly Then Suddenly (5, 3C2): Our Bo Diddley beat song. Like a Christmas song, every band has to have one. The title was inspired by a line from Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises*:

How did you go bankrupt anyway?

Two ways really... first gradually and then suddenly.”

Or something like that.

Still Love Xmas (SLX): Written about 45 minutes before it was played live on Max Faulkner’s “Holiday Global Village” show on N.P.R. Recorded at the original Workbook Studio with Jon Chinn and Neil Schmidt who went to Worthington High School with us. “Joe’s idea for the cheesy Casio keyboard at the top was inspired,” says Colin.

If That’s How You Want It (T, SV): Slated to be the second single from *Twister*, but we got dropped before it came out. We re-recorded it for *Star Vehicle* because we thought we could do it better. “To be honest, it sounds just like the *Twister* version, so I don’t know what we were thinking exactly,” says Colin. “And Blink 182 does our “na-na-na” part even better than we do.”

#5 Seeds

Over Too Soon (H/W): One night, after a solo gig at Andyman’s Treehouse, Pat Dinizo (Smithereens) drove away from the bar, went around the block, and pulled back up to the front door with his window down, telling Joe: “I want you to know that ‘Over Too Soon’ is a smash hit. I don’t care if it never gets played on the radio. You guys wrote a hit song, and you should be proud of that.”

Twister (T): Some of Herb’s best drumming. Recorded in the legendary Studio A at the Power Station in N.Y.C. Studio A is four times bigger than any of our houses. After we finished with it, Aerosmith moved in. Then AC/DC with Rick Rubin. No shit.

Consolation Prize (SV): Making *Star Vehicle* with Frank Aversa—in his fabulous studio outside Great Barrington, MA—was like recording in a Norman Rockwell painting. This song lost its starting job to “Anniversary” the way Todd Boeckman lost the QB job to Terrelle Pryor—a great song stuck behind a phenom.

Half of Me (SV, also on The League Bowlers’ *Some Balls*): Joe first played this song up in Great Barrington, MA and Colin and Herb were like, “Is that a Hank Williams song? Is that a George Jones song? Wait, wait, wait. *You* wrote it?” The first time we played it live was opening for Dash Rip Rock in Jacksonville, AL. We have always been big fans of The Georgia Satellites, Terry Anderson, The Bottle Rockets, Tim Easton, Dwight Yokham, Steve Earle, Lucinda Williams, etc., but the *Star Vehicle* version shows why rock bands can’t play country. The League Bowlers’ version shows what a great country song this is.

#6 Seeds

Lucky Day (5): Colin says, “I love the video for this. And the song is slightly better than Springsteen’s ‘Lucky Day,’ if you want my fair and balanced opinion.” A hard song to play (at least for us). Featured in a bunch of second-tier MTV shows and in something called *Fashion Television* which aired on Canadian TV.

New Depression (5): Where “Lucky Day” demands a small, tight setting to be effective, this song really soars in an empty gym/airplane hanger/indoor volleyball court.

Plan B (SV): Originally demoed with Chad Steinhardt in Chicago, this song grows younger each year, a la Ben Button. In fact, after not playing it for many years, we did it recently at the L.C. in Columbus, and it felt brand new. Maybe not one of our ten best songs but absolutely one of our ten most interesting. Weird the way “Speak Now” by Cheap Trick is weird.

The Habit (5, 3C2): We’re always surprised by how great this song sounds on live tapes because it usually feels like a borderline disaster playing it. After doing 87 takes of “Small Doses,” Patalan made a very tired and drunken Dave Masica lay down this track with no warning and no click track at about 4 AM. One take. “Flawless,” Tim said, as Dave fell off his stool onto The Loft’s the comfy floor.

#7 Seeds

I’ve Been Looking Everywhere (H/W): We closed almost every show on the *Hurts* tour with this tune. There is only one lyric in the song, which must tie some kind of record somewhere. It has such a Who feel, we couldn’t resist tagging “Join Together” onto the end for a live rave-up. You know, if you let this play through, you get to hear our hidden bonus track. That’s two songs for one on I-Tunes or on a jukebox.

Superstressed (SV): With our live production budget always hovering around \$0.00, we (Biggie) used to hook up a bunch of strobe lights and try to freak everybody out with an extended mid-song light show during this tune. Colin says, “Willie Phoenix and The Flower Machine used to pull this same bit at Bernie’s, once driving me up the stairs onto High Street thinking Kosmos’ top hat had come to life and was trying to kill me. I puked 30 seconds later.”

Nightshade (T, 3C): Two things stopped our major label debut from becoming a massive hit: 1) Michael Jackson spent so much of Epic’s money floating that gigantic statue of himself down the Hudson river for his ill-fated *History* greatest hits collection, that SONY had no money left for hookers, blow, and free t-shirts to promote the Watershed album, and 2) *Twister* wasn’t very good. Still, this track has great lyrics and a truly raw guitar and drum sound that ages well. What else does this sound like?

Just For Show (H/W): Always great second in the set. Almost as hard for Joe to sing as “Temples of Syrinx” by Rush. This song caused a blood vessel to pop in Joe’s vocal chords, making him unable to speak for three months.

#8 Seeds

New Life (H/W): Three versions of this song were written before we settled on this one. All are pretty good. This is the fastest, but maybe not the best.

Romantic Noise (H/W): The first song we recorded with Tim Patalan. “The night we did it was one of the highlights of my life, Colin says. “We will always be deeply in debt to Tim for what he gave to the band musically. We almost never play it live, but still one of my favorite songs.”

I-65 (T): Written just before Ronald Koal memorial show at the Newport. The Toll and the R.C. Mob crushed that night—the only time they ever shared the stage as far as we know.

The Laundromat (5): The last song written for *Fifth of July*. When we played it for Tim, his response was, “Have you heard about this race of killer robots that is taking over the world?”

#9 Seeds

Something Wrong (SV98): Played most recently at Beachland Ballroom, 11/08. One of two Columbus songs to reference Ace Frehley (“’70’s Porn Star” by X-Rated Cowboys is the other one). We always think of B.A. Baracus when we play this one. The acoustic version is kind of funky.

I’m Getting Ready (5): This and “Obvious” were the first two songs we brought to Tim for *Fifth of July*. Pooch produced the demo and thinks the original was better than the CD version. After further review, he might be right. “I hate that this song has to face Romantic Noise in the first round,” Colin says. “Those 8/9 games are a bitch.”

Good Day (H/W): Tim wanted it 2nd on the album because it would embrace our eccentric nature and keep people confused (and listening). Inspired by “Big Pink” (not the famous one silly, 265 Crestview) where Colin lived for 6 years. Bridge kind of sounds like “U.K. Jive” by The Kinks.

Sweet Kisses Bitter Scars (B-side): Oh the sweet, sweet irony, “Bitter Scars” right below the song that knocked it off *The More it Hurts* into b-side obscurity. The two songs couldn’t be more different. The tone of *Hurts* was changed forever. “Biggie still thinks that this should have been the lead track,” says Colin. “Wait,” says Joe. “Biggie told me he thinks ‘Can’t Be Myself’ should have been the lead track.” “Either way,” Colin says, “The CD title *The More It Hurts the More It Works* replaced *Sweet Kisses Bitter Scars* per suggestion of talented writer and band friend Dave Martin. “Wait,” says Joe. “I thought Mike Rothe from Spank Bank had the idea first.” They were both right.

#10 Seeds

I’d Be a Liar (SV): The first song we brought to the SV sessions. Appeared on a split EP we did with John Speck’s band Hoarse. One of our favorite lyrics: “I wouldn’t cheat my friends at playing cards, but cheating on you ain’t that hard.”

Youth is Confusion (T, CC, 3C): Live version a career altering disaster but the studio track has a groove. Owes something to “Pump it Up” by Elvis Costello.

Get Over Me (T, 3C): Would you believe the back-up vocals were inspired by “Pick up the Knife” by Dan Baird?

Going Through the Motions (5): Part of the “New Depression”/“Best is Yet to Come” trilogy to end the album. Joe sings the studio version but Colin sings it live for no real reason. “Colin should have probably sung the studio version,” Joe says.

#11 Seeds

I Deserve You (T): Our managers said, “You need to write a ballad for *Twister*.” So we did. The guitar solo is inspired by “Save the Whales” by Dash Rip Rock. Sean Beal from Big Back 40 plays the mandolin.

Easy Way Out (SV): This was written after touring with the Smithereens, and it sounds like it. Joe’s rail against dudes who quit playing in bands and go sell insurance.

Give a Little Bit (SV): “This would have been a great Soul Asylum song,” says Joe.

Eyes of Fire (CC): Back when we started playing the Newport, this song ruled the dark portion of the set. We’ve always been a confusing (and semi-unmarketable) blend of poppy and dark.

#12 Seeds

Everywhere I Turn (T): Pretty catchy song with not enough bass in the mix (kind of like “The Laundromat”). Was written while Joe was at work. He hopped down from a forklift and recorded the chorus into a little tape recorded so he wouldn’t forget it. Groovy background vocals worked out in Danny Lawson’s basement in Brooklyn.

Hero of A Tragedy (CC): Our buddy Dave Cook’s favorite Watershed song. A gem from the Ruby’s days. Hear that Billy Squier influence? We admit it proudly unlike those posers from Rocket From the Crypt.

She Picks The Songs (SV): Only reference to Ipecac in a rock song that we know of.

Little By Little (B-side): One of our best songs, but somehow it never found a home. Always went over better live than in the studio.

#13 Seeds

Naugahyde (SLX): After hearing “Closing Time” by Semisonic, Joe decided to try his hand at writing a song about a bar. Recorded with Andy Harrison at the Howlin’ Maggie studios, when Happy wasn’t looking. Clinking glasses straight outta The Replacements’ “Swingin’ Party.”

Rise (W): The first song we wrote that Willie Phoenix thought was worth recording. We pressed this song up on a vinyl 45, and in 1991 it got pretty decent play on Midwestern college radio.

Wreck It (B-side): Captures the spirit of recording at The Loft (read: 30 beers each per day).

Finally Cracking (B-side): In various forms, this song has also been called “This Love Will Never Die” and “The Dog Will Never Die.” Joe is going to keep writing it until he nails it.

#14 Seeds

That’s the Girl I Want (W): At one point Joe wrote for this song the line: “A modern Mona Lisa for a Renaissance man like me.” Luckily his friend Randy talked him into scrapping it.

Didn’t Exactly Lie (SV98): Our attempt at writing a Neil Young *Ragged Glory* song (i.e. a good song to camp to). Recorded at Captured Live studios, downtown Durham, NC.

Oh Oh Oh (B-Side): Our set at Comfest 2000 made Hurricane Katrina look like a lawn sprinkler. Three inches of standing water and lightning crashing all around. Had a sax player sit in and the ink ran off his charts a la *The Jerk*. We used to tag “Mt Everest” (R.C. Mob) onto this one. “Curt Schieber gave me a ride home at the end of the night. I was soaked inside and out,” says Colin.

Barnburner (B-Side): First recorded at Route One Recording in Monticello, MS. It was on this trip that we first learned about Marah, who had also recorded there. If you don’t know Marah, stop reading this right now and go buy their seminal album *Kids in Philly*.

#15 Seeds

Freedom (W): Kosmos earned his producer’s fee (a twin-lobster tail dinner) on this one song alone.

Dance With You (CC): We tried to cut this for *Twister*. Even paid session keyboard player Jeff Bova something like \$10,000 to play a piano part that didn’t make the mix, on a song that didn’t make the record. \$10,000 is ten times more than any of us made from *Twister*.

Drop Tonight (B-side): Another of our attempts to sound like Cheap Trick. Trouble is neither Colin or Joe can sing like Robin Zander.

For You Girl (B-side): The highlight here is the Afghan Whigs-like guitar solo.

#16 Seeds

Run (CC): John Speck’s first favorite Watershed song.

Remember What You Said (B-side): Cool but we could never really nail it.

A.M. Boy (SLX): Colin recorded the guitar and vocals on an eight-track, then he left the tape for Joe, who finished off the production with Andy Harrison on ebow and Dave Masica on piano. (We should have had Masica play the piano part on “Dance With You.” Bet we could have got him for a six-pack.)

Play In Game

There is Always Someone Between Us (W): First song Colin ever played for Joe, way back in their Junior year of high school. “Written on the back of my paper route collection book about a girl named Kim O’Reilly,” says Colin. “That *someone* was a big hunky football player. Oh the pain,”

Missing Out (W): First Watershed song to ever be played on the radio. When Sue Wiggins spun it on Q-FM-96’s *Local Licks*, she introduced it by saying ominously, “We are now venturing into the realm of *alternative* music.” Colin remembers, “NOTHING is cooler than hearing your own song on the radio for the first time, even if it is the local show. We had a party at our apartment in Harrison House to celebrate.”