



Full Throttle

(StockXChange/Sony)

There are a lot of bands these days that try and chase the hard rock genre to the top, and while very few have achieved this, those who haven't have generally fallen to the wayside due to singing about the lifestyle and not living it. Thankfully though, Brisbane is able to claim a genuine article in The Driving Conditions. The four local lads have put together their debut long player of pure rock sounds with a gritty garage edge and home grown sweating, fast-tempo enough to charge everything from the local corner dive to the fringes of stadium rock.

Led by frontman Woody, each track is layered with attitude, good times, barraging solos, and just a bit of anarchy. While Woody's gravel soaked vocals add punch to the verses through 'Take Me There' and 'Rock N Roll', it's the rising Dr. Feelgood choruses that deliver the knockout blow. Although the touchstones of influence are obvious throughout the album (think the usual heavy culprits), the album is far from a tribute as everything is given a personal touch – cue the rockabilly swing sounds of 'Give It Up', a sleazy blues backdrop for 'Crazy Bitch' and a touch of classic metal for 'Black Hawk Down'. Nestled in between the chainsaw boomerang riffs is 'Be Mine', a tidy little ballad of lost love which adds another dimension to the band and grounds the album nicely, before charging back up to the key album track in the fist-pumping salute of 'My Bonnie' for what has to be considered a perfect rock song.

It's a solid effort that The Driving Conditions have put forward and a debut that the band (and Brisbane) can be proud of, one which has already kickstarted the anticipation about where the album will lead.

HHHH Mark Beresford