

IN THE FAST LANE AND ON STAGE

By Allen Kiger



Interview with Jesse James Dupree

I recently had the opportunity to interview Jesse James Dupree, front man for the band Jackyl. Jackyl will be performing at 8 Seconds Saloon Friday November 23rd.

As I spoke with Jesse on the phone I was soon to find out a lot about Jesse and the band. Jesse James Dupree is a busy man who wears many hats. He's a rocker, a southern man, and a smart businessman.

My first question for Jesse was what kind of music inspired him when he was growing up. He said that in 1971 his father had lost his job at Lockheed Aircraft. The family sold everything they had including Jesse's bicycle and the family moved to Gadsden, Alabama. His father bought a cafe but Jesse joked his dad didn't even know how to boil water. According to Jesse, the cafe had a jukebox that played all of the hit songs of that time. Jesse said he was drawn to the soulful, deep, gritty sounds of Joe Tex, Wilson Pickett, and James Brown.

Jesse with much enthusiasm explained how Jackyl got their first record contract. He said they just toured across the country and they were confident a record deal was inevitable. Jackyl's live shows were already legendary before they got their record contract in 1992. Jackyl's self-titled debut album was released under Geffen Records. That record went on to be double platinum. Jackyl has released many albums over their 26 year career. Jackyl has sold millions of albums including one other platinum album. They also have had ten top 40 hits with two in the top 10.

Jesse says the band now only does about a 100 shows a year. Early in Jackyl's career they broke and still hold the record in the Guinness Book of World Records for putting on 100 full length concerts in 50 days all across the country. This is pretty impressive considering this also included full stage setup. I asked Jesse if he thought the band might ever do that again. He said "No, I think I will leave that for the kids."

As I said earlier Jesse is a busy man. In addition to being lead singer, Jesse is also the manager of the band. He says he does his best to manage the band and that he is always wanting to do what is right for the band.

Jesse has his own brand of four different kinds of Jesse James American Outlaw Whiskey. He says when the band is on the road touring, he usually does a bottle signing at a liquor store a few hours before the show. Jesse is also part owner of the world's largest biker bar, the Full Throttle Saloon in Sturgis, South Dakota. Full Throttle is also the name of the hit reality tv series that had a successful run for five seasons on TruTV.

Jackyl is also generous when it comes to giving back. Jesse says the band gets multiple letters a day requesting donations. He says they can't respond to all but try their best by donating band items like T-shirts, CD's, or whatever it is they can do to help. He also says the band participates in the Wounded Warrior charity motorcycle ride for veterans.

My last question was when Jackyl was getting start and was hitting the road as an opening act, what band was their favorite to tour with. Jesse said it was a tough question as they have toured with great bands like Aerosmith, Ted Nugent, and ZZ Top. But he said if he had to pick it would be ZZ Top because Billy Gibbons is his favorite guitar player and he was just generous, often bringing the band members of Jackyl cool gifts.

Jesse said if you come to the show at 8 Seconds Saloon you'll definitely have a good time "unless you don't have a pulse." He said the band is high energy and that they have faithful fans who keep coming to the shows. He believes the show gets better year after year. Jesse said fans don't just show up to hear the band but to also participate and be a part of the show.

I would have agree with what Jesse said. This year will be my 9th time to see Jackyl.

So, Danville after the Christmas tree lighting on the courthouse square make your way up to 8 Seconds and see one of the most fun rock 'n' roll, high energy concerts of the year.

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