

JIM & JACK's - Feb. 18 Show: Hi "waxers"...it's great to see you all again after a 3 month hiatus. I will start this commentary much like I started my last commentary from last season. Once again, my sidekick "the Jimster" who is actually Jim Breeze and myself headed up to Jim & Jacks Saturday evening very early and arrived there around 6:00. Once again, we went early to make sure that our seating arrangements were taken care of as we had reservations for 46. Once again, I was worrying needlessly as all the great folks at our favorite night spot, like Ennie, Jim and of course our girl Margie took very good care of us and we couldn't have been happier! Getting great seats was not an easy thing to do.....as Jim & Jacks was completely sold out and had been for quite awhile. That was the largest crowd that I have ever seen at Jim & Jacks....very impressive! Ennie....thank you again for making us feel so comfortable at Jim and Jacks!

Now, this is where the similarities end. Last year as the Jimster and I drove up to J & J'sthere was a lot of excitement in the air and great anticipation on how things were going to unfold later in the evening. However, there was also some sadness as we knew that 5 of our very good and talented friends were leaving "Hot Wax" to strike out on their own and to form their own band....and that would be our last time to see them as members of "Hot Wax". This year ...things were going to be different because we were feeling no sadness....just excitement! We had not seen our boys in 3 long months and us "waxers" needed a "Hot Wax" fix real bad! As this great band opened their 23rd season...we "waxers" had a lot to look forward to. We couldn't wait to see the new performers and hear them perform all of the new songs. We were anxious to see the new skits and also to see the new uniforms. We had seen the uniforms on the web site and we really liked them...but we were hoping that the shirts would be tucked in. Bobby and the boys came up with a great idea....and that was to have the frontmen tuck their shirts in and have the back line leave their shirts out....and that works very well and is a great look!

I was excited to see the first show for other reasons also.... as I like to break my evening down into 3 parts....much like a good meal where you start with the appetizers, then the main meal and then dessert. The appetizer part of my evening is getting to the show real early and getting to mix and mingle with all of my great "waxer" buddies! It is also a great time to meet and make new "waxer" friends and that is what I did. I was fortunate enough to make a handful of new friends. While I have talked to both of these very lovely ladies, Tiffany from Indiana and Jean from MT. Healthy many times on the web site, I never had the good fortune to meet either one of them in person. I was not disappointed as both of them could not have been any nicer and it was my pleasure to meet both of these very nice ladies! I also got to meet Lenny from West Harrison and he was a great guy also....very warm and friendly! We had a very nice chat and Lenny is going to try his best to see if maybe he can stir up some corporate sponsorship for our boys and try to get them back in Harrison. I have been looking forward to meeting this next lady for quite some time...and most of you probably already know her or have at least seen her as she is a great "waxer"....and I got to meet her Saturday night. She is a very attractive senior citizen and her name is Mary. Unfortunately....I do not know her last name....but she always sits with Nancy Helwigs group....and just like "Ambassador Bob"....she always has her black "Hot Wax" T-shirt on. Anyway, getting to the show early allows me to meet all of my new friends....but it also is a great time to get to spend some time talking to some of the band members and their spouses. I really enjoyed the time I spent with Tito , Boomer, Kingsley and of course Bobby before the show. It was also nice to talk to my boys, Buddy & Buckeroo... wasn't it Roo....LOL? There's a small inside joke there somewhere...LOL! It's also always great to see my gang members like the Breezes, Montgomery's, McGees, Carol Woodward, Gwen Floyd and our recent honorary gang member Debbie Leppert! I also want to thank Lesli Fite, who is a new "waxer," for the phone call Sunday night and your creative show ideas ...and I will pass them along to Bobby. Nikki Ankiewicz...it was nice to see you and your Mom and Pop, and say Hello to Sonny for me when you see him. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention my very nice sister and brother-in-law Joan & Randall

Smith. Joanie, thanks for bringing your gang of newcomers with you. Well...I finished the appetizers ..so now it is time for the main meal.

The main meal part of my articles usually consists of describing the show. As many of you probably know by now "Hot Wax" brought in 6 very talented new band members this season and we were all anxious to see them perform in the new show. Donnie Diamond is one of the 6 new members and is an amazing talent....and potentially may be as good as any vocalist that has ever worn the "Hot Wax" uniform! He is simply outstanding....and because he is that talented, a very large portion of the show was built around Donnie...and "Hot Wax" could not wait to display his talents Saturday night. If you have heard any of his rehearsal tapes, then you know what I mean as his voice will just give you chills!

Unfortunately for both Donnie and "Hot Wax", Donnie developed a throat problem and spent the entire evening before the show in the hospital and was not released until 6:00 in the morning the day of the show. Donnie tried to go Saturday night and gave it his best ...but he simply just could not sing. Now, since everyone is so new and Donnie was such a big part of the show....this threw the whole show out of kilter. Now, because the original show was altered so much, improvising kind of took over. I'm not going to take too much time telling you about that show....because we will never see that show again. When Donnie is healthy....then we will see the show that was originally planned and I will go into much more detail about that show.

I can't begin to tell you what a tough spot our boys were in...when they found out that Donnie couldn't perform at the last moment. Try to imagine the Rolling Stones finding out that Mick Jagger couldn't perform hours before show time. Imagine if a group like the Bee Gees who had made a name for themselves based on their tight 3 part harmonies found out that one of the Bee Gees could not perform at the last minute! It would alter their show drastically and certainly mess up the harmonies....but they would go on and do the best they could and still put on an entertaining showJust like "Hot Wax" did. I'm sure Bobby and the veterans in the band were a little disappointed in their performance, but that is only because "Hot Wax" has set such a high standard of excellence that when they can't match that standard ...then they are upset....but that is what makes "Hot Wax"....Hot Wax". However, Hot Wax....even with the last minute loss of Donnie still put on a very entertaining show. I looked at it this way....with Donnie performing, I was getting a chocolate sundae...without Donnie, I still had the sundae but the key ingredient, the ice cream was missing....but you know what.....the chocolate, the whip cream, cherries and nuts were still pretty darn tasty.....don't you think? Wow, ole "Ambassador Bob" is turning into a philosopher. I think just being around Einstein is making me smarter....LOL! My group, my sister-in-laws group, Jim & Shirley's group, and Tiffany's group had about 18 first timers at the show....and 16 of them already said that they want reservations for either the Starlite show coming up soon or the next show at Jim & Jacks on April first... so that tells me that the show was still very entertaining and they all had fun! Now to those people....I say ...you haven't seen nothing yet.....wait till you see the real show with Donnie!

Now, I'm going to comment on the new Performers. Even though Donnie could barely sing...you could still hear enough every now and then to tease you and have you imagining how good he will be....when healthy! I think we could also see that he has the fun loving personality that "waxers" will love....much like we did Sonny. I think that the medal of bravery should go to Einstein...our other very talented new vocalist. I thought that Donnie's loss put Einstein in the toughest spot of all. This put a lot of focus on Einstein and he wasn't able to share that with his other rookie singing mate Donnie. Einstein had to perform in front of this huge throng of people and perform many of the toughest songs in the show! Einstein is very important on the back up vocals also and without his harmony mate, Donnie, on all of the high range stuff....it was very difficult....but

somehow Einstein pulled it off....so I would like to say "Way to goEinstein"!!!!!!!
Remember Einstein....it only gets easier from here!

Now , about Kingsley, he may have been the best kept secret in the band. Kingsley has a persona about him that just oozes confidence. Every time Kingsley stepped up to the front of the stage to perform....he just took command. I know a little about Kingsley...and the reason he exudes all of that confidence is because this very talented fellow was a front man for his own band for many years. Most of the mumbling at my table was how little they knew of Kingsley....but how much they were impressed with him. He is going to become a real force and also become a very popular member of this group...real soon!

Sticky, our new drummer, was outstanding also. I knew that even before Saturday night as Bobby had told me that on several occasions....and I had seen Sticky play before with Kingsley's band before they joined "Hot Wax". I kind of think of the drummer the way I do an umpire or a referee. The really good one are the ones that you really don't notice that much. I just want him to lay down a solid back beat and be the heartbeat of the band ..but I don't want him to be so noticeable that it distracts me from the rest of the band. I always liked the drummer in Bruce Springsteen's E-Street band because that is the way I felt about him. I listened carefully to Sticky play on the Elvis "Trilogy" number....not that it is that difficult to play for a good drummer....but there is some very familiar drum rolls in there with a marching beat sound and it is important to do that right for that song to work and Sticky nailed it! Great job Sticky!

Boomer Bailey....what can we say. My crowd not only loved your playingbut we absolutely love your fun loving Rock N' Roll attitude that you play with. We loved the way you moved while playing and your attitude is infectious. We fans enjoy the show so much more when it looks like the band is enjoying themselves. We watched you all night Boomer and you had us smiling all evening! By the way....we also loved your creativity with your little flag during the patriotic part of the show! This is off the subject a little but Gail and I got to talk to your lovely wife Angie for awhile before the show and we love her and her enthusiasm also!

Cadillac Charlie, last but certainly not least! It was just amazing to me to see how much you were able to add to the show in such a short time...just incredible! I watched you all evening and I just don't know how you played as much as you did and as well as you didsince you have only been here 2 weeks or so. I can only imagine how much better the band is going to be when you get some more time under your belt.....and we know how important a good keyboard player is to a band! Great, great job, Charlie!

How do I do this? I never think I can come up with enough to write about and then I wind up going way, way too long....forgive me. I was only going to cover the new guys....but I have to mention the great other veteran members of the band who made us "waxers" so happy by staying and being so loyal to Bobby and "Hot Wax". I know the new guys are getting all of the attention now...which is natural....but know this.... we really still love and appreciate all of you veterans!

I will try to shorten my comments here (insert laugh here)...I know ...I said try...LOL Doc & Tito, we just love how well you guys blend together. There is a chemistry between you two that we as fans can feel. You both did a great job the other night and Tito...we are really looking forward to your new solo number maybe later this season. We loved it when we heard it a couple of months ago! Doc....you are always terrific....and one of the most pleasant surprises of the entire evening was your rousing duet with your sidekick Tito on the "Love Potion # 9" song! I have never heard that song done that way and it was outstanding! Bobby told me that you arranged that whole set yourself....nicely done Doc!

Now onto Bruno: If Bobby is the heart of the band then Bruno has to be the glue. Bruno is such a steady performer. His performances just never vary as he turns in the same outstanding performance every show. Bruno just never seems to have an off night...and I mean that. You just know you can count on Bruno to do anything the band needs and to do it well. He has done just about everything for the band at one time or another including many, many behind the scenes things that a lot of people don't know about and I am just speculating here....but maybe "Hot Wax" would not exist without some of Bruno's behind the scenes help or at least exist in the first class way that we "waxers" have become accustomed too. Thanks so much Bruno for "Helping to keep the memories alive"....and we sincerely mean that!

Now we get to that Bobby fellow....and you know what....I'm not saying much about him because personally as one of the many abused and neglected husbands out there....frankly, we are just tired of hearing from our wives how charming and cute and sweet that ,ole "Blue Eyes", as our wives like to refer to him, is. Nah, I'm just joking. Heck, even us guys find him charming.....what can I say....he's just a likable fella! Seriously, I'm not going to say much about Bobby because as we all know, Bobby is always the "waxers" favorite....and probably always will be....and I guess us husbands are just going to have to accept that fact....LoL! We husbands get even every now and then as we sneak a peek at Tina....LOL! Keep up the good work Bobby...and we hope we get to see "Hot Wax" for many more years!

Ok, hang in there as I swear that I am getting close to closing and yeah, I know some of you will have to take a day off work to read this and some of you slow readers may have 2 birthdays before you get through itbut it's been 3 months since I got to do this....and I am enthusiastic....I just can't help it. I'll try to get shorter on the next commentary in 2 weeks after the Wilmington show. That should be a cool place to see a show....looks great on the web site. My gang will be there! Now, one last thing. I don't know how many "waxers" know longtime "waxer" Sandy McGee.....but she has the neatest jacket. Sandy has followed the band for years and years and she has a jacket that has the autographs of just about every "Hot Wax" member during that time frame....and I mean including all of the great ones like Eugene, Danny Fontaine, Tommy Casino, Pepe, Eddie, Major Flash, Johnny Rocket, Sonny and of course all of our great current guys like Doc Roc, Tito Barabella, Bruno Caliente and naturally Bobby Valentine. Sandy asked me the other night to sign her awesome jacket....and I think Sandy thought that I was joking about being so thrilled when she asked me to sign itbut Sandy I was not joking and I was genuinely thrilled! Sandy....thanks again as it truly was an honor for me to do that! Your the best!

Ok....I must be OFF (again... insert wise cracks here) but Keep on Rockin'

"Ambassador Bob"