



STILL SCREAMIN'

THE SCREAMING JETS' ever-so-rock & roll front man **DAVE GLEESON** might be partial to a little more country music these days, but he's in no danger of mellowing out. The seasoned vocalist tells **CHRIS DRIVER** that parents are still educating their kids in the right ways of rock – and he loves it.

Newcastle-reared rockers The Screaming Jets have certainly carved themselves a place as a band hell-bent on Aussie rock. Since screaming out of the gates in the early '90s, the band has steadily built a reputation for loud music and big nights via that timeless fun factory – the Aussie pub.

Fortunately, though Dave Gleeson & Co might now be edging toward the sunny side of forty, when the last of the Aussie pub rockers roll through town next week they'll be sporting a whole swag of new tracks, courtesy of their first new studio effort in almost a decade, and an appropriately keen Gleeson is anxious to play them live and loud from a boozier near you.

"At the end of the day, we're an Australian pub rock band," he emphatically declares. "That's where we cut our teeth and that is what's at the very heart of this band."

"I wear my Australianness with great pride," says Gleeson. "When I first started in a band in '85, it was the end of a golden era in Australian rock and I always felt like we should grab the baton and just go for it."

The new album, *Do Ya?*, recorded shortly before founding member Grant Walmsley's departure after nearly two decades with The Jets, comes after an extended hiatus that saw the band release just a handful of original tracks since Rugby League players last wore jumpers that fit.

"We'd covered the length and breadth of the country quite a few times and gone overseas a bit," explains the pensive 40-year-old.

"We thought we might be in danger of burning ourselves out so we took the opportunity to take ourselves off the road and really appreciate what we were doing," he says.

Having taken time, as Gleeson says, to reinvigorate themselves after the relentless touring that became the band's hallmark during the hit-laden '90s,



The Jets' latest effort wasn't without its hiccups while the boys weathered line-up woes and an industry with little confidence in tired performers.

But, true to their self-proclaimed Novocastrian spirit, and thanks to fully-fledged digital world of the contemporary recording studio (Gleeson admits "the Pro Tools revolution is in full swing these days"), band management took the new material abroad, where Canadian producer Brandon Friesen and New York-based engineer Leon Zervos were eager and waiting.

"The irony is that we had to send it over to America to get anyone in Australia interested in even taking a look at it," explains a mildly amused, though bemused Gleeson.

"The re-invigoration that comes from people on the other side of the world, who know very little about the band, wanting to get involved in the record ... it's inspiring."

Though, Gleeson admits, the guys have reached a point where the majority of autographs they sign are souvenirs for the average punters' parents, the Screaming Jets remain a force to be reckoned with as the flag-bearers of Australian pub rock and might even do a little educating of their own – just add beer.

"Every night I have to get up on stage and convince everyone that I'm not some boring old fart who's past his prime," jokes the jovial frontman.

"My mission statement is probably just to get out there and go harder every time!"

THE SCREAMING JETS play the Villa Moosa Hotel on the Sunshine Coast this Friday, Oct 24 and Hard Rock Cafe, Surfers Paradise Oct 25. DO YA? is out now through StockXChange /SonyBMG.