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The Jets are back, screaming more than ever. KANE YOUNG reports

SCREAMING Jets frontman Dave Gleeson reckons the band's new album *Do Ya* is the epitome of what Australian rock is all about.

"Loud guitars, big drums, anthemic choruses, harmonies," he said.

"A lot of American stuff gets watered down. It's music made for radio, whereas ours is music made for stereos, to turn it up as loud as you can.

"Last week I went around to a mate's place and cranked [*Do Ya*] up, and the louder it got, the better it sounded.

"So maybe that's part of the Australian rock ethos — the louder it is, the better it gets."

Do Ya is The Screaming Jets' first studio album in eight years, and marks a return to form for the band who had huge hits in the '90s with tracks like *Better*, *Shivers*, *Helping Hand* and *Sad Song*.

The Jets took an indefinite break after their last studio album *Scam* in 2000, before reforming to hit the road together again in 2004. A series of unforeseen events prevented the group — now featuring Gleeson (vocals), Izmet Osmanovich (guitar), Paul Woseen (bass), Mick Sayers (drums) and Scotty Kingman (guitar) — from releasing their new album until last month.

"We started back together in 2004 after our extended break, and we brought out an EP (*Heart Of The Matter*) just to let everyone know we were back," Gleeson said.

"We had every intention of bringing out a full album the next year, but events conspired against us.

"Because we self-financed it we had to get the money together, and once we went in to record it we realised that we didn't have enough money. We broke up with a management company along the way, and sacked a guitarist as well.

"It'd be nice if the world would stop while you record an album, but stuff continues on around you."

A major disruption was the departure from the band early last year of founding guitarist Grant Walmsley, Gleeson's long-time songwriting partner and the man behind their breakthrough hit *Better*.

"We got to the stage where Grant and Izzy, the two guitarists, were involved in guitar wars," Gleeson explained.

"They were like 'if you're on 11, I'm going to be on 12', which really takes away from the overall sound of the band.

"Any time over the years that a new member has come into the Jets, everyone picks up their game again. We're trying to impress [Scotty] and show him that he's joined an awesome band, and he's trying to impress us and show us that he belongs in an awesome band.



HEAVY: The Screaming Jets bring their trademark Aussie rock to Tasmania next weekend.

Rock legends return loud and proud

"Not that you want these things to happen, but generally after the negative side of the process goes away you're left with a real positive. And that's what we've got with Scotty, who's a fantastic musician and a real asset for the band."

While *Do Ya* may be the epitome of Aussie rock, the album does have some foreign influence, in the form of US producer Stevie Salas and Grammy-nominated Canadian engineer Brandon Frieson.

Gleeson said Salas asked to be involved — bringing Frieson along with him — after being "pretty blown away" by early recordings of the *Do Ya* tracks.

"Between them they've got a rap sheet in music around the world that reads like a who's

who, from Mick Jagger to Nickelback," he said.

"It was actually really gratifying for us to know that after we'd been turned down by all the record companies, that these big heavyweights wanted to be involved. It really re-inspired us, actually.

"We were more than keen to hear what their input would be, and when we heard it back it blew us away, it was really the icing on the cake."

Do Ya also features contributions from another heavy-hitter — former Guns 'N' Roses and current Velvet Revolver drummer Matt Sorum.

"We toured with Velvet Revolver about three years ago when they came out [to Australia], and ended up hanging out with Matt

on the last night of the tour, having a great old night," Gleeson said.

"When he heard the [new] songs he said 'Great! Who's this?' and when he found out it was The Screaming Jets he wanted to get involved.

"He did a bit of percussion on a few songs, played the tambourine and stuff like that. For him to want to be involved on any level was really gratifying for us."

Gleeson said having the names Sorum, Salas and Frieson attached to *Do Ya* could possibly help the band make inroads on the lucrative US market.

"There's no denying that when you've got heavyweight people [like them] involved, if nothing else people will have a listen to the record," he said.

"The great part about overseas is that there's no pre-conceived notions about who or what The Screaming Jets is.

"If we get in the ears of the right people over there then the sky's the limit. You just never know, we could be on *Letterman* next year.

"In Australia there's a very ageist approach to bands and musicians — once you reach the big 3-5 it's all over, mostly. But over there the guys who make the most money on tour aren't Good Charlotte, it's guys like Neil Young and bloody Air Supply."

The Screaming Jets play at Wrest Point from 8.30pm on November 21 and the Launceston Country Club on November 22. Tickets are \$35 (plus booking fee), phone 1300 795 257 for bookings.