



Woodstock Seven

Woodstock 7 is the “yacht club” version of music festivals. Reserved for those who are prepared to get dirty as well as silly, this is a festival that everyone should experience.

The festival took up four days from the 29th September to the 2nd October at the Hartebeespoort Dam resort in Johannesburg. Sponsored by names such as Musica, Tuks FM, Go and Blunt Magazine, this is a festival which forces the masses to submit to the talent that is clearly abundant in South Africa. The festival consisted of various food stalls and merchandise tents selling items one would not be able to find here in Natal. The only events apart from music were the skate park and the motocross events which went on throughout the day, gently pushing people into appreciating the sounds of South Africa.

Bands which stood out on the main stage were *Wickhead*, *Pestroy* and *16 Stitch*, who had just completed an overseas tour. These three bands were made for the large crowds. Their stage presence is overwhelming and worth every cent. On the second stage various bands caught my attention. *INeRSHa* consists of members from *El Camino* and *Skin Deep*. *Rhutz* is a band I am utterly impressed with and have the deepest respect for. *Neshamah*, *The Construct* and *Unwritten Friday* entertained the masses with their alternative sounds, unique style and aggressive nature. *Running with Scissors* and *Mel-Function* added a feminine touch to the male dominant scene and each of their performances was an experience never to be forgotten.

For those interested in percussion there was *1st Project*, a percussion-only band who ended the festival with an explosion in the variety of drumming which they presented. Besides the two primary stages, there was a hip-hop area in the Soviet tent as well as a dance area, offering a various selection of music genres for everyone’s satisfaction.

Straying away from the musical aspect of such an awesome festival, the atmosphere was incredibly laid back. Woodstock 7 was an opportunity for many to leave their burdens behind and simply relax and enjoy the four days of perfect sunshine.

The environment is completely different from that of Natal which was startling and yet exhilarating to experience. The people we camped with were friendly and open to foreign blood joining their ranks. We were not isolated as Pietermaritzburg people, but rather instantly welcomed with no sense of alienation whatsoever.

I left Woodstock 7 feeling refreshed and with a positive attitude towards my life, making it an experience I won’t forget anytime soon. This is an encouragement to all students who wish to experience something completely different and fresh from Pietermaritzburg life. Invest in a trip to Woodstock 8 next year, or you will be missing out on one of the most awesome events of the year.

Festivals such as Woodstock, give the youth of South Africa the privilege to experience the eruption of powerful talent that is emerging from our country, which effortlessly contends with the international music industry and its artists, if not exceeds it.