



Gene's Ween

Ween are the spazz duo that brought enjoyment and many smiles to our lives with their sick 'n' pervy songs of general, all round wackiness. Y'know, 'Push th' little Daisies', 'Skycruiser', 'Voodoo Lady', 'Mr Won't You Please Help My Pony', 'Spinal Meningitis' and all that. The duo consists of Gene and Dean — otherwise known as Aaron Freeman and Mickey Melchiondo.

Gene Ween is in Amsterdam, on tour with his other half. It's 11.30am, and he's been woken up out of "a really, really deep sleep". Qh-oh, I think. People who have been woken up, are not good on the phone. I am not good on the phone. We are not good on the phone.

Gene is scantily clad, that is to say he has no clothes on. I know this because someone knocks on the door and he goes: "Er, hang on, I gotta put some clothes on."

"Do you have visitors," I enquire.

"Ah no, I have coffee," he replies. I suspect he's having funny cigarettes as well, as I hear taking sounds, and he is in Amsterdam after all. And there passed the highlight of our conversation.

We touched briefly on parents — "they didn't like our music at first, but they've grown to know and love our craft" — his career — "I'd be cooking if I wasn't doing this" — the people in his band — "Andrew Weiss plays bass" (Weiss used to play bass for Hank Rollins and also produced Ween's most recent album *Chocolate and Cheese*) — and fishing, which he and Dean do quite often when they're at home. "Yeah I miss [fishing]," he qualifies, and he's "really looking forward to doing it down there." Fishing that is.

Ween bestow their wealth of profanities, jolly japes and music to skip to upon us at the Powerstation in Auckland, on April 23.

SHIRLEY CHARLES

TVNZ DROP AWARDS COVERAGE

After initially giving it the thumbs up, Television New Zealand have decided not to screen coverage of the 1995 New Zealand Music Awards.

Auckland company Maxwell Film & Television had entered into a verbal agreement with former TVNZ programming assistant Bettina Hollings to produce the Awards ceremony, that was to screen in primetime on TV2 on Saturday 15 April. Hollings has since left TVNZ to work for rival network TV3, and newly appointed TVNZ programme director Mike Lattin informed Maxwell the ceremony would not be broadcast.

Lattin, former Director of Programmes with Australia's Network 10, was unavailable for comment, but TVNZ Publicity Manager Roger Beaumont insists the Awards were never scheduled to appear.

"TVNZ hasn't actually dropped the Awards, funding for the Awards presentation was turned down by NZ On Air in Wellington, so we understood there would be no ceremony to televise."

Beaumont claims he wasn't aware the Recording Industry Association of New Zealand (RIANZ), the governing body of the Awards, had offered to cover the shortfall caused by the lack of NZ On Air funding, but this is denied by Karyn Hay of Maxwell and RIANZ President Terence O'Neill-Joyce.

Hay: "It could be possible within a bureaucracy to not know this information, however the truth is, TVNZ, or Bettina Hollings specifically, was aware of it and the programme was scheduled. As an officer of TVNZ, who was at that time responsible for making decisions, Bettina had scheduled the Music Awards and our feeling is that that obligation should have been honoured."

O'Neill-Joyce: "My suggestion is that he should have been aware. The communications all along have been about NZ On Air funding, about Karyn Hay and Annabel Carr from Maxwell putting a package together, about RIANZ funding part of it and about sponsorship from Coke. When NZ On Air funding didn't come through we undertook to meet the shortfall, that was generally known."

O'Neill-Joyce has been in contact with TVNZ several times since the decision not to screen the Awards was made, but remains unsatisfied with Lattin's explanation.

"No, personally I wasn't happy but there was very little I could do about it. I expressed that I was disappointed at the very late removal of the

Awards from screening. I just find it extraordinary that in 1995 television is not prepared to be supportive."

While O'Neill-Joyce is hoping TVNZ will devote more screentime to the 1996 New Zealand Music Awards, he's not holding his breath, and is prepared to explore other avenues.

"I don't think it would be intelligent of me to be optimistic with past history and present attitudes, but don't misunderstand that as being a lack of resolve to try and get in place something on a more permanent basis. There needs to be a commitment and I'm not going to sit back and wait. As soon as the Awards are over we'll make a concerted effort to get a commitment, and if it's not a commitment from them [TVNZ], we'll certainly attempt to get a commitment from somebody."

Segments of the Awards ceremony will now feature on the new music series *Music Nation* that will screen on TV2 at 11.30am on Sundays from April 16.

JOHN RUSSELL

FRENZY GETS NEW TIME SLOT

The New Zealand music show *Frenzy* is now screening on Thursday nights at 10.30pm.

The weekly half hour video show returned for a third season on TV3 on February 19, but was relegated to 'the graveyard shift', usually not screening until or after 11.30pm on Sundays, and on one occasion at 12.30am on Monday. During the last week of March the show was returned the day and time slot that it held when it first went to air in August 1993.

The existence of *Frenzy* as a forum to promote New Zealand music depends on regular funding from NZ On Air, who in turn, wish to see a satisfactory return for their input. To continue supporting *Frenzy*, NZ On Air must be secure in the knowledge the show has a high profile and a healthy number of viewers.

Ross Cunningham of *Frenzy* says although the earlier time slot is good, the shift to Thursdays is not entirely pleasing. He believes the show would secure more viewers if it screened at 10.30pm on Sundays.

"I was happy with the show screening on Sundays, but it would have been more appropriate if we were put on after the movie and before *Entertainment This Week*. I think content wise and stylistically we are completely opposed to *Entertainment This Week*, and we would have had a better follow-on audience after the movie. A broader section of people would have seen *Frenzy*, and I suspect people who have only a

passing interest in music could be pleasantly surprised."

Geoff Steven, Director of External Productions at TV3, is responsible for the positioning of *Frenzy* within the network's programming schedule.

"We have hours and hours of television programmes that are available for us to screen. What we've got to do is prioritise those programmes and find the most general slot that suits a programme. *Frenzy* is a programme that goes to a niche audience, an audience who basically find it and look it out because they are committed to New Zealand music. Because it's a niche audience it will be further back in the schedule."

Steven was recently interviewed in the *New Zealand Herald* for an article entitled 'NZ shows a priority, says TV3.' The report featured a list of local productions commissioned by TV3, they included *That Comedy Show*, *Skitz* and *Melody Rules*. *Frenzy* wasn't among the list, but Steven denies that it is of less importance to the network.

"I think for us to make and commission a half hour New Zealand music programme that is going into its third season, doesn't show that we don't give it priority. But it goes within the priority of all the other things we do. We're supporting the show, we're playing the show — what else can we do?"

In reality TV3 can do plenty. *Frenzy*, being entirely NZ On Air funded, is presented to the network as a completed package at absolutely no cost to them, but to date they have not screened a single promo for the show since it first went to air 20 months ago.

"We advertise our shows within the priority of what we as a commercial television network decide to go with. *Frenzy* isn't a major priority with us. It costs us no money, yes, but we're prepared to give it a half an hour of airtime. We've got a lot of other programmes we could put on during that half hour, but we have to prioritise our schedule and our promo schedule. We are committed to New Zealand music but it has to fit in with the total spectrum of our business. We do for it what we can."

In conclusion, Steven states that if NZ On Air continue to fund the production of *Frenzy* TV3 will continue to screen it. As stated earlier, continued funding depends on the degree of impact NZ On Air believes the show commands. Therefore *Frenzy* needs a fair time slot and the support of the network on which it screens. In comparison to the hours of air time devoted to sport, which is of no more importance than local music, that's not much to ask.

JOHN RUSSELL



FAITH NO MORE COMPETITION



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Entries must be received by Thurs, 21st April 1995.
Winners announced in the May issue of *Rip It Up*.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. The competition is open to all residents of New Zealand. 2. You may enter as often as you wish, however you must complete a separate entry form and obtain another proof of purchase sticker to attach. 3. The competition closes April 21st 1995. Winners will be notified immediately. 4. Entries must be sent to Festival Records, Faith No More Competition, PO Box 1170 Auckland. 5. The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 6. Winners must make their own arrangements to claim their prize from either Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch.