

A 'Sailing' debut from local boys Jolly Mon



SAILING

★★★

GROUP: Jolly Mon
LABEL: Elemental Records

By Dave Charbonneau
Oregon Daily Emerald

If you've lived in Eugene for any amount of time, you know Jolly Mon.

And if you know Jolly Mon, you were likely crushed when they packed it up and moved to Portland a year ago. Well, the local boys done good.

Jolly Mon's new CD *Sailing* is nine songs-worth of the sound and feel that has made them the band with the ability to lure you into a skull-cracking pit, while lighting up a bowl at the same time.

The CD, like Jolly Mon's live show, is loaded with ups and downs, further proving that Jolly Mon could be one of the most versatile bands in the oh-so-hip Northwest music scene.

The roller coaster ride begins on the opening track, "The Machine." After a somewhat loopy beginning, the song collects itself and fires into a powerful wall of noise that is enhanced by the surprisingly obnoxious-sounding vocals of Carey Rich. From there the song falls back into a dreamy, melodic break that doesn't sound one bit out of place.

Next comes "The Glass Headed Boy," which brings the listener back down to earth with its hypnotizing beat and mellow lyrics.

The third track is the popular "Fairy Tale." This song, along with "The Ode," became anthems to many of the pit-dwellers in Eugene and the songs shine as much on *Sailing* as they do live. Whether

it be Carey Rich's bass intro on "Fairy Tale" or Greg Eklund's drum intro on "The Ode," both songs build up tension in the opening seconds and explode once Carl Becker's guitar comes crashing in. (Sadly, Becker has since quit the band, but Jolly Mon has already picked up a 17-year-old replacement from Salem).

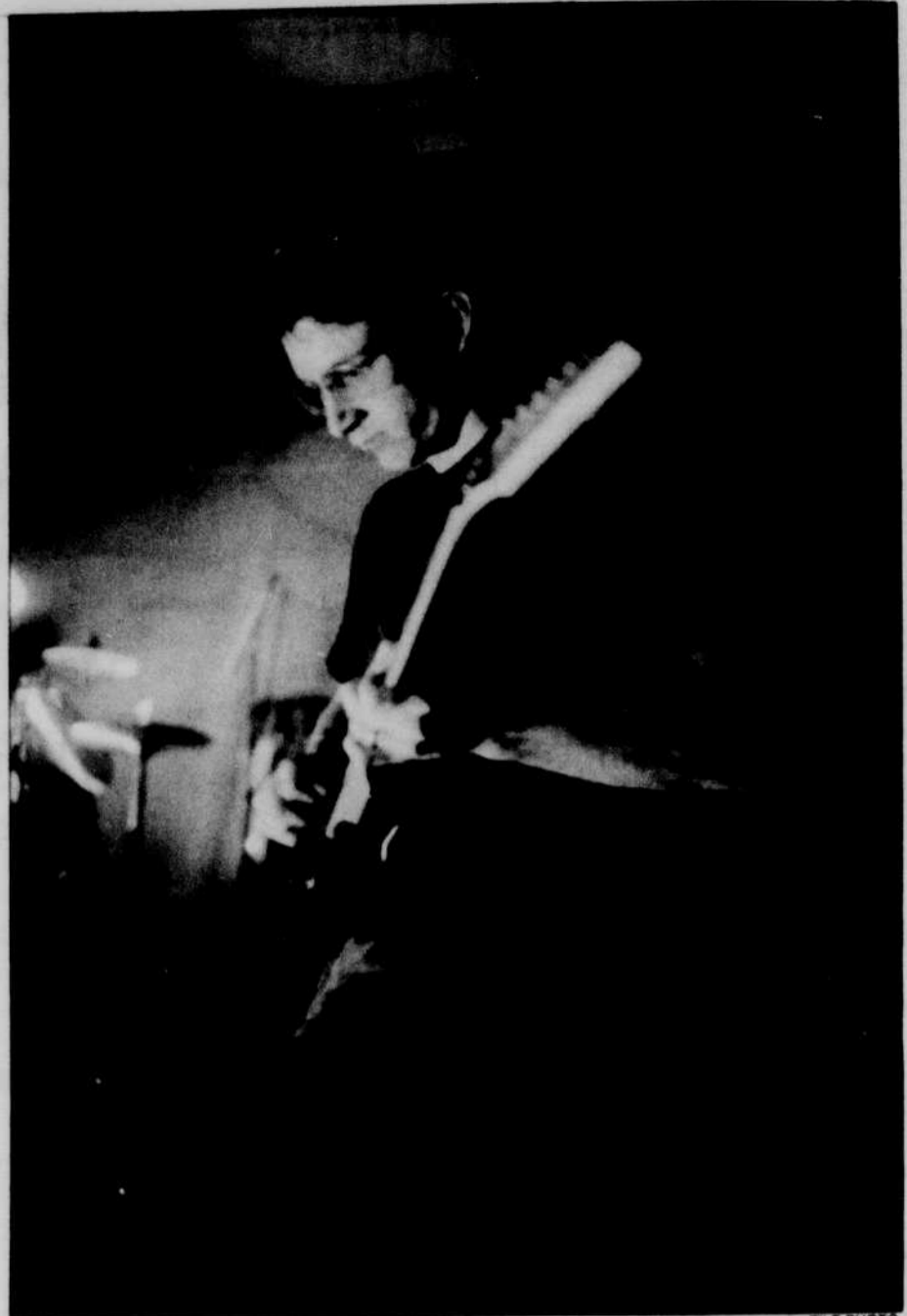
The short-but-sweet "Mother Nature" launches in and out in less than two minutes and is followed by another slow ride with "Alien." The song has no guitar, just bass, drums and wood blocks. Pretty cool.

One word of note is that *Sailing* will finally give Jolly Mon fans a chance to hear Rich's voice, and at times you can actually hear what he's saying. Rich's voice is not great, but by as low as they usually have the voice mike turned down live, you'd think he was terrible, which he is not. But Jolly Mon's vocals are at its best when Rich and Becker are harmonizing.

On "Mother Nature," "So Big" and "Tolusa," Rich and Becker prove that the vocal skills of Jolly Mon cannot be overlooked. On "So Big," the repeated "ahs ..." near the end of the song would get annoying if not for perfect sounding harmonies of Becker and Rich.

Sailing is the second album released by Elemental Records in Portland — the first was a compilation CD entitled *Northwest Ungrunge*, which Jolly Mon also appears on — and the people at Elemental did an amazing job of capturing Jolly Mon away from their familiar stomping grounds: the stage.

The only disappointments of the CD is that the band decided to cut out the reggae beginning of "Tolusa" and there are only nine songs included. Besides that, let's just be proud that we can all sit back and brag to our friends that "I saw them before they were big." It's something to be proud of.



Jolly Mon guitarist Karl Becker adds his talents to the band's sparkling debut album.

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