



Md. native Nils Lofgren returns home to Ram's Head Live!

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By *DIANE LEIGH DAVISON*,
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More renowned now as a member of Bruce Springsteen's infamous E Street Band than in his own right from a long career as a respected musician, Nils Lofgren continues to tour solo in support of his own albums during his extended breaks from rigorous E Street work.

Having turned pro at 17 back in 1968, Lofgren has toured and recorded regularly till the present with the likes of Grin, Neil Young (he recorded on *After the Gold Rush* at 17) and Ringo Starr, with the All Starr Band. Hey, it wasn't for nothing — the Rolling Stones originally looked to him to replace Mick Taylor, but he snubbed them for a solo career.

At his shows, though small they may be, you wouldn't know him for Bruce, and his fans will say, "who?" Because the Ram's Head Live! benefit concert on April 29 was packed well enough by his diehards — though older — with many who have attended his shows since the early days in the '70's.

Six out of the 12 tracks on his new CD *Sacred Weapon* were performed including "Fat Girls Dance," a funky upbeat tune; a moving "Pay Your Woman," and "Whiskey Holler," featuring a virtuoso turn on pedal steel guitar. He was diverse, changing handily from pedal to acoustic with "You" and to slide with "Cry Tough." He then went over to keyboards and back to electric.

It wasn't one of his pure acoustic shows, like often seen in the early 80's. Nils was supported by drums, bass and keyboard, but front and center the spotlight shined on his guitar prowess, and he preened for the spotlight licking the chords — literally — with his tongue, behind his back, high up in the air, and low to the ground.

The sound is classic rock — the old kind. It is what was called "AOR," or album oriented rock, but it still sounded fresh when he improvised and jammed. On many of the songs you



Maryland native Nils Lofgren brought his repertoire of classic rock hits when he played Rams Head Live! on April 29. Among the songs Lofgren, above right, played was the 'Black Books,' which was featured in an episode of The Sopranos television show.

Photo by Diane Leigh Davison

could close your eyes and swear it was Neil Young on stage. I guess he's picked that up from the years of work with him.

Set List:	
You	When performing one of his older songs, "Black Books," Nils introduced it as one his favorite songs. Incidentally, it was included in an episode of The Sopranos (the incestuousness of the industry apparent).
Fat Girls Dance	
Cry Tough	
You're Not There	The strongest crowd response came on his classics: "The Sun Hasn't Set On This Boy Yet" and "Shine Silently," picking up the enthusiasm and energy level that seemed to wane here and there throughout the long, two-hour set.
Black Books	
Comfort Your Love Brings	
No Mercy	Maryland-born and based, Lofgren graces our stages more often than others, and one day may be more fan-appreciated here than he presently is only critically acclaimed.
Whiskey Holler	
The Sun Hasn't Set On This Boy Yet	He will likely come back in the future to better and bigger attendance — maybe next time including you.
Man in the Moon	
Valentine (last minute change from Like Rain)	<i>Diane Leigh Davison is a Baltimore-based entertainment attorney, University of Baltimore School of Law adjunct professor teaching entertainment law, and founder of the MSBA Sports & Entertainment Law Committee. Ms. Davison welcomes comments at 410.486.0900 or via email. The opinions expressed here are her own.</i>
Mr. Hardcore	
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Girl in Motion	
I Came to Dance	
Encore:	
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