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New Found Glory
Where: House of Blues at Showboat, A.C.
When: Friday, Feb. 19, 7pm
How Much: \$19.99

NEW JERSEY IS A HOME AWAY from home for New Found Glory.

"We would drive up from high school [in 1997] on the weekend and maybe play for a couple hundred kids in South, Central or North Jersey and then drive right back home, maybe play a show in the South and then be back at home and go to school Monday morning," drummer Cyrus Bolooki tells *Atlantic City Weekly*.

"We never forgot how important New Jersey was for us. During the later years we loved playing the Surf and Skate fest in Asbury Park. Those were some of the most awesome dates we ever played. It was such a cool environment and the fans in New Jersey were just so into it. We never forgot that."

"There's always been fans for us in New Jersey, no matter what part of the state we played in."

New Found Glory is hardly averse to returning to its old stomping grounds or re-visiting older material. The band is touring behind the re-release of its re-mastered eponymous album. A decade has passed since the band's breakthrough blast of pop-punk dropped.

The energetic act will showcase the 2000 album (on Drive-Thru Records) from start to finish when it performs Friday, Feb. 19, at the House of Blues at

Showboat in Atlantic City.

"Our fans love that album so we're looking forward to playing it from top to bottom," Bolooki says while calling from his Miami home. "We want to call attention to [the re-release]. It's something our diehard fans shouldn't miss out on. We had fun adding the B-sides and demos."

Not to mention the playful 2002 DVD, *The Story So Far*, which was out of print. "Fans miss that DVD since it captures much of our early days," Bolooki says. "A lot of those early days were spent in New Jersey."

NFG has especially enjoyed playing Atlantic City. "I'm all for that date since the House of Blues in Atlantic City is a really nice room and we pack the place," Bolooki says. "It's like Las Vegas there and I'm over 21, so I can play some blackjack. I like to go out to the casinos and relax and just have a good time. How can you not have a good time in Atlantic City? We'll have fun there but there's also some business to tend to in Atlantic City."

Aside from delivering music from its eponymous disc, NFG will also render cuts from its latest album, *Not Without a Fight*, which is filled with passionate, clever pop-rock. The album was produced by the band's longtime pal, Mark Hoppus of Blink 182.

"The best thing about working with Mark was that the comfort level was at an

all-time high in the studio," Bolooki says. "There were no weird situations. It was all straightforward and we respect Mark for his musical work. We know him well since we toured with Blink 182 many years ago. It was a positive experience for everyone."

It's hard to believe that Bolooki is just 29 and that most of his bandmates haven't hit

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30 since the group formed 13 years ago.

"I think people are taken aback by that because it seems like we've been around forever and I guess we have been," Bolooki says. "The thing is that the band became pretty serious quickly and then we've just had such staying power."

Bolooki and his bandmates, vocalist Jordan Pundik, guitarists Chad Gilbert and Steve Klein and Ian Grushka (bass) hope to stay together for many more years.

"That's the plan," Bolooki says. "We feel like it's just begun even though we've been at this for awhile. We have some-

thing special as a band and the cool thing is that we all really like each other."

Apparently that isn't just lip service. The band has been intact since its high school days.

"It's cool when you look at it and it's all the same guys," Bolooki says. "Nobody has left, but why would you leave this? I can't imagine anything being more fun than being in New Found. It's awesome because I grew up with those guys. We're all still incredibly close."

Expect NFG to tour and record for many years.

"I can't imagine doing anything differently," Bolooki says. "We have the greatest job in the world. Why would we want to do anything else? The thing is how many kids know what they want to do since they were in high school and then go out and get that career going and actually sustain it? I don't think many do. We're just really fortunate guys, but we've made some of our luck by working really hard. I think that's what kids, who love music should know. This is hard work. You really have to put everything that you have in this. It doesn't stop once you actually get somewhere in this business. You have to work as hard as ever once you get an audience. We'll never stop working hard but that's not a big deal for us since we love what we do." ■

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