

January 19, 1996
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THE BATTALION

AGGIELIFE

Local Talent

HALF-LIFE focuses on impressing college crowds with unique attitude, musical style

By John LeBas
 THE BATTALION

Let's face it — some bands just don't like playing in College Station. But rock band HALF-LIFE loves performing here — if the audience is of a certain breed.

Bassist Scott Neeman, a junior mathematics major, said the band enjoys playing for an open-minded crowd.

"I like playing for the people who come to our shows to listen to music more than for those who just come to drink," he said.

Interested more in artistic expression than drunken revelry on or off stage, HALF-LIFE is generating local support with its musical approach.

With bands such as Pond, James, Ride and the Charlatans U.K. cited as major influences, HALF-LIFE weaves a "wash" of sound, guitarist and vocalist Scott Tomhave said.

Tomhave, a sophomore construction science major, teamed up last spring with Neeman and Rob Oldfather, a junior environmental design major. Drummer Adrian Crisantes, a sophomore horticulture major, joined the group in August.

Each member brings to the band various musical passions, including heavy rock, indie and British music. These influences shape a style characterized by heavy groove and a "dense" guitar sound.

"We're still evolving," Neeman said. "When I think back to what we played our first show, I can't believe it because we have changed so much. There's no telling where we're going to go. I wouldn't mind putting out an experimental noise album."

HALF-LIFE first performed in College Station at the beginning of last semester. Although the members have recovered from their initial anxiety, they said they are still working on "playing the crowd."

"The crowd here is really weird," Tomhave said. "They don't get into stuff as well as in places like Denton and Austin."

"Here, it's like if you're not country or



Dave House, THE BATTALION

HALF-LIFE

pop or a cover band, nobody really pays attention," he said. "But I don't want to sound down on the crowd, because the crowd is what makes a band."

Accepting the local crowd's tastes has helped solidify HALF-LIFE's desire to develop its own musical direction. While what this means musically is still undetermined, Neeman said the band will intensify its shows this semester.

With new equipment and plans to play in Austin and Denton, HALF-LIFE's primary goal is to find success outside of College Station.

Oldfather said they hope to develop and improve their songwriting tech-

niques as well. "I'd like to make a song where everything conveys the same feelings," Oldfather said.

The group is currently producing its first tape, scheduled for release this spring. The growing local following has been requesting a tape since the first show, Neeman said.

But HALF-LIFE isn't looking to get on a record label this semester. They are instead driven by the satisfaction of playing their music for as many people that will listen.

"Sometimes when you're playing a show, you get chills because you know that you're playing really awesome,"

Tomhave said.

The members said they also draw inspiration and support from their girlfriends, families and each other.

Musical integrity notwithstanding, Neeman said he aims to impress.

"Basically, I just want the crowd to walk away and say, 'Wow, they were better than most opening bands I've seen,'" he said.

If not, that's fine, too.

"We understand that not everyone's going to like us, and that's cool," he said. After all, Crisantes said, the important thing is to "have some fun, enjoy yourself and make music."

4D2 focuses on original live performances

By Tab Dougherty
 THE BATTALION

4D2 is not a dominoes game. No, 4D2 is the name of one of College Station's newest local bands.

Influences like Stevie Ray Vaughn, The Beatles and jazz and soul backgrounds have given the band a recipe for success, especially when it comes to live music.

Brandon Elam, the band's lead guitarist, said playing music inspires him.

"When you're making music and the crowd likes it . . . to me there is no other feeling," he said.

A lot of hard work goes into making 4D2 possible. Each member has devoted many years to learning his instrument.

In addition, all of the equip-

ment provided by the members, including the lights, microphones and amplifiers.

"We like it that way," Elam said. "We call all the shots."

Craig Hones, drummer of 4D2, said no two crowds are ever the same.

"It depends where we are," he said. The band members say they enjoy playing in a small college town.

"Each one of us adds his own flair to it."

Elam said one of the things that makes the band unique is they do not cover the "hard stuff that a lot of people do."

"We do a lot of songs with finesse like Dave Matthew's Band and Blues Traveller," Elam said.

As nice as it may seem, Pape said there are some weird situations that come with the territory, such as groping fans and failing equipment.

"Once a crowd gets into it, man, we really start rocking."

— Shane Everett
 lead singer of 4D2



Amy Browning, THE BATTALION

4D2

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