

10-4 Magazine

"FOR TODAY'S TRUCKER" AUGUST 2003

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ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

UNLIKELY DUO PAIR UP TO FORM SUCCESSFUL COMPANY

Only in Hollywood could a stunt man and a rock star get together and create a successful business in the trucking industry. Although this tale could make an interesting scenario for a movie on the big screen, it is a reality for Errol Sack and John Christ. These two young men recently formed a company called Hollywood Fires, which provides water trucks for wet-downs and fire protection on movie sets, and proudly features a flashy, flamed water truck as its flagship. Coming from very different backgrounds, this two-some has combined their diverse creative talents and experience to embark on a partnership that will undoubtedly go on to tackle even bigger and better projects.

After meeting two years ago on a movie set in Long Beach, California, Errol (27) and John (38) made a deal with each other: Errol would teach John how to drive a truck and John would teach Errol how to play guitar. Quickly becoming the best of friends, the two decided to partake in a business venture together – partly to make money and partly to see if the two could even work together. They resurrected a company that had been formed back in 1991 by Errol's brother called Hollywood Fires. Errol's brother wasn't doing very well in his business and was ready to move on, so, as a symbolic gesture, sold the name to Errol and John for one dollar. Besides providing water trucks for movie sets, Hollywood Fires, based in Agua Dulce, California, also provides studios with vehicles (and sometimes drivers) for use in movies and television. The company currently has five water trucks and seven drivers, but its flagship Pete seems to be getting all the attention.

Errol and John had the idea of building the best looking water truck around – one that would really turn heads – and that's what they



did. They bought an over-the-road Pete 379 tractor with a 3406B Cat engine (Errol would have nothing less) and then promptly removed the sleeper, stretched the frame five feet, and installed a 4,500 gallon water tank. They did all of the work (including the plumbing) themselves. They also added lots of chrome, stainless steel tool boxes, 7-inch stacks, LED lights (the cab lights are square), a drop visor, stainless steel full fenders and four chrome spray heads (one on each side, one in the front and one in the back). They also equipped the truck with a water cannon on top of the

tank that can shoot water up to 300 feet.

Inspiration for the truck's paint job came from John's custom motorcycle built by the now-famous Jesse James, owner of West Coast Choppers in Long Beach, California. Jesse is an old friend of John's and "Tang" was one of the first bikes he ever built (see centerfold). West Coast Choppers is known for building the hottest bikes (at a high price) and now Jesse is also known for his popular cable television show called "Monster Garage" on the Discovery Channel. Like the bike, the truck's three-stage paint job, done by Errol and John, started with a coat of White Pearl, then Tangelo Pearl was sprayed, then a few coats of clear were applied. This process gave the truck a deep, glistening shine that changes colors (slightly) in different lights. Metallic silver flames, outlined with purple pinstripes, added the final touch. Working only at night and on weekends, the entire building project took about four months. Both Errol and John are very happy with the finished product they created.

Born and raised in Agua Dulce, California, just north of Los Angeles, Errol (named after the legendary actor Errol Flynn) grew up around trucks and movie sets. By the age of 13 he was already driving trucks around the yard and doing some stunts. His father, George Sack (AKA The Jackknife King), is well-known around Hollywood for his truck-related stunts and his talent of building custom vehicles for movies. George gave us a tour of his yard – a graveyard where movie vehicles "rest" until they get called upon for another movie. He showed us the armored car he built for Men in Black; a white and orange tractor he recently used in Terminator 3; a small tank used in the movie Tank Girl; and another hour or so of stuff.

But if Errol's dad can be called the jackknife king, Errol could be called a jack-of-all-trades. Errol not only drives and operates the water trucks, he also acts in commercials, races sprint cars, has a pyrotechnic license (he can legally blow things up), he's a stunt man, he shoots amateur movies, and now, with help from John, he's becoming a guitar player. Errol has done commercials for Mt. Dew and Pizza Hut, appeared in music videos for Kid Rock and Tommy Lee (as a stunt double), and recently drove the truck that ran over actor Jim Carey in





his latest movie Bruce Almighty. Errol worked for three weeks on the movie's set in San Diego, but only about four seconds of his work actually appeared in the movie. Errol really wants to be an actor but he doesn't want to be broke while waiting for his big break, so he keeps himself busy with many other projects.

While Errol tends to juggle many things at once, John, on the other hand, has had a much more focused life. From early on, growing up in Baltimore, Maryland, he had an interest in music. Playing guitar seemed to be his "calling" and he took it seriously, practicing sometimes for twelve hours straight. One year shy of earning his BA in Jazz Composition at Towson State University in Maryland, John got the gig as lead guitarist for a punk-metal band named Samhain and moved to New Jersey. Shortly thereafter, in 1987, John met Glenn Danzig, the singer of a punk rock group called The Misfits. Glenn was forming a new band called Danzig and needed a guitar player – John got the job. Under the direction of a very influential producer named Rick Rubin, the band saw some success but never broke into the mainstream. Their music was dark, gothic-style, hard rock and was known for its aggressive guitars and driving beats. After eight years, five albums and many world tours (one with the heavy metal icons Metallica), tension between band-members had increased to the point that John and the band's bass player quit on the same day in 1995, shortly after the drummer had said his "good-bye" to the group. Glenn Danzig went on to rebuild the band and is still making music today, while John decided to take a much-deserved break.

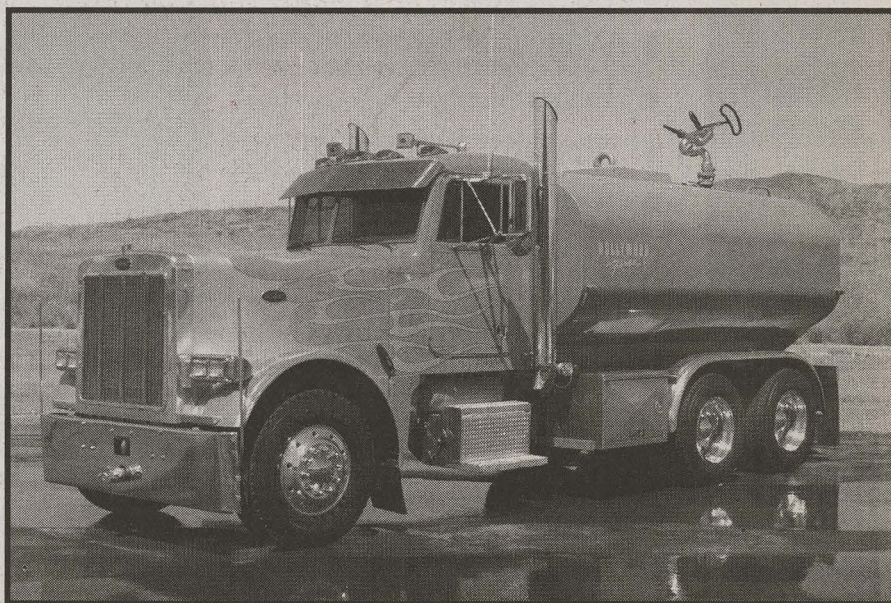
John went on to do some writing for music magazines and got to interview some of the biggest names in hard rock music – like Ozzy Osbourne and Ted Nugent. He also recorded a few solo records and even spent a little time as the house guitarist for Australia's number one rated TV variety show "Hey Hey It's Saturday" where John backed up high-powered talent such as Tom Jones and Lou Rawls, to name a few. More recently, he started his own small label and

produced his latest solo album entitled "Flesh Caffeine" almost entirely on his own. His passion is still music, but he is enjoying his anonymity behind the wheel of a water truck. After meeting Errol, he wanted to learn something new and different and driving a truck seemed to fit that bill. His reputation from Danzig and his taste in music may give people the impression that he is some kind of guitar-screaming madman (and maybe he is when he plays), but that's not the guy we met. We found John to be calm and insightful, caring and compassionate, with a surprising gentleness about him (sorry to burst the rock 'n' roll bubble, John).

Together, John and Errol make a pretty enthusiastic and creative team. Their latest goal is to buy another water truck and then paint the entire fleet to match the orange one. But they have a lot of other "ideas" floating around in their heads and, knowing these guys, they will

eventually develop some of those ideas into actual companies and ventures. Both Errol and John are proud of the fact that they started something and finished it – they had an idea (to build the truck) and did it. So many people out there have great ideas, but they never do anything about them. It takes guts and determination, but if you stay focused and positive, your dreams can be realized. But, as Errol put it, "You have to swim out to the boat, it won't come to you."

Where there's smoke, there's fire – and where there's fire, hopefully you'll find a Hollywood Fires water truck – at least if you happen to be filming a movie. In real life, neither of these guys have any formal fire-fighting training, but that doesn't stop them. Only in Hollywood can you make fake fire and have fake fireman put it out (and pay big bucks for the service). One thing's for sure, there's nothing fake about Errol Sack, John Christ or their head-turning Peterbilt. Although their life may not be riveting enough to be made into a Hollywood blockbuster yet, give them some time – they are both still pretty young and you just never know what might happen next.



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August 2003 Cover Feature:

Errol Sack and John Christ built this flashy Pete water truck for Hollywood Fires, their movie studio rentals company based in Agua Dulce, California. John's custom Harley "Tang" provided the two young men with the inspiration for their truck's color scheme.