

Hit the Lights begins first headlining tour

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THE TRIANGLE

"What a day, what a day," sighs Omar Zehery in his band's dressing room. Hit the Lights has just completed one of the most chaotic days that they've experienced on the road. "We got to the show like six hours later than we should have been here," says the guitarist. Nevertheless, the band certainly pulled off a show that rocked as hard as their day was.

"Tonight was a good show. It was a good crowd. I love this place," proclaims Omar from behind his black-rimmed glasses. "We always have really good times here in Philly," he added. "I always know it's going to be a good show. I look forward to coming out and being here. The kids here are super rad." Hit the Lights is in the midst of their first headlining US tour, the Let It Ride Tour, with

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Whether they're early or terribly late, guitarist Omar Zehery and bassist Dave Bermosk still manage to tear it up with an unparalleled energy.

Pop-punk band Let's it Ride on tour

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Valencia, All Time Low, and The Secret Handshake.

The band's date tonight in Philadelphia was something a little different. HTL was co-headlining the show with Valencia, Philadelphia natives. Nevertheless, on this tour, the band has spent most of their nights under the spotlight, playing in the headlining slot. "Headlining is a lot more rewarding for me," says vocalist Colin Ross as he leans back on his couch. "A lot of times when you're opening, or if you're support, you never know who people are there for. The fans don't always seem to give it everything they have. They kind of save their energy for the headlining band." This time around, Hit the Lights are getting to experience tour from a different perspective. "This way you kind of see, after touring and touring, it kind of pays

off," says Ross. "So far I've been surprised at the turn out so far. It's definitely been rewarding." "Yeah, dude, it's a lot different [from opening]," Zehery added. "Last year we played almost 300 shows. We'd always be opening. We'd go out there and play 25-30 minute long sets...kind of get in, get out. The main difference is the time pretty much. Now we have to kind of pace ourselves and not completely blow all our energy within the first half an hour. You have to stretch it out to like an hour."

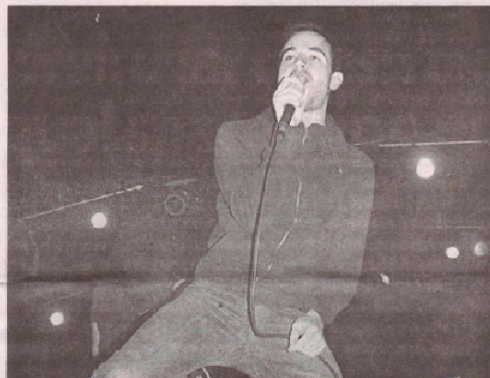
As the headliners, the band must rework their set, which may include breaking out songs that are a challenge to work out on stage. With only one full-length album under their belt the five piece, pop-punk outfit may have a difficult time filling this extra time.

On this tour, the band has decided to expose their fans to an obscure song, a hidden track on their album, This

is a Stick Up, Don't Make it a Murder. "We knew we wanted to play it on this tour," Zehery said.

"We haven't really had the chance to play it out. Being the opening act and support the last year, we've played the same like seven songs over and over again. It's cool to play something different," Zehery stated, "especially since it's just me and Colin that go out there and play it. It's something different." This gives the band an opportunity to take a break from their long, energetic set, and give their fans a breather.

As of late, the soft-spoken, five-piece was in the studio with producer Rob Freeman, formerly of the band Hidden in Plain View, working on new material to sufficiently fill their time on stage. The band churned out a three-song demo with Freeman. "They turned out really, really cool," says Zehery. "Hopefully we're going to put those up online. We've been playing so much over the last year and a half that we haven't had much time to record." In light of their intense touring schedule, the guitarist said, "we're going to take this summer off to write and record a new record. Hopefully it'll be out like late-fall, early-winter, something like that." This will be a follow up album to last year's Triple Crown/East West debut. However, until the release of their new album, Hit the Lights plans to enjoy the rest of the Let it Ride Tour. Check out Hit the Lights' current release This is a Stick Up, Don't Make it a Murder on Triple Crown Records.



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Vocalist Colin Ross enjoys the limelight of being the headlining band on the Hit the Lights tour with Valencia.