

Dropkick Murphys give Avalon an Irish wake

By Marc Hirsh

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If Avalon must close its doors to make way for an expanded, if not improved, Lansdowne Street entertainment complex

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— and it apparently must — it would be harder to think of a more fitting band to send it off than the Dropkick Murphys. They're local and fully capable of drawing a crowd large enough to fill the room, and as evidenced by their legendary St. Patrick's Day concerts, they know how to come up aces in the face of heightened expectations. And from what went down at last night's show, perhaps the management thought they might be able to save some money on the wrecking crew.

With the club speakers wrapped in yellow "Caution" tape, the Murphys' traditional opening tape of the Chieftains and Sinead O'Connor performing "The Foggy Veil" was accompanied by a film of demolition footage. As soon as that was over, the Murphys came blasting onto the stage with the breakneck "Famous For Nothing," and they seemed never to let up. It was a wonder that "Citizen CIA" and "Vices and Virtues" didn't take the walls down on their own, since so much of impact of the band's Celtic punk comes from its purely visceral punch.

The Murphys weren't a one-band wrecking crew, though. Everybody Out kicked things off with spirited, roaring punk that fired up the crowd. Darkbuster followed, adding flashes of hardcore and ska, as well as a sardonic edge that gave them a slightly sharper bite. But the show was most definitely an Irish wake, and the Murphys were in top form. The performance wasn't a big production like their St. Patrick's Day shows, but it didn't need to be. The band operating on nothing more than its own power was plenty.

And it was power that the band primarily focused on, though the lost-loved-ones dedication "Forever" and an impromptu duet between singer Al Barr and guitarist Marc Orrell on Johnny Thunders' "You Can't Put Your Arms around aMemory" (necessitated by singer/bassist Ken Casey's temporarily uncooperative amplifier) provided some plaintiveness. Another dedication, to the fondly remem-

bered Greg "Chickenman" Riley, led to the furious explosion of "Your Spirit's Alive."

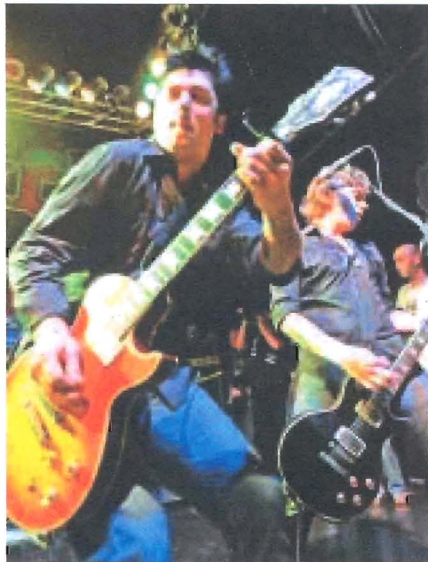
So it went with the Murphys' mourning of a club they had played 30 times by Casey's count, as the sentiment was less concerned with tearful remembrances than with raucous celebration. Throngs of women flooded the stage singing "Kiss Me, I'm [Bad Word For Drunk]"; the "Let's go, Murphys" chant filled the air; and Orrell smashed his guitar at the end of "Dirty Water." The show-closing "Pipebomb on Lansdowne" was punctuated by confetti falling from the ceiling and Frank Sinatra's "My Way" ushering people home.

And with that, Avalon closed its doors.

Dropkick Murphys, Darkbuster,

Everybody Out

At: Avalon, last night



ARAM BOGHOSIAN/FOR THE GLOBE

The Dropkick Murphys closed Avalon last night with a rousing set.