

ARTSETC

Profits sell out show at Luther's



by **Laura Stanelle**

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The line snaked around Luther's Blues down University Avenue, keeping in order the throng of college students clad in black Northface jackets and Abercrombie knit hats ready for a high-energy, massively entertaining show to be put on by the Madison-based band, The Profits.

Gaining recognition throughout the Midwest, the Profits, who channel the musical attributes of artists like Jack Johnson, Coldplay and Dispatch, delivered a performance worthy of accolades as they played for over 600 people crammed into the popular Madison venue January 28th. Despite the cramped conditions, enthusiasm was high as fans prepared for a night of silky guitars, impressive vocals, candid lyrics and interaction between band and audience.

The nearly three-hour show was opened by Atlanta native Pete Schmidt, a John Mayer-esque singer/songwriter. Described by Smother.net as having "the WB sound," Schmidt started the evening with songs from his full-length debut, *No Safe Bet*. Reception to Schmidt was slightly less than full strength, however, as the audience was decidedly present for the headlining act and that act alone. To refer to The Profits's most well-known song, the crowd was there for "Sex at Six" and would not be easily distracted by a guy with a guitar who looked eerily like an older version of Corey Matthews from the once popular television show, "Boy Meets World." After closing with a mellow song written about his younger brother, Schmidt thanked the Madison audience and exited the stage. Then the real fun began.

The entrance of the much-anticipated headlining act was staggered with each member of the band appearing on stage one after the other. Skirt-wearing bassist Scott Lamps entered first, creating a strong foundation upon which drummer Benjamin Schaefer elaborated. Guitarist Mike Drohomyreky appeared next, followed by shaggy haired "heartthrob" JP Roney. The band dove into what has become a sort of college anthem, "Sex at Six," with the audience responding to Roney's "repeat after me" request. "I like sex at six in the morning. Sex is free at six in the morning. With Mandy Moore on top at six in the morning," sang Roney, prompting the crowd to sing along and making more than a few female audience members wish they were the object of the lead singer's lust, instead of the short-haired brunette singer/actress.

Taking advantage of the energy sparked by the opening selection, the band continued to rock with songs from their first album *The Sign of the Dollar* as well as newer songs only available on the band's website. Midway through the set, the musicians exited, reappearing with a yellow plaid couch placed near the front of the stage. The four then proceeded to sit on the piece of furniture, which looked as though it belonged in one of their grandmother's basements, and slowed the concert's pace down with the soft, sweet ballads "Morning Eyes" and "Atlantic." Seemingly close enough to touch, the band capitalized on the aspect that makes them most appealing — their accessibility to listeners. The one hour and 45 minute set ended on a high note, with Roney, Drohomyreky and Lamps performing an a cappella cover of the Cox Family's song "I Am Weary (Let Me Rest)". Their tight harmonies served as further evidence of the band's impressive musicianship and creativity. Further pleasing audience members, the band performed an encore. With Roney at the piano and Schaefer at an actual drum set instead of his usual bongos, The Profits delighted those at Luther's with an energetic cover of Coldplay's "Clocks." The crowd's excitement was evident as the band sang and played their final notes, thanked the audience and left the stage. The lengthy set was the perfect mix of fast and slow, rowdiness and professionalism, and musician-audience interaction.

Next up for The Profits is the Madison Music Awards where the band is nominated for Best Acoustic Band, Best Acoustic Album and Artist of the Year. If the sold-out Luther's Blues show is any indication of the huge amount of potential and popularity this band possesses, current fans will for sure be able to say "I knew them when..." as the band's star rises higher in the musical galaxy.