

# NICKELBACK

## *Dark Horse*

**Chad Kroeger – Vocals, Guitar**  
**Mike Kroeger – Bass**  
**Ryan Peake – Guitar**  
**Daniel Adair – Drums**

"We never take anything for granted," says **Nickelback's Chad Kroeger**. But this is one band that certainly could.

Since it rolled out of Alberta some 13 years ago, Nickelback has been hit-making, multi-platinum concern whose last album, 2005's *All The Right Reasons* is one of the most successful of the century, and has stoked great expectations for the quartet's sixth album, *Dark Horse*. A lesser group might rest on its proverbial laurels and assume the world is anxiously waiting for it, but Nickelback -- Kroeger, his brother and bassist **Mike Kroeger**, guitarist **Ryan Peake** and drummer **Daniel Adair** -- still feel like a new album is a fresh opportunity to prove themselves.

"I honestly think that with every song you release you have to keep winning your own fans over again," Chad Kroeger explains. "I want every single song to be amazing. That's what I want to hear, so that's what we have to try to provide to our fans."

His brother, bassist Mike Kroeger, adds that, "Any artist that is even surviving right now is a dark horse because things change pretty fast. You're a superstar one day and wake up the next day and you're anonymous. To be successful in any way is beating the odds right now."

Nickelback is well ahead of those odds, and it continues to pulverize them with *Dark Horse*, an 11-track survey of everything the group has done so well to this point -- fist-pumping anthems, grinding rockers, soaring power ballads, grinning sexual innuendo, heart-wringing romanticism, choruses that stick in your ears after the first listen and hooks so big they practically boomerang through the songs.

And while Mike Kroeger contends that *Dark Horse* "isn't affecting some huge departure from our past efforts," it does find the band working in some fresh -- and rarefied -- rock 'n' roll territory. It marks the first time Nickelback has worked with an outside producer since *Silver Side Up* in 2001, but considering that producer is **Robert John "Mutt" Lange**, he of AC/DC "Back in Black," Def Leppard "Pyromania" and "Hysteria" and Foreigner "4" fame, it's easy to understand why the group was willing to open up the inner sanctum again.

"He was actually somebody we were interested in working with for a long time," notes Peake. "We had to think a lot about relinquishing a bit of that control to someone else. But we just said, 'Yeah, let's give it a shot.' If there's anybody we were gonna try to work with, it would be very cool to work with somebody like (Lange), who's done some pretty fantastic work in the past.

Nickelback's track record certainly speaks to the group's stature. The group has sold 27 million albums worldwide and, since the 2001 breakthrough of "How You Remind Me," has sent 13 singles rocketing onto the various Billboard charts, expanding its solid foothold in rock markets to the Top 40 world.

*All The Right Reasons* insured Nickelback an indelible place in rock history, however. It spent a staggering 112 consecutive weeks in the Top 30 of the Billboard Top 200, was certified 8-times platinum in the U.S. and has sold more than 11 million copies worldwide, topping charts in four countries. *All The Right Reasons* spun off seven multi-format singles and made Nickelback the first band in Nielsen BDS history to send five singles onto the CHR charts. All five of the album's videos hit No. 1 on VH1's playlist, while Nickelback has sold more than 9 million single digital downloads and more than 5 million ringtones of the album's songs. *All The Right Reasons* won the American Music Award for Favorite Pop/Rock Album and helped the quartet to three Billboard Music Awards in 2006 and a pair of Juno Awards in Canada. And on the road, Nickelback has sold more than 1.65 million concert tickets over the course of the album cycle.

"It wasn't like we all sat back and said, 'Oh my God, this is gonna be the biggest record of our lives,' " Chad Kroeger

recalls. "It was us sitting around saying, 'we're really proud of this record, and I hope that everyone else is gonna love it half as much as we do.' And they did."

*All The Right Reasons* did, however, set a high bar for *Dark Horse*, but the members of Nickelback say they felt a different kind of pressure when they sat down with Lange to start working on the new album.

"That pressure has always been there; it's self-imposed pressure from before we started selling records," explains Mike Kroeger. "It's self-imposed pressure to do your best work."

Peake adds that, "I've been asked quite a bit about the pressure of a new album, and I don't buy into it. I didn't buy into it after (2001's six-times platinum) *Silver Side Up*. I didn't buy into it after (2003's three-times platinum) *Long Road* and I'm not gonna buy into it again. We just have to go in, do the best to our possible abilities and leave it up to the people."

Work on *Dark Horse* began in March, after Nickelback made its long-awaited contact with Lange. The band traveled to the producer's home base in Switzerland to begin going over song ideas. The tunes came from a variety of directions; for instance the dynamically swelling "**If Today Was Your Last Day**," had been around for awhile but hadn't been finished. "Chad brought it out of the vault and the creative juices started to flow," Mike Kroeger notes. Then there's "**This Afternoon**," whose acoustic, rootsy flavor, along with some downright country-style guitar licks represent a refreshing departure from the Nickelback norm. "It's a big-time part of our background," Mike Kroeger notes, "that whole laid-back, barroom kind of feel. Where we grew up everybody listened to country. I would say that song's our 'Friends In Low Places,' y'know?"

*Dark Horse's* other songs -- recorded during the summer at Chad Kroeger's converted barn studio in Vancouver -- traverse a wide terrain, from the arcing melodic ebb and flow of the first single, "**Gotta Be Somebody**" and the metallic groove of "**Burn It To The Ground**" to the heavy riffery of "**Something In Your Mouth**" and "**The Next Go Round**" and the inspiring balladry of "**You'll Never Be Alone**" and "**I'd Come For You**." "We're a rock band," Peake says. "We like to get heavy and we do like to write stuff that's melodic and maybe a little more mellow. It's nice to have both, and it's nice to have both accepted by the fans. There are some bands that can only put out one kind of thing, but our fans are pretty open so we don't get stuck in one place."

Mike Kroeger adds that, "I think people expect that level of effort or level of 'quality' from us. We don't pen ourselves into one identity; we're just trying out new things and doing some things we haven't done before...and making sure that it's as good as it can be and the cleanest and most refined version of what we do."

That's what comes honestly for Nickelback, And it seems to work time and again.

"We're kind of a people's band," Peake explains, "so we'll leave it up to them whether they like it or not. We're one of those bands people come back to, which is very cool."

Even when it's applied to a self-declared, multi-platinum dark horse.