

# KICKING GOALS

Attempting to go beer for beer with **DAN SULTAN**, **BRYGET CHRISFIELD** holds it together long enough to find out the singer/guitarist is a perfectionist, "can be prone to having a bit too much fun" and dotes on Boof A Dingus (his cat). Pic by Kane Hibberd.



Once a wrap is called on the *Inpress* Community Cup cover shoot, it's time to hit a bar. The gentleman who delivered the footy kits for our shoot is heading in to the centre of town and graciously agrees to drive us closer to our destination. His vehicle resembles a dogcatcher van and Melbourne singer/songwriter Dan Sultan volunteers to ride in the back. "I can't have you going in there," he protests, with a husky, contagious laugh. Wandering down Little Bourke Street, Sultan points out a photo of a fish dish that's pictured on the menu in a restaurant window and strongly recommends it. When we turn the corner, a group assembled out the front of a dumpling house ask whether we can take their picture. Sultan happily captures their Kodak moment and goes unrecognised. We wander up the lane and take a load off at an outdoor container bar, longnecks in hand.

Sultan wears a charcoal, long-sleeved top, jeans and Chuck Taylors and places his new footy kit, wallet, mobile phone with cracked screen and packet of Peter Stuyvesents down beside him. On whether the recent price hike on cigarettes has been an incentive to kick

the habit, Sultan chuckles, "Almost," and sparks one up. Having recently caught Sultan's blistering set at Cherry Rock, two go-go dancers were noted among the already substantial amount of players on stage. "My girlfriend was the one to my right," he says proudly. "She got up [onstage] with a couple of her girlfriends a few years ago at Meredith for Even and I thought, 'Yep, I want her to do that.'" Reflecting on his performance that day, Sultan displays trademark humility. "I had a good time," he acknowledges, "It's a good little festival. It's a bit of an honour [to play Cherry Rock] and I just wanted to make sure I didn't fuck it up, you know. I just wanted to make sure I did the best I could."

When Sultan was four, "a friend of the family" gave him his first guitar. "It was cool," Sultan remembers. "No amplifier, but it was an electric guitar." These days, Sultan works closely with longtime collaborator/guitarist Scott Wilson and the pair initially met in a pub in Williamstown. "For the first two or three years, we just sat in his lounge room and listened to records and got to know each other and had a good laugh." The pair's

onstage banter is evidence of their close bond. Sultan has also known his trombonist Steve Veale (who fronts The Hello Morning) "since [they] were teenagers".

If you chat to punters at Sultan's shows, it quickly becomes apparent that they're loyal supporters. Whether you've discovered Sultan via his multiple performances on *Rockwiz*, the Kev Karmody tribute album (Sultan and Wilson performed their own version of *This Land Is Mine*) or last year's EG Awards (Sultan performed his own song *Old Fitzroy* plus *Gimme Shelter* by The Stones), once you've experienced Dan Sultan live, you need another fix. "We've got a lot of support now from the people who have enjoyed our shows and have been really loyal, which is really, really good," Sultan acknowledges. "At the end of the day, mate, I'm fuckin' pretty lucky. People like yourself and everyone else tell me they're interested in promoting my shit in their papers or on their radio shows. No one could give a shit, that's what I mean - it's a possibility. So it's good that some people like it. It's not lost on me."

And then there was the Paul Kelly tribute shows at the Forum (Sultan performed *Give Into My Love*). "Oh, that was cool," Sultan extols. "It was such an honour to be part of. It was pretty humbling. You can go one of two ways with something like that. You can either see it as, 'Oh, that's it,' and you can start to relax and get a bit ahead of yourself, or you can work really hard."

Based on Dan Sultan's career trajectory and the fact that he and his band continue to sell out larger capacity venues with each tour, he must have chosen the latter. With two album releases under his belt - *Homemade Biscuits* (2006) and *Get Out While You Can* (2009) - surely there's been major label interest? "There's always a few [offers] kicking around," Sultan asserts, "and we're not exactly fiercely independent or anti record companies or anything like that. No one's ever offered us a deal or a proposal that we like, that we wanna take." But surely if you are able to succeed independently, that's better, right? "Oh yeah," he agrees with that laugh, "we're making all the money and we own everything and we're allowed to do what we want, so it's good. That's the biggest thing for me: I just like to do whatever I want."

"For me, I never decided to do this; it's just what I am and it's what I've always been. It's not even a personal belief

in some ways like that; it's just what is. It's like pointing at the scoreboard: I don't believe that we won, I'm just pointing at the scoreboard and we won... It comes back to doing whatever I want - and I don't want that to sound like [employs a belligerent tone], 'I do what I want,' you know? I do do what I want and I've got a great band and we're great players and have great people working for us. But if I don't wanna do it, I won't do it. And then sometimes if I actually don't wanna do it, I just have to - you just keep doing it and just be as good as you can be. And, look, I'm not [good] all the time, I drop the ball."

Sultan specifies a recent gig at the Corner that fell at the end of an intense week touring nationally to promote *Bran Nue Dae*, a feature film he appears in alongside Jessica Mauboy and Geoffrey Rush. "I wasn't 100%," he remembers. "I was nearly passing out. I was just unfit. I'd been working so hard and it'd been a week of [getting] up for breakfast shows and then doing the late night shows - so all these interviews and all this travelling - and I was just having a bit too much fun and couldn't hold it together." This scribe was present at said gig and while Sultan's voice did sound extra husky, it's doubtful that anyone present had cause for complaint. "But I noticed," Sultan insists. "And it's good that people had a good time and it was good that we could still put on a good show. And people pay their money and you're providing a service but, yeah, I thought that maybe I could have done a little bit better. So I was a little bit disappointed in myself."

"I'm a lot fitter [now] than I was. I've been training. I'm not fit, but I'm a lot fitter than I was and I'm just eating good food. [Pause] Oh, I still give it a bit of a nudge - like I can be prone to having a bit too much fun - but, fuck! I'm 26. I'm not a millionaire but I'm getting paid and I'm totally comfortable. I can buy my cat food if he's hungry and my cigarettes if I want and I can get cabs if I need to." Spelling out the letters in the air with his finger, Sultan tells me his cat's name is "Boof A Dingus - like Homer J Simpson".

"I was away touring and my song was being played on the radio, or I was doing an interview or something like that, and my flatmate told me [Boof A Dingus] went into my room and he was looking for me!" Sultan marvels, a clearly proud of the ginger feline stray he adopted. "He's a beautiful cat, he looks like a fucking show cat!"

**WHO:** Dan Sultan

**WHEN & WHERE:** Friday, Forum; Friday 30 July, Splendour In The Grass

## UPCOMING GIG GUIDE



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19th June - Noxshi (UK)  
25th June - The Scarlets (EP Launch)  
16th July - Brown Paper Bag

**Over Yonder....**

Brown Paper Bag w/  
Jonathan Boulet & Rat vs. Possum  
Dream On Dreamer (EP Launch)

**How To Get There**

Trams - Stop Cnr Exhibition/  
Market Lane (15second walk)

Carparks - Undercover paid  
parking Bourke/Russell

Walking - From Flinders St  
station is approx 10mins.

**THUR 17 JUNE**  
  
**\$5 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**EN TOUS CAS & SAN FRAN DISCO**  
THURSDAY RESIDENCY ALL JUNE

**THUR 24 JUNE**  
  
**\$5 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**EN TOUS CAS & SAN FRAN DISCO**  
THURSDAY RESIDENCY ALL JUNE

**THUR 1 JULY**  
  
**\$5 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**THE KICKERS & ORANGE ROOM + MORE**  
4 BAND RESIDENCY THURSDAYS JULY

**FRI 18 JUNE**  
  
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GREAT DJs SPINNING THE BEST FROM THE 80'S ALL NIGHT LONG!

**FRI 25 JUNE**  
  
**\$12 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**THE SCARLETS**  
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**FRI 2 JULY**  
  
**\$12 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**THE BEARDS (SA) PLUS GUESTS**  
WITH GUEST DJ STONE LOVE (PBS)

**SAT 19 JUNE**  
  
**\$12 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**TONE DEAF W/ NOXSHI (UK) & DEAD ACTORS CLUB**

**SAT 26 JUNE**  
  
**\$10 ENTRY 9PM DOORS**  
**WEEKENDER W/ VOLTAIRE TWINS & PHILOSOPHY OF SOUND**

**SAT 3 JULY**  
  
**\$12 ENTRY 8PM DOORS**  
**TONE DEAF W/ REDCOATS, VILLAINS OF WILHELM + A MASSIVE SURPRISE GUEST!**

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