



The Kentucky HeadHunters — Doug Phelps (from left), Ricky Phelps, Richard Young, Fred Young and Greg Martin — will open for Hank Williams Jr. at 7:30 Saturday in the Breslin Center.

HeadHunters: On a roll

Band's first record spins hot tunes

By HUGH LEACH
Lansing State Journal

In the Kentucky HeadHunters, Hank Williams Jr. has found the perfect opening act. The HeadHunters, like Williams, are rock-influenced fun lovers who stretch the boundaries of country music to its outermost limits. They're loud, they're entertaining — and they are HOT!

Their first album, irreverently called "Pickin' on Nashville," reached the one-half million mark in sales after only two singles were released.

Their current single, "Dumas Walker," a catchy, upbeat number that sticks with you long after you hear it, is among the top 20 country songs in the nation.

They were nominated as best new vocal group at Wednesday's Academy of Country Music awards.

Lead singer Ricky Lee Phelps says the group is a bit surprised at the acceptance it has received since being labeled as a country act.

"It was the industry that we

On music Country

Kentucky HeadHunters

- Opening for Hank Williams Jr. at 7:30 p.m. Saturday.
- Jack Breslin Student Events Center, MSU.
- Tickets \$18.50 at Breslin or Ticketmaster outlets (Hudson's, some Where House and Harmony House stores). To charge by phone, call 336-1440 or 484-5656.

didn't expect acceptance from more than the people," he said. The HeadHunters' music is influenced by rock, blues, country, gospel, bluegrass and maybe a few others for good measure.

"It's really just fun music," Phelps said. "We just try to have a good time. We don't want to get over people's heads and try to show off our musicianship."

The group's beginnings go back to the early 1970s in Kentucky when brothers Richard and Fred Young, their cousin, Greg Martin, and another cousin formed a rock group called the Itchy Brothers.

The group disbanded in 1981 and the Youngs and Martin found jobs in Nashville — Richard

Young with a publishing company, Fred Young as a drummer for Sylvia, and Martin as a guitarist for Ronnie McDowell.

Doug Phelps, another musician in McDowell's band, and Martin struck up a friendship. They got together with the Youngs and started performing around the Nashville area. Then Phelps introduced the others to his brother, Ricky Lee, who proved to be the final ingredient the group needed.

Originally the group called itself the HeadHunters.

"When we started out we were kind of a blues-based type of rock band that was kind of exploring some roots," Ricky Lee Phelps said. "We did some research and found out that Muddy Waters had a band that was nicknamed the HeadHunters, which came from a tradition known as 'head chopping' up in Chicago. Blues bands would get up on stage and try to outdo each other.

"We kind of liked the aggressiveness of the name, so we chose the HeadHunters. When we wound up getting a record deal, we did some research on the name and found a few other bands that were called the HeadHunters. We added the 'Kentucky' to the front of it kind of out of fluke and it had even more of a weird ring to it, so we decided to keep it. It was really put on to keep us out of a lawsuit."

MUSIC

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Mason High School Concert Choir
Friday — Capitol Rotunda, noon-1 p.m.; free.

Roosevelt Fine Tuners from Keego Harbor
Monday — Capitol Rotunda; noon-1 p.m.; free.

Zeeland Seventh Grade Choir
Tuesday — Capitol Rotunda; noon-1 p.m.; free.

Grand Ledge High School Concert Choir
Wednesday — Capitol Rotunda; noon-1 p.m.; free.

Sistrum — The Lansing Women's Chorus
Saturday — Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove St., East Lansing; 8 p.m.; \$6.50, \$12.50, \$25 at Motherwit: Books & More or at the door. 371-5076

Classical/orchestral/opera

Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Thursday and Saturday — Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit; 8 p.m. Thursday and 8:30 p.m. Saturday; \$45, \$35, \$23, \$21, \$16 at Ticket Master outlets. 484-5656.

Friday — Ford Auditorium, 1 W. Jefferson, Detroit; 10:45 a.m.; \$18, \$16, \$11 at Ticketmaster outlets. 484-5656.

Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra
Sunday — Detroit Symphony Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit; 7 p.m.; free. (313) 567-9000.

James Galway and the Tokyo String Quartet
Sunday — Fairchild Theater, MSU, 3 p.m.; \$28.50, students \$14.25. SOLD OUT. 355-6696.

Don Giovanni, opera
Saturday — Masonic Temple

auditorium, 500 Temple Ave., Detroit; 8 p.m.; \$12-5507 (313) 874-7464.

Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
Friday — Miller Auditorium, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo; 8 p.m.; \$15, \$12, \$8. (616) 349-7759.

Jackson Symphony Orchestra
Saturday-Sunday — Potter Center Music Hall, Jackson Community College; 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday; \$12, \$10, 782-3221.

Cello students of Louis Potter
Wednesday — Molly Grove Chapel in the First Presbyterian Church, 211 N. Chestnut; 12:10-12:50 p.m.; free. 482-0668.

Juliard String Quartet
Tuesday — Wharton Center, MSU; 8 p.m.; \$15, \$12.50, \$10, \$7.50, students half price. 355-6686.

Country/bluegrass

Guy Clark, Townes Van Zandt, Robert Earl Keen Jr.
Friday — The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main St., Ann Arbor; 8 p.m.; \$10.75, \$9.75 for members and students. (313) 763-8587.

Harmonix
Today-Saturday — The Colonial Bar & Grille, 3425 S. Logan; 9 p.m.; free. 882-6132.

Lookout
Sunday — The Colonial Bar & Grille, 3425 S. Logan; 9 p.m.; free. 882-6132.

Kathy Ford
Thursday-Sunday — The Hayloft, 727 E. Miller; 9 p.m. except 7 p.m. Sunday; \$1, 882-7225.

Tracey Lynne and the Mountain Express
Wednesday — The Hayloft, 727 E. Miller; 9 p.m. except 7 p.m. Sunday; \$1, 882-7225.

Billy Napier and free country dance lessons
Monday and Tuesday — The

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