

# ALL TIME LOW

**Alex Gaskarth: Vocals/guitars // Jack Barakat: Guitars // Zack Merrick: Bass // Rian Dawson: Drums**

Nobody *wants* to have to grow up in public. But when you're young, talented and creating something that strikes a chord with enough people, sometimes you've got no choice. For the members of All Time Low, who cut two strong indie releases and inked their Hopeless Records deal before they'd even finished high school, that's just the path they had to take. And with their new album, *So Wrong, It's Right*, these 2006 graduates from the Baltimore suburbs prove they're growing up just fine.

Produced by Matt Squire (Panic! At the Disco, Cute Is What We Aim For), with help from the band's longtime collaborator Paul Leavitt (Over It), *So Wrong, It's Right* finds All Time Low cranking out 12 infectious, impeccably played slabs of classic pop-punk that recall ATL's early inspirations (Blink-182, New Found Glory) as much as they push the whole genre forward. "A lot of bands that start out being called 'pop-punk' either shy away from the term or end up trying to force their sound in a different direction," singer/guitarist Alex Gaskarth explains. "We're proud of who we are, and we're trying to take pop-punk back to where it used to be: a place that's about having fun, being positive and building a community."

Since forming in 2003 when Gaskarth and guitarist Jack Barakat teamed up with bassist Zack Merrick and drummer Rian Dawson, All Time Low have steadily risen to the center of that community. With a four-song EP and an album, *The Party Scene* (both on the Maryland indie Emerald Moon), under their belts, the band kicked off their first national touring campaign in 2005, supporting like-minded headliners such as Plain White T's, the Early November and Motion City Soundtrack. And in 2006, after one of those tourmates, Amber Pacific, brokered a meeting with their label, All Time Low signed to the label and released their Hopeless debut, the *Put Up Or Shut Up* EP. Though it drew on older material, *Put Up Or Shut Up* was a breath of fresh air for the genre, winning critical acclaim from outlets such as AbsolutePunk.net (which beamed, "Say hello to your new favorite pop-punk band") and Aversion.com.

Between *Put Up Or Shut Up*'s release and their high-school graduation, All Time Low finally had the freedom to hit the road full-time, and over the next year they'd share stages with bands like Sugarcult, Cute Is What We Aim For and Hit The Lights, in addition to bringing their fun, freewheeling stage show ("We try to make every show feel like a party," Gaskarth says) to the 2007 Bamboozle and Warped Tour festivals. "When you're out there on the road and you're going out on what can be pretty massive tours for the first time, it really keeps you grounded," Gaskarth says of the band's ascent through the touring ranks. "You're surrounded at all times by this huge, diverse group of people with all these amazing experiences to share, and you're always learning from them. It really gives you a chance to find yourself."

And that they did. While it has the same loose, energetic spirit that fueled *Put Up Or Shut Up*, *So Wrong, It's Right* reflects the tremendous musical growth All Time Low have experienced in the past few years. And as Gaskarth notes, working with Squire as their producer also forced the band to step up their game. "We went into the sessions with 15 songs, and Matt was like, 'Okay, these three songs are great, and the rest suck,'" he remembers, laughing. "But it was the perfect outside opinion to get, because Matt has a

great ear for what we want to be writing, which is really solid pop-rock songs. It forced us to go back and make the rest of the album that much stronger.”

From the fist-pumping first single “Six Feet Under The Stars” (which Gaskarth describes as “about regrettably drinking Jäger with someone you used to have a relationship with”) and the SoCal-style punk volley of “This Is How We Do,” down to the acoustic lament “Remembering Sunday,” *So Wrong, It’s Right* proves why magazines as far-ranging as *Metal Hammer* and *Alternative Press* (which in 2007 declared ATL one of “100 Bands You Need To Know” in its annual cover special) have cozied up alongside fans to embrace the band. And while Gaskarth’s lyrics are tongue-in-cheek clever and rich with wordplay in tracks such as the driving, multilayered “Holly (Would You Turn Me On?),” he’s also grown in some impressive new ways. “I’m not just writing about the everyday things that happen to me anymore, although there’s still some of that in these songs,” he says. “I’ve started to become more of a storyteller.”

All Time Low’s story may just be starting, but with *So Wrong, It’s Right*, the band have added a new chapter that feels destined to be a classic. “We’re still doing just what we set out to do, which was to have fun and celebrate this style of music that we all grew up listening to,” Gaskarth says. “But at the same time, we’re growing up as a band, and it feels like we’ve finally found ourselves with this album.”

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