

by Nick Perkel

Speedwolf are a thrash/speed metal band from Denver, Colorado, signed to Hells Headbangers Records. They have appeared at influential concerts such as the Maryland Deathfest and Thrasho De Mayo, and have played all over the U.S. Last year, they were able to get their debut album, *Riding With Death*, pressed on the Tokyo, Japan label Spiritual Beast, which has two exclusive live tracks on it ("Up All Night" and "Denver 666").

While they were at the Maryland Deathfest, I had the chance to talk with Speedwolf singer Reed Bruemmer and drummer Richie Tice about *Riding With Death*, touring, what advice they would give to young musicians and more. The transcription is below:

Can you speak about what a radius clause is and what it means for touring bands?

Reed Bruemmer: It means if you have a show booked in a city, usually your own hometown, you can't play a show within this amount of time and this many miles around the concert. Sometimes for fests like this, they will say you can't play another show within 100 miles of Baltimore for two weeks, before and after the show. If you do, that is breach of contract, and they don't have to pay you. By the way, we need to get paid (laughs).

Richie Tice: It just sucks for bands sometimes. Like for us, coming from Denver, you want to hit everything you possibly can. It makes you end up losing money because of that. It sucks for fans and the bands while being good for promoters.

How did you make the contact with Spiritual Beast to get *Riding With Death* pressed in Japan?

RB: We are on Hell's Headbangers Records in the U.S. Spiritual Beast got in touch with them and asked if they could do it. I just negotiated with them and we did all the money stuff and it happened. They reached out to us.

Have you received much international interest in your band since that happened?

RB: Absolutely. From what I understand, we have a good following in Europe now. Thankfully, because of Spiritual Beast, we have a decent following in Japan, too.

Any plans to tour Europe anytime soon?

RT: We are working on one right now. Probably this fall; September, October, likely a month-long tour. Not with any bands in particular but likely a bunch of festivals and DIY spots. The first week of September to the first week of October.

Any countries you are looking to hit hard?

Both: Germany!

RB: Germany is where all the big metal fests are as well as Northern Europe.



RT: We are trying to play everywhere we can. We would like to go to Japan and are working on everything we possibly can do.

What types of things do you need to consider when communicating with an international entity about releasing your music or booking a concert or tour?

RB: There is a lot of weird international law, so if you do a regular signing with a label, you get a normal contract. In the U.S., usually the people we work with are honest. You have a spit and handshake-type deal. Internationally it is twice the paperwork. You have a contract that says, "We will give you this much money up front and you let us press this record this many times and we sell it for this much and that's it."

Looking back at your music video for "Speedwolf," what was your favorite part to make?

RT: Riding on top of the van was probably the coolest part for me. Scary, my mom hated it. It was fun.

RB: The video our friends did for us, the most fun scenes for me was the end scene where we got all our crazy biker friends in Denver together and we killed the first person wolf. We also did a lot of live show footage which was cool as well.

Can you tell me about the differences in preparations your band undergoes as well as what you hope to achieve playing at a festival such as the Maryland Deathfest or Thrasho De Mayo as opposed to a gig when you are on tour?

RT: Fanwise, I think it is more fun to play these festivals to play to people from all over the place that you normally would not get to play for. There are people who haven't seen us before and there are people who have seen us in Philly or D.C. It's really cool to

have this big community of fans with people who have heard you and haven't heard you and be able to massively get so many people's attention as opposed to playing for a hundred kids or some basement show. This showcases big national exposure for massive amounts of people.

RB: We have never been to Europe and there are European people here to see us as well as other people at the fest. It becomes to our advantage. For them, it is a big special occasion. For us, it is just Baltimore.

For this appearance at the MDF, you have an exclusive "Fuck Flacco" t-shirt. What did Baltimore Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco do to inspire this shirt?

(Reed and Richie smile and say, "This is why!" Richie holds up a United In Orange Denver Broncos towel with endorsements from Citibank, Verizon, Bud Light and more.)

RT: Hey, he is in the playoffs, I was there. I froze my ass off. I froze my beers off. We lost that [2013 playoff game] due to that stupid Hail Mary pass. Hey, screw that guy, he won the Super Bowl. Congratulations, but we got it this year.

RB: He is the MVP. He is going to have people hate him. You have to live in Baltimore. I don't.

RT: We should have had that game. We are just football fans. It's not a huge thing. We don't hate Baltimore or nothing or hate the guy personally. It's just a football rivalry. We're Broncos fans.

Reed, you run a label called Splattered! Records. What type of changes have you made promoting and distributing your music after working with this label?

RB: It's funny when people ask about the label that I do. It's really nothing big at all. I started it just to put our early stuff out for fun, as well as friends' bands in Denver. It had a small distro, as well as being able to have a small wholesale with other distros. I learned a ton about pressing records and making merch, all of which has been applied to our band.

RT: I think Splattered! is awesome for us. Reed has helped out a bunch of friends' bands out with little stuff. I think it is cool to have a shirt. I support him (Reed laughs).

What advice would you give young musicians who are getting ready to release their debut album on an underground label?

RB: I feel like nowadays, a lot of bands that are at an underground level have the wrong expectations at first. They think, because you get a little bit of attention, you deserve the world, which is not the case at all. We realized that at the beginning. You need to work your ass off. You need to get on the road. You need to tour and play shows, lose money and take time off work. The label isn't always there to make things easy for you. I think a lot of young bands have the opposite idea.

RT: You need to do it because you love it. Just because you have a label, or even a DIY label, you do it because you love the music. You want more people to hear it, or have a little bit of support. They are not going to sell it in Best Buy or wherever, all over the place. You have to go to DIY places to get it. It's definitely cool to have.

RB: 90 percent of the time, these labels are run by people like us. They have people that make the same amount of money that we do. They do the same stuff we do day in and day out. I talk to Chase [Horval] from Hells Headbangers. We are one of the only bands on his label that tours and we talk all the time. He is like, "I don't know how to handle it. I want to help you guys so much, but I can only do so much." It's a cool relationship, but it puts things in perspective.

RT: A lot of things are DIY. I think that's better. I don't really like the whole big wig record producers and labels and all of that stuff. It's cool to have small people who love what they do and put out what they love. That is really cool to have.

SPEEDWOLF'S DEBUT ALBUM, *RIDING WITH DEATH*, IS AVAILABLE NOW. FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO [FACEBOOK.COM/SPEEDWOLF303](https://www.facebook.com/speedwolf303)