



FLYING HIGH AGAIN

Ace Frehley is the man who gave the original **Kiss** line-up one hugely important attribute – attitude – and he remains a massive favourite with the band's hardcore fans to this day. **Dave Reynolds** hooks up with the guitarist for a wide-ranging interview...

DESPITE ADMITTING TO HAVING never taken a guitar lesson and being purely self-taught, Paul Daniel 'Ace' Frehley became one of the most influential players of all-time as one of the four original members of Kiss.

The band was formed in 1973 from the ashes of various New York outfits including Gene Simmons' and Paul Stanley's band Wicked Lester. With the help of visionary manager Bill Aucoin and Casablanca label boss Neil Bogart, the quartet quickly became one of America's greatest concert attractions, in addition to achieving multi-platinum record sales as they kicked their platform-booted way from their mid- to late-'70s heyday into a more challenging period for them in the early '80s.

Ace Frehley gained his nickname after showing an impressive ability to snare girlfriends at school. Although his musical achievements were framed against a background of personal excess that involved copious amounts of drugs, booze and women (along with the odd wrecked DeLorean automobile), as he rightly points out he was never fired from Kiss. He enjoyed, effectively, two stints with the self-styled 'hottest band in the world', the first ending in late 1982 and the second starting when the original band reunited in 1996.

Born in the Bronx, New York in 1951, Frehley first quit the band as Kiss were about to make a 'return to form' comeback after the disaster that was the conceptual '(Music From) The Elder' recording in 1981. Although he appeared on the cover artwork of Kiss's 'Creatures Of The Night', released in October 1982, and participated in the video for the 'I Love It Loud' single, Ace played no part in the actual recording of the album and officially announced his departure after completing a promotional tour of Europe at the end of that year.

HAVING SIGNED a deal with Megaforce Records (at the time an Atlantic Records affiliate) the guitarist's first post-Kiss album finally emerged in 1987. Interestingly, Ace chose to launch his new project as a band rather than as a pure solo outing and had carefully assembled a collection of talented musicians. The amusingly titled Frehley's Comet included ex-707 vocalist/guitarist Tod Howarth (who'd replaced Ace's original choice of right hand man, Richie Scarlet, in the line-up), former Peter Frampton bassist John Regan, and Frehley's long-time partner-in-crime, drummer Anton Fig (of Spider/Shanghai/David Letterman fame). After the eponymous debut album's modest success, a year down the line 'Second Sighting' didn't sell as well as everyone expected. The problem was that there just weren't enough Ace Frehley songs on it. Indeed, *Rock Candy Mag* editor Howard Johnson noted in his review of the album in issue 190 of *Kerrang!* back in June 1988 that Ace "hasn't been the egotistical bastard that all great guitarists are... he hasn't taken the music by the scruff of the neck and made it all his own."

It was all change for Frehley's next solo album, as Ace dropped the Frehley's Comet moniker to revert to his own name. 1989's 'Trouble Walkin'' also found him reunited with original Frehley's Comet member Richie Scarlet and veteran producer Eddie Kramer, with whom Ace had recorded not only as a member of Kiss, but also on his legendary first solo album released in 1978. A pretty solid affair, 'Trouble Walkin'' regained a little of the ground lost with 'Second Sighting', but not enough to enable him to follow it up with anything sturdier.

AFTER LOSING the Megaforce deal it wouldn't be until 2009, some 20 years later, that the Spaceman's

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