

GUITAR HERO 2005

Guitar Player's Guitar Hero 05 competition, held at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 10, couldn't have been a more joyous event if it were scripted by Santa Claus. The ten finalists were gracious and talented, Tommy Rich's house band kicked ass, cleveland.com's Webcast spread the joy far beyond those in attendance, the techs at the Hall were totally tops, and the judges (Joe Satriani, Steve and Trevor Lukather, DJ Munch, and GP's Jude Gold) were insightful and hilarious.

But the night belonged to the players, of course, and each guitarist uncorked a phenomenal performance. (Jaws were dropping like flies, baby!) The thrills and chills exploding from the stage were ample reminders of why it's tremendously cool to be a guitar player. Stay tuned for entry instructions for *Guitar Hero 06*. Be there! (Many thanks to Gibson and Audio-Technica for sponsoring GH05.) —Michael Molenda



The Gang's All Here—Various contestants, house-band members, judges, and GP peoples take advantage of a photo op after the GH05 awards were announced.



Tony Gaglio
Finalist
Home Base: New York
Age: 30-something
Style: Rock, blues.
Influences: Randy Rhoads, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Zappa.
Gear: '79 Gibson Les Paul Standard and '79 Les Paul KM,

'57 Supro (for slide), ESP Mirage Deluxe, two Marshall JCM 800 50-watt half stacks, Marshall DSL 401 combo, Ampeg Reverberocket reissue, Dunlop CryBaby, MXR Phase 90, ADA MP-1.

Best Moment at GH05: "The mystery and expectation caused some underlying tension on the trip in, but once I started meeting the guys, it turned into a really relaxing day. It was a big friendly meet up of new buddies! When I finally got on stage, I felt like I was home. Tommy Rich and his band were flat-out killer on my song. The moment the crowd started clapping along with the groove, I knew I had 'em. It was an honor being chosen to perform with such an elite—and literally global—group of guitarists."

Web Site: milliondollarmovie.com



Sean Kelly
Finalist
Home Base: Toronto
Age: 32
Style: '70s boogie glam on the early '80s Sunset Strip.
Influences: Thin Lizzy, Ritchie Blackmore, Aca Frehley, Eddie

Van Halen, Marc Bolan, Mick Ronson, Mick Mars, Warren de Martini, Slash, Brian May, Randy Rhoads, Joe Perry.

Gear: B.C. Rich neck-thru Classic Mockingbird and Bich, Mesa/Boogie and Traynor amplification, various Dunlop pedals, In-Tune guitar picks (medium), SIT strings (.010-.046).

Best Moment at GH05: "Having the opportunity to play my music for a combination of my heroes, peers, family, and friends was a mind-blowing experience. To be acknowledged by a publication I have read for years, and to get to know some of the people I have read about within its pages, was an honour and a privilege. I thought that the GH event was a triumph of musical diversity and friendship over self-indulgence and ego."

Web Site: crashkelly.ca



Matt Rae
Finalist
Home Base: Connecticut
Age: 35
Style: Country, blues, surf, western swing.
Influences: Arlen Roth, Danny Gatton, Albert Le

Jim Campilongo, Duke Levine, Roy Buchanan, Brad Mason, Brad Paisley.

Gear: '63 Fender Telecaster, Dr. Z Z-28 amp, Ernie Ball strings (.010 sat).

Best Moment at GH05: "I don't know where to begin as one moment was better than the next. Meeting and playing with such amazing musicians was incredible. Each contestant deserved an award! It was such a treat to play with Tommy Rich and his house band. The GP staff, Steve Lukather, Joe Satriani, Trevor Lukather, and all the contestants were so welcoming and cool that the entire event felt more like a celebration than a competition. The vibe just got better and better as the weekend progressed. The high point for me was hanging out after the GH05 event with everyone. Steve Lukather was exceptionally generous with his time and kind words for all. I'm honored to have been a part of the first GH event, and I'm excited that GP readers will be exposed to such great guitar talent."

Web Site: mattrae.com



Dominic Frasca
Winner, Guitar Hero 05
Home Base: New York
Age: 38
Style: "I don't have a clue."

Influences: Stephen A

Tom Patterson, Benjamin Verdery, Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Anthony Davis, Michael Gordon, AC/DC, The Who, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Led Zeppelin, Tenacious D, Nine Inch Nails, Van Halen, Frederick Chopin, Maurice Ravel.

Gear: Modified Thomas Humphrey 6-string classical (with RMC pickups), modified Humphrey/Marshall Millennium 10-string (with RMC pickups), Audio-Technica AT4040 mic, MOTU 828mkII, Macintosh PowerBook [running Apple Logic 6, Waves, and Nomad Blue Tubes plug-ins], custom buffer built by Sal Trentino, EAW M563 speaker, D'Addario and Augustine strings (steel and nylon for 10-string).

Best Moment at GH05: "Hanging out with the other contestants backstage before the show, as well as the acknowledgment of all the unknown guitarists in the world who are out there playing their asses off."

Web Site: dominicfrasca.com



Rodney Verbrugge
First Runner-Up
Home Base: California
Age: 30-something
Style: Prog rock, blues rock, neo-classical rock.
Influences: Eddie Van Halen, Randy Rhoads,

Yngwie Malmsteen, Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Allan Holdsworth, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Neal Schon.

Gear: '83 Kramer Pacer, Gibson chambered Les Paul Custom, Fender Stratocaster, Behringer V-Amp, Marshall, Fender, and Pierce amps, various Boss pedals, Morley wah, GHS Boomers (.009-.042).

Best Moment at GH05: "It was great meeting all the people from GP, Joe Satriani, Steve and Trevor Lukather, and all of the other Guitar Hero contestants. Everyone was very friendly, helpful, and supportive. Some new friendships have been formed, and I look forward to seeing everyone in the near future. The pinnacle of the experience was being able to share my music with a larger audience—which has always been my ultimate goal. I'll never forget standing on stage after my performance and getting to hear the judges comment on my playing. Thanks to GP and everyone involved for an unforgettable experience, and a special thanks to my family and friends for supporting me over the years."

Web Site: rodneyverbrugge.com



Marcus Deml
Second Runner-Up
Home Base: Germany
Age: 37
Style: Rock, blues, country, jazz, electronica.
Influences: Gary Moore, Eivind Aarset, Michael Sagemelster.

Gear: Custom Yamaha Pacifica USA, Coura signature, Engl Savage, Thomson Error, Yamaha Delay Modeler, Coura Gain-or, MXR Phase 90, Boss SYB5 Bass Synthesizer, DigiTech Whammy, Flixer strings (.010-.046).

Best Moment at GH05: "Discovering the different mind frames my GH buddies were coming from—which, once again, proved that your music and your playing is an extension of your personality. I also became friends with Steve Lukather. We continued our party two weeks later in Hamburg, where he made some (unjustified) compliments about my playing, which made my face turn cherry red. GH05 was also a chance for me to step outside of Europe, meet a lot of nice people, make new fans, and celebrate the coolest instrument in the whole bloody world."

Web Site: errorhead.com



Scott Jones
Finalist
Home Base: Missouri
Age: 39
Style: Jazz, fusion.
Influences: Scott Henderson, Michael Landau, Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Pat

Martino, Adam Rogers, Allan Holdsworth, Mike Brecker, Chick Corea, John Coltrane, Dave Liebman, Planet X, John Petrucci, Steve Vai, Steve Lukather, Guthrie Govan.

Gear: Fender HM-Strat (customized and rebuilt by Randy Selms), Ibanez FGM Sabre, Taylor 314-ce, Gibson Chet Atkins, Jerry Jones Sitar and Baritone, Roland GR-303, Schecter C-7, Tacoma Pappoose, Fender Cyber-Deluxe, silverface Fender Twin Reverb, Budda Wah, Morley PVD volume, Line 6 Delay and Modulation Modelers, DigiTech Whammy, Rocktron Intellifex, Behringer Stereo Compressor, Dean Markley Blue Steel strings (.009-.042).

Best Moment at GH05: "Just being able to hang out with so many world-class players and share in the experience with them. I thought it was particularly great to hang out with Luke. He was so gracious—he really took the time to hang out with everybody—and his stories and humor were off the hook. It felt really good to be acknowledged by a publication I've read and respected."

Web Site: scottjonesmusic.com



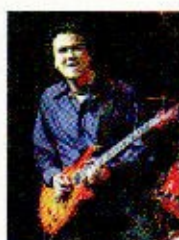
Ulf Högberg
Finalist
Home Base: Sweden
Age: 39
Style: Rock, pop, jazz fusion, blues, country, bluegrass.
Influences: Pat Metheny, Michael Landau, Steve

Lukather, Steve Morse, Scott Henderson, Tony Rice, Mike Stern.

Gear: Assorted James Tyler electrics, Taylor acoustics, Custom Audio OD-100, Xotic RC-Booster, Keeley Compressor, Voodoo Labs Proctavia and MicroVibe, Eventide Eclipse, D'Addario strings.

Best Moment at GH05: "Meeting all the fab players and hanging with judges such as Satch and Luke. GH05 represented more of an event that promoted diversity rather than a competition. Everybody was such a star—both as a player and as a human—so the tension of a competition was never present. It was an excellent platform to showcase the depths and widths of a high-quality guitar community that proves the art of lead guitar never really died."

Web Site: "Sorry—no site at the moment!"



Juan Carlos Coronado
Finalist
Home Base: Ontario
Age: 25
Style: Latin rock.
Influences: Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Yngwie Malmsteen, Nuno Bettencourt, Carlos

Santana, Frank Gambale, Tom Morello, John Frusciante, Dimebag Darrell, Steve Lukather, Ace Frehley.

Gear: Paul Reed Smith Custom 24, Ibanez Universe UV777P, Gibson Flying V, Epiphone EJ-200 CE, Fender Cyber-Twin, DigiTech Whammy, Morley Bad Horsie 2 wah, Shure wireless system, Johnson J-Station, D'Addario XL strings (.010-.046).

Best Moment at GH05: "Where do I start? The whole experience was amazing, right from the first night when I met the other finalists, the GP staff, Joe Satriani, and Steve and Trevor Lukather. It was also exciting and nerve wracking to play on a live Fox Television broadcast with GH finalist Rob Burton to promote the competition. It wasn't easy going in front of the cameras at 8 a.m. after a very late night! Of course, the actual concert at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame was something I will never forget. Sharing a stage with all those talented guitarists from different parts of the world, and performing for such an incredible panel of judges—while enjoying my favorite kind of music—was certainly the highlight of the whole event."

Web site: juancoronado.com



Rob Burton
Finalist
Home Base: New York
Age: 35
Style: Progressive instrumental rock.
Influences: Michael Romeo, Paul Gilbert, John Petrucci, Steve Vai,

Joe Satriani, J.S. Bach.

Gear: Ibanez 7-string electric, Ibanez Artwood 7-string acoustic, Line 6 amplification, Behringer V-Amp, Soldano cabinets, Lava cables, GHS Boomers (.009 set), Dunlop Big Stubby picks.

Best Moment at GH05: "That would be playing for Joe Satriani. Being 'on' that night also made it really cool. Waking up at 6 a.m. with only one hour of sleep to play on a live television broadcast with Juan Carlos Coronado was totally mind-blowing. Sharing the stage with such a diverse group of guys was a once in a lifetime opportunity. GH05 made me realize where I stand in the guitar playing world, and I will now take my craft more seriously."

Web Site: robburton.us