



(Credit: John Joe Coffey)

Joe Taysom · May 1, 2020

Remembering The Clash's 'White Riot' tour with The Jam and The Buzzcocks



43 years ago today, The Clash kicked off their [White Riot](#) tour in emphatic style at the Roxy in London where they were joined by The Jam and The Buzzcocks on support duties making it one of the greatest tours in the history of British music with three iconic bands all sharing the same bill on a tour that brought punk to the provinces.

The tour was a historic moment in punk history as it took the punk movement to areas that were uncharted territory such after it kicked off on May 1st, other provincial places the trio of bands would pass through on the run of shows would include Swansea, Chester, Stafford and Swindon to name just a handful.

The *White Riot* tour was a landmark moment in which rebellious adolescents across Britain would realise that punk was their reconning.

The tour marked the beginning of their time with CBS, less than a month after the release of the debut album, *The Clash*. It also saw the [integration of new band member, Topper Headon](#), on the drums following Terry Grimes' departure.

"The only band that matters," CBS employee, Gary Lucas, once said of The Clash. This statement came shortly after the band had signed a relatively lucrative deal with the 'big-time' record company and, in the eyes of many, had 'sold out'. The editor of the ultimate punk fanzine, *Sniffin' Glue*, reacted to the news of the time, writing: "Punk died the day The Clash signed for CBS."

Punk didn't die at all, however, it was just getting started and The Clash were keen to make sure that it was alive and well all over Britain rather than just in London. The tour was notorious for a whole host of reasons, another one would be the in-fighting that went on between the bands which would lead to The Jam being fired from their support slot at some point during the run.

Former Clash tech Barry 'Baker' Auguste spoke about the wildness that ensued on the White Riot Tour to [MOJO](#) back in 2017, revealing: "We're going out on this huge tour, and we can't put the [protective] covers on the equipment because the paint isn't dry. We get to the venue and the speakers are damaged and have to be repaired, all the grilles have to be screwed back on... It was complete chaos before it even started."

He then explained why The Jam suddenly vanished from the tour: The Jam left because they thought they should be headlining the show," reckons Auguste. "[Clash bassist] Paul [Simonon] was constantly taking the piss out of them. We all thought they were a mockery. Their dad [manager John Weller] would come into the dressing room and start bossing everyone around. In the end, he said they wanted more money. But Joe [Strummer] in particular felt they weren't right for the tour. Joe and Paul [Weller] later became good friends, but then there was a lot of animosity."

Check out this footage below from when The Clash took over [Brighton](#) on the tour that would change punk forever.



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