

TAKING BACK SUNDAY

New guitarist talks about his influence on band's sound

STORY BY JINELLE SHENGULETTE

Special to Metromix

The last thing you would expect from five young guys in a successful touring rock band is "family bus week."

"My mom, my brother and my girlfriend are all on tour with us right now," says Taking Back Sunday guitarist Matthew Fazzi (pictured second from left). "Everyone's got wives and girlfriends out with us, so it's a total family atmosphere for this week. It's a lot of fun."

The rock band brings the tour to Water Street Music Hall on Wednesday, June 24, which Fazzi is "so stoked" about since his brother is an RIT alum.

We talked with the guitarist (formerly of Facing New York) before a gig at the House of Blues in Las Vegas about emo, being the newest member of the band and more.

How did you become a member of Taking Back Sunday last year?

I met Eddie Reyes, the other guitar player, on Warped Tour in '04 ... and we just developed a really close friendship. And they took Facing New York out on tour in '06. Then when (Taking Back Sunday's lead guitarist) Fred Mas-

cherino left to do his own thing, Eddie called me up and was like 'Hey, you should try out for the band' and I was like 'Whoa!'

Was there any hazing involved?

No, they were really light on me, I think because I'm too nice [laughs].

Taking Back Sunday is often labeled 'emo.' Do you identify with that genre?

I think of emo as an early '90s sort of thing. We don't really feel connected with that genre at all. I don't know how you would describe emo music now ... it's kind of a silly weird label; I would just consider us a rock band. We play rock and roll music, and we try to write good songs.

How does the band's sound change on the new CD *New Again*?

I think the noticeable difference really is in my guitar style. I prefer to play richer, jazz-influenced guitar chords, so it frees up a lot of frequency space and changes the overall texture. Also, stylistically, we tried so many different things like time signatures and different approaches to the vocals and backup three-part harmonies. So I feel like we've definitely branched out in different directions on this record that helped us grow a lot.

Later this summer, you're opening up for Blink-182 and Weezer.

We're all super-stoked about that tour because of the size of the venues; and it'll be a first for me to play a stretch of shows that big. Blink-182 and Weezer. I remember being in junior high and learning how to play guitar to those songs. It's kind of a weird, full-circle, time-warp thing for me. It's crazy to go on tour with those bands now. ♦



TAKING BACK SUNDAY WITH ANBERLIN AND ENVY ON THE COAST
WHEN: 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 24
WHERE: Water Street Music Hall, 204 N. Water St.
TICKETS: \$25 in advance through Ticketmaster; \$28 the day of show