

Just for laughs

Noland survives his 1st year in heckle hell

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Mention bombing to Kirk Noland, and Pearl Harbor and Nagasaki don't immediately come to mind. His first year as a stand-up comedian does.

"I went through a period of about a year where I ate it every night," said Noland, 26, a five-year veteran of the laugh wars. "I hear comedians today saying, 'I can't believe you stuck it out because you were so bad.'"

Noland can chuckle at such memories. His stage act has developed considerably since then, thrusting him out of the trenches of heckle hell.



Kirk Noland has had a chance to air his comedic talents on television on such shows as "Comedy Night in America" on BET and "Night Shift," a talk show in Fort Wayne, Ind.

THE DIFFICULT part is not writing funny jokes, Noland said. Anyone can develop material.

The task of a comedian is to involve himself into the act, exposing his views in a non-offending way to audiences. Noland likens it to a "dictatorship" instead of a democracy.

"People pay \$10 to hear what I have to say," Noland said. "Not to have their views bounced back off of them."

The line is fine, though, and Noland walks it like the finest circus high-wire act. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to talk about religion in Southern clubs and draw laughs.

"I talk about Moses in my act," Noland said. "Moses is one of my favorite Biblical stories. Think about it, the guy had to have charisma. He dragged people around the desert for 40 years. Did you ever think how long 40 years is? That's something like 360,000 hours or 2 million minutes."

You ever follow someone around for five minutes and realized they are lost and you have to say something?

LOST IN a series of day jobs, Noland found comedy to his immediate liking after one trip to the Comedy Castle. He also worked in community theater for a while, including with one group at Henry Ford Community College.

Noland credits the theater for providing discipline. But it also has helped in other areas, including the development of characters in his act.

One such character is "Spike Jones," a vigilante who tells people how to defend themselves. Another is "Tony Seat," a lifelong bathroom attendant.

The latter evolved from a meeting with such a person in a New York hotel.

"Could you imagine doing that your whole life?" Noland said. "But then I thought, he's probably as proud of his job as I am mine. He could come from a long line of bathroom attendants. He could talk about all the famous people who

have used his restroom. It's turned into a nice bit, actually."

THOSE TYPES of bits have garnered Noland television exposure on such shows as "Comedy Night in America" on BET and "Night Shift," a talk show in Fort Wayne, Ind. He was an extra in "Beverly Hills Cop" and had a cameo role in "Striker's War," a film made in Detroit and entered at Cannes Film Festival.

His stock has also increased on the club circuit. Within the past year,

Noland has traveled extensively outside the Detroit area.

"I'm on the road a lot," he said. "My wife isn't on the road with me. I miss my wife. I miss my dog, my cat."

But in order to make it in this business, travel is a prerequisite. Noland already has his future mapped out.

"I'm going to be a big star someday," he said. "That may sound like I have a big ego. You have to know your limitations. With me, there are no limitations."

COMEDY CLUBS

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

- **JOEY'S LIVONIA**
Lowell Sanders will perform Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 1-4, at Joey's Comedy Club, 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia. Show times are 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday. For reservations, call 261-0555.
- **LOONEY BIN**
Norma Zager will perform with Dan Legas and Roland Kimble Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 2-4, at the Wolverine Lounge and Looney Bin Comedy Club, 1655 Glengary, Walled Lake. Show times are 9 p.m. Friday and 8 and 10:15 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 669-9374.
- **LOONEY BIN TOO**
Gary Thison will perform Friday-Saturday, Nov. 3-4, at the Looney Bin Too at the Roky, 194 and Haggerty, Belleville. For reservations, call 699-1829.
- **MISS KITTY'S**
Mike Sullivan-Irwin will perform with Randy O'Brien Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 2-4, at Miss Kitty's Comedy Club, Long Branch Restaurant, 595 N. Lapeer Road, Oxford. Show times are 8 p.m. Thursday; 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 628-6500.
- **MAIN STREET**
Stunt Johnson Theatre will perform Wednesday-Thursday, Nov. 1-2, and Cathy Ladman will perform Friday-Saturday, Nov. 3-4, at Main Street Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-9080.
- **SECOND CITY**
Second City Touring Company will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4, at the Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$12.50 and \$15. For information, call 99-MUSIC.
- **BEA'S COMEDY KITCHEN**
Mike Blader will perform with Steve Mitchell and Downtown Tony Brown Friday-Saturday, Nov. 3-4, at Bea's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Show times are 8:30 and 11 p.m. For information, call 961-2581.
- **CHAPLIN'S EAST**
Ed Fala will perform with Steve Hillis and Bill Hutson Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 1-4, at Chaplin's East, 34244 Groesbeck, Fraser. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 792-1902.
- **CHAPLIN'S PLYMOUTH**
Anthony Griffin will perform with Mike Green and Greg Gilemma Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 1-4, at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Plymouth Radisson, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. For information, call 454-4680.
- **CHAPLIN'S WEST**
John Pinney will perform with Don Boria and Tim Rolands Tuesday-Saturday, Oct. 31 to Nov. 4, at Chaplin's West, 16890 Telegraph, south of Six Mile, Detroit. For information, call 533-8866.
- **HOLLY HOTEL**
"The Bad Boys of Chicago Comedy," featuring Orlando Reyes, will take place Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 2-4, at Holly Hotel, 110 Battle Alley, Holly. Show times are 8:30 p.m. with additional 10:30 p.m. shows Friday and Saturday. For information, call 634-1891.



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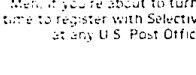


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