

Media release

Thursday, 25 August 2022

SEARCH BEGINS FOR STATE'S BEST PUB BAND

After three years off-stage, the state's ultimate pub band competition, Rockin' the Pubs, is finally back with live music heats to be held in Tamworth, the Illawarra, the Hunter, Central West and Sydney.

NSW Minister for Hospitality and Racing Kevin Anderson and AHA NSW CEO John Whelan launched the live music competition today.

Mr Whelan said after years of COVID-enforced silence the AHA NSW-backed competition is returning with a new format and a renewed emphasis on getting live music back into pubs.

"Many of Australia's top music acts first got their start down at their local and this competition is our way of giving back and supporting the next generation of local talent," Mr Whelan said.

"COVID had a huge and debilitating impact on live music venues over the past two years and this is one way we can help artists return to the stage and get our pubs rocking again."

Like in previous years, entries will be open to any NSW-based pub act which performs at least one song of original material - but this year 20 semi-finalists will be chosen to perform in one of five 'battle-of-the-bands' events in pubs across NSW.

The top five acts will then battle it out at a live 'Grand Final' at a Sydney pub early next year.

Minister Anderson said the NSW hotel industry had always been a big supporter of live music with more than 75,000 live music performances at pubs each year.

"This is a great initiative because encouraging new artists and giving them a platform to achieve on encourages a growing, vibrant live music industry," the Minister said.

"Live music is a massive drawcard for people to attend their local venue, which in turn creates jobs. Pubs are such a valuable asset and the Australian Hotels Association should be congratulated for the work they do to support live music and the hospitality sector in general."

Entrants will have until **Thursday, 15 September 2022** to submit their application via the website at www.rockinthepuburbs.com.au

Heats will be held at **The Stag & Hunter Hotel – Newcastle** on Sunday, 13 November, **The Oxford – Bathurst** on Friday, 18 November, **The Fiddler – Rouse Hill** on Friday, 18 November, **Family Hotel – Tamworth** on Friday, 25 November, and **Towradgi Beach Hotel** on Friday, 25 November. The winner will receive a prize package valued at over \$15,000 including an East Coast Pub Tour.

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