

From the *Lockn' Times*: Feelin' Alright



photo by John Patrick Gatta

What a difference a day makes. The grey skies of Thursday gave way to the clear blue of Friday. And with the cleanup chaos in the rear view mirror, Lockn' finally kicked into gear.

Due to Friday's date, 9/11, the festival opened with a moment of remembrance as John Popper welcomed more than two dozen first responders to the stage to honor them for their efforts before playing the national anthem. A large American flag was then displayed via a fire truck's selwing ladder next to the Ridge Stage.

Music on the Oak and Ridge stages ended with Mad Dogs & Englishmen Celebrate Joe Cocker (late night sets by Umphrey's McGee and Mickey Hart with Steve Kimock and EOTO followed). Although Cocker was from England, his singing style was influenced by Ray Charles, so the Mad Dogs material dug deep into blues, roots, soul and gospel traditions. The 100-minute performance featured Tedeschi Trucks Band with alumni from that 1970 tour including Leon Russell, Chris Stainton, Rita Coolidge, Claudia Lennear, Pamela Polland, Matthew Moore, Daniel Moore and Bobby Jones, Chuck Blackwell and Bobby Torres.

The performance opened in fine fashion with Susan Tedeschi digging in for an electrifying version of "The Letter." The entire set to follow was a highlight reel but notable moments included performances by the original players: "Cry Me A River" with Lennear on vocals, Coolidge's turn on "Superstar," Leon Russell's take on Bob Dylan's "Girl from the North Country" as well as his solo encore version of "The Ballad Of Mad Dogs And Englishmen." Guests included John Bell who sang lead on "Delta Lady," an unexpected appearance by Warren Haynes for "She Came In Through The Bathroom Window" and contributions by Chris Robinson, Anders Osborne and Doyle Bramhall II.

The spirit of the performance and the day as a whole may have been best encapsulated during Dave Mason's appearance. The big band lit into his tune with glee and shared a common sentiment with the audience, because after a day lost to weather, Lockn' 2015 was finally underway and everyone was indeed "Feelin' Alright."