

# Makin' Waves

Compiled By Ray Deegan

## EVENING THE ODDS ANDREW HEWITT

ROTOCAST BRC



Andrew Hewitt is becoming one of the most talked about drummers in the Australian and International Drumming Communities. Andrew was born with Cerebral Palsy, which affects movement in his arms and legs, and restricts him to walking on crutches. Despite this, over the past 17 years Andrew has worked successfully as a Performing Artist, Clinician, Motivational Speaker and Drum Educator.

It all started when Andrew's parents bought him a drum kit at the age of 10 thinking it would be a great form of physical exercise. After 26 years, Andrew is still hard at it and has performed with various bands in North West Tasmania, Melbourne and Sydney, since 1989.

His big break came in April 2004 when he was introduced to the world in Modern Drummer magazine's On The Move section. This was indeed a huge honour for Andrew, as only a handful of Australian drummers have had the privilege of gracing the pages of Modern Drummer.

The Raven Drum Foundation, an organisation in the USA run by one-armed Def Leppard drummer Rick Allen, named Andrew Hewitt 'Spirit of the Month' in April 2004. This was also a huge honour for Andrew, as Rick had been his biggest inspiration for many years.

Andrew's list of performances has grown since this time. In August 2004, Andrew performed at the Sydney Opera House with Melbourne band BiPolar Bears with very special guest guitarist, Ross Hannaford of Daddy Cool fame. He also held a drum clinic at Erina on the NSW Central Coast for the International Day for People With a Disability in December of 2004.

During 2005, Andrew began performing and lecturing at various conferences around Australia, including the Novita Tech Fest '05, the Australian Cerebral Palsy Association National Conference in Adelaide, Leaders of Special Education NSW conference at Parramatta and the Social Worker in Disabilities conference in Sydney.

In October 2005, Monique Wright from Channel 7's Sunrise program interviewed Andrew for her 'Everyday People' segment. He also performed on Channel 10's Sydney weather report with Tim Bailey on the steps of the Sydney Opera House, promoting upcoming Club Wild shows and the International Day for People with a Disability.

Andrew is also being included on an upcoming DVD release by website organisation; [www.alternativesinmusic.com](http://www.alternativesinmusic.com). The DVD will be a documentary about Andrew and his drumming achievements. It was

filmed in January 2005 in store at Billy Hyde's Drumcraft in Sydney, and also features clips from various live performances Andrew has done.

Andrew has had various teachers over the years such as Scott Bird, Ashley Davies, Tubby Wadsworth, Bruce Stephens, and Chris Brien, who have all gone that extra mile to help him achieve his goals. He is currently undertaking his AMEB drum studies with guidance from Bruce, Tubby and Chris.

While studying and actively gigging, Andrew also runs a personal workshop program, which he has named 'Drums in Motion'. These workshops are aimed at people with physical challenges. Andrew tailors each workshop to the needs of the people attending. Some may not be able to use conventional drumsticks or some may only be able to use one hand, either way he makes sure everyone can be involved. Andrew recently held one of his personal workshops in Adelaide for Novita Children's Services, at a camp for kids with severe physical and communication disabilities.

Andrew is also currently working on a drum tutorial DVD that he has entitled 'Overcoming Challenges'. As the title suggests, it will be a drum tutorial/motivational DVD aimed at drummers who have challenges they face in their lives.

Andrew is proud of his endorsement with DW Drums and recently became a member of Vic Firth's PDT program after being contacted by Vic Firth U.S.A on a recommendation from Dom Famularo.

Andrew plays a DW Pacific acoustic drum kit with DDT and Roland drum triggers, which run through a Roland TD-8 V-Drum module to help with physical obstacles, related to playing drums.

Andrew Hewitt has clearly made his mark on the music scene. There's no doubt he will continue to do so through his amazing drive and determination and his tireless work in helping those who suffer similar disabilities, persevere against the greatest of obstacles to achieve their dreams.

*"My outlook on life is simply that life is too short to sit around and do nothing. Being born with a physical disability has helped me thrive to exceed all barriers placed before me. Just because I have a disability, doesn't mean I have to stop functioning in life. I believe that persistence and determination are the keys to my success".*

For more information about Andrew or to drop Andrew an e-mail, check out his official website; [www.drummerstix.com.au](http://www.drummerstix.com.au)