

IT'S GREAT OUTDOORS

FESTIVAL REVIEWS

NIGHT took a tour of the best summer dance festivals, and encountered fantastic performances, dazzling sets, enormous sound systems and some very tired, if very proud, production crews.

Festival Drinks: Strongbow Cider House

As seen at: Hi-Fi North, Isle of Wight Festival, Global Gathering, V Festival and Creamfields.
Total Drinks Served: 300,000 drinks samples, 160,000 pints of Strongbow

Number of people entertained: 500,000

Strongbow Cider House artists:

Rob Calder, Scottish and Newcastle UK cider brand manager: "We had 68 DJs and 40 live acts. Our highlights included Hayseed Dixie, Son of Dave, Caged Baby and the Infadels but there were many more. We had a base of performers that we were delighted to welcome back to the Strongbow Cider House as well as many more that we showcased for the first time."

Strongbow Cider House highlight:

Rob: "Seeing Son of Dave perform his incredible one-man-band and human beatbox hybrid - a fascinating performer who got the crowd begging for more inside the Strongbow Cider House, even with beautiful sunshine outside. A real performer with an incredible ability to entertain."

Strongbow's summer achievement:

Rob: "We provided over 300,000 samples during the festivals and the feedback has been fantastic."

Strongbow's memorable moment:

Rob: "On our trip to the Isle of Wight festival, we had Kate Moss and Bobby Gillespie after Primal Scream had performed on the main stage. They were both chatting up a storm over a glass of Cirrus!"

GLADE (15-16 JULY)

Despite reports of gatecrashers infiltrating the secret Glade site, thousands of ticket-paying dance fans at Glade had a fantastic time during a sun-drenched weekend, with Sasha, Dreadzone, DJ AFX, and The Bays bringing a little underground to the UK festival scene. Originally a part of Glastonbury, the Glade has branched out to become one of the country's most credible events, boasting idyllic locations, blissed-out clubbers, and a cracking mix of breakbeat, house, drum 'n' bass and psy-trance. With Glastonbury out this year, the Glade kicked off the summer with a welcome slice of the Glastonbury vibe, boasting boutique stalls, charity appeals, sun-kissed clubbers and over 500 stewards looking after the crowds.

As a small outdoor event for crowds of up to 20,000, the Glade required a site-wide sound installation that could provide impact at a controllable sound pressure level. For this, Funktion One systems were used for four areas at this year's event, with Funktion One themselves providing sound and system engineering for the main Origin stage and the Sancho Panza tent.



Oxford's Beat Audio provided a Funktion One system for the Overkill tent, while installers 4D PA also provided Funktion One to the ID Spiral area.

The Sancho Panza tent, newly enlarged for 2006, saw the deployment of three Funktion One Dance Stack systems (left, right and rear) supplemented by two

Resolution 2ws for in-fill in the rear bar area. The DJ mixer was an FF-6000 with DJ monitoring provided by Funktion One's new RM15 Stage Monitors.

The Origin stage made use of Funktion One's ground breaking Ambisonic moving sound technology. The set-up was a six-stack hexagonal loudspeaker arrangement with five high-intensity Resolution 5 mid to high enclosures left and right of the stage, and two wider dispersion Resolution 4 enclosures (with F218 bass units beneath) in each of the other four loudspeaker positions. Funktion One also used the festival to show off their new self-powered F221 double 21" horn loaded bass enclosures, with eight of these providing the main bass energy to drive the event. They offer an unprecedented combination of depth, upper bass speed and high efficiency. On the Origin stage, most DJs used the FF-6000 mixer.

A pair of Funktion One's new self-powered Resolution 2 full range loudspeakers were used for DJ monitors, providing on-stage sound to match that of the front of house. The sonic accuracy of this Funktion One system combined with the quality of the Ambisonic filters made for a totally immersive audio experience.

Says David Bruml of Funktion One: "Last year this stage was the largest source of local noise complaints but with the focused sound control offered by Funktion One's Resolution system, this year no environmental complaints were received as a result of this stage despite having the highest audience SPL."

GLOBAL GATHERING (28 - 29 JULY)

There was something for everyone at Angel Music Group's Global Gathering on the weekend of 28-29 July, and with venerable, festival-friendly dance acts like Daft Punk and Fatboy Slim, the Angel Music Group and founder James Algate proved that they were more than capable of topping last years newly extended two day event.

A capacity crowd of 25,000 descended on Long Marston Airfield, Stratford Upon Avon, to set up camp on Friday, while 45,000 people turned up on Saturday.