

# DJs spin into big event

## Defending champ may not try for 3-peat

**F**OR THOSE wondering if DJ Solution will pull off an amazing three-peat in the Hawaii regional of the DMC (Dance Music Community) DJ Championships tomorrow night — keep wondering. “Everyone’s asking me that, but I don’t know what to tell them,” says the teenage mixmaster, known to his closest associates as Radford High senior Kyle Cardenas. Although he fended off considerable competition to take top honors in 2001 and 2002, a third consecutive first place finish is still up in the air. When asked earlier this week if he intended to defend his title, Cardenas was still undecided. “We’ll just see that day whether I’ll be there or not,” he said.

Within a decade of its formation as a record subscription service in 1983, DMC was recognized the world over as the ultimate DJ contest, as it began pitting the world’s most nimble-fingered turntablists against each other in a spectacular showcase format. Contestants are judged on six-minute routines, in which they display their mixing, scratching and beat-juggling DJ skills. Two years ago, DMC expanded its scope to include a regional heat in Honolulu.

“We were looking for new cities and we decided to try Honolulu,” explains Charles Tuason, DMC events coordinator. “We did our homework and found out that there was a good turntablist community in Hawaii, so we tried it out. We’ve had no complaints.”

NOT ONLY HAVE Hawaii’s DMC entrants fared well in local battles, but a few have also garnered awards in other prestigious international competitions. Heralded Hawaii turntablist outfit Nocturnal Sound Krew took top prize in the International Turntablist Federation (ITF) group category in 2001 and even more impressively, retained their title in



2002. DJ Solution, a card-carrying NSK member, was also a runner-up in the invitation-only Allies U.S. All-Star Beatdown in California last year, while teammate DJ Deception reached the ITF’s 2001 national semifinals before conceding to eventual world champion DJ Klever.

“Hawaii competitors rank pretty high not just in the DMC battles, but other battles all over the world,” says Tuason. “In a few more years, I expect them to win the USA finals. Honolulu turned out to be one of the best cities in the tour and we always look forward to see the new talent that comes out of Hawaii.”

Solution’s own performance last year was capped with inventive beat-juggling, as he transformed Ludacris’ catchy “Roll Out” riff into an authoritative, mesmeric kick-and-snare rhythm. “I guess the judges saw how I was trying to freak it a little bit different from the others,” he reasons. “I tried to go for originality, aggressiveness and composition and keep



Last year’s event was a packed affair. Above, the so-called “1st Lady of the Tables” spins the wheels of steel. At left, DJ Craze, left, Thud Rumble, Yografrog and Charles pose for the camera.

everything at a steady, upbeat pace.”

WHILE SOLUTION admits to working on a few routines here and there over the past year, none were tailored specifically towards this year’s contest. “My goals toward Djing are trying to expand outside of battling and try to go into a more musical direction,” he reveals. “I’ve just been making routines

and contemplating this week if I should or not.”

If he decides to drop out of this weekend’s contest, other competitors may breathe a sigh of relief. Still, DJ Solution is not opposed to offering tips to his fellow contestants. “Don’t listen to what anyone says about your routine,” he advises. “If you like it, then go for it and hope for the best. That’s all I did and I got what I wanted.”

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREG DEHNERT