

# JIM McGorman



who worked at a management company. He said there was a female artist (Rebekah) there who needed “someone like me” – a guy who could play keyboards, guitar and sing like a lead singer. As it turned out, I got the gig; ten years, several world tours with various artists (Michelle Branch, Cher, New Radicals, just to name a few) and a hit international T.V. show later, I got another call.

It was from Paul Stanley.

When I checked my voicemail that early September day, I was shocked to hear that smoky, distinctive voice. He had left a message telling me that he had a solo record coming out, and wanted to talk to me (and the House Band) about playing with him. I immediately called my childhood friends and told them about the call. Growing up in the South Jersey/Philly area, rock n’ roll was our upbringing. KISS, Bon Jovi, Cinderella, etc. They were the soundtrack of our high school days. When I finally spoke with him, he was as cool and down to earth as anyone I have ever met, let alone someone who has sold around 80 million records.

After a few phone calls, Paul and his

manager, Doc McGhee, invited us to dinner. It was over a meal that they offered us a job to be Paul’s band for a month-long tour to promote Paul’s new record, *Live to Win*.

The timing was such that there were a few weeks left on the second season of *Rock Star*. After the last show, we only had a week before we had to start learning KISS/Paul songs. It was bit tight, but we learned about twenty songs and started rehearsing right away.

One thing we quickly learned about Paul is that he is an incredibly hard worker. When we first started to play, Paul Mirkovich (keyboards, vocals) said, “Paul, you don’t need to sing with us every time. We know all the singing is in a really high register.” Paul Stanley said, “This is what I do. If you play it, I’m gonna sing it.” During rehearsals, he was the first one there and the last one to leave. You rarely see that in a singer, especially one that has had the success that he has. It was really great to see someone that I admire live up to all the expectations and surpass them.

It’s always an odd thing to play music that you’ve heard on a record so many

times. You have to take something that is so firmly established in your head and play it live in a way that is true to the original spirit, but also bring a fresh look on it. At least that’s how I look at it. To me, that was our job in rehearsal. I wanted us to give the new songs a live feel, and bring the same approach to some of the older material.

One thing that was interesting was that three of us played guitar. Though Paul may be best known for being a charismatic front man, he is also a great guitar player. He does it so effortlessly that you almost don’t even realize that he’s playing. When we first got together, he was showing us a lot of the guitar parts for the songs. It’s crazy to think that he wrote them. Having three guitar players in a band gives you a lot of freedom and confidence. You know that all the parts from the record are being covered and you can take some liberties to be musical that way.

During the rehearsals, I also had one of the coolest days of my musical life.

