

## Airbourne - Runnin Wild (2007)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Stand Up For Rock 'N' Roll* 02. *Runnin' Wild* 03. *Too Much, Too Young, Too Fast* 04. *Diamond In The Rough* 05. *Fat City* 06. *Blackjack* 07. *What's Eatin' You* 08. *Girls In Black* 09. *Cheap Wine & Cheaper Women* 10. *Heartbreaker* 11. *Let's Ride* (\*2007 release) 11. *Hellfire* (\*2008 release\*) Joel O'Keeffe - vocals and lead guitar David Roads - guitar and backing vocals Justin Street - bass and backing vocals Ryan O'Keeffe – drums

With their debut album, *Runnin' Wild*, Melbourne, Australia's Airbourne add their name to a long list of Aussie and non-Aussie bands earnestly beholden to hard rock godfathers AC/DC. Although good timing may be on their side because, inevitable charges of cloning notwithstanding, there's arguably never been a greater need for fresh blood like Airbourne to come along and revive this hallowed form of basic, pub-born, boogie rock & roll. After all, 2007 marks the seventh anniversary (or, more appropriately, the seven year itch) since AC/DC delivered a studio album of their own, and that was the career lowlight *Stiff Upper Lip*, containing one great single and a lot of filler. So when compounded with Airbourne's natural, no-fuss songwriting instincts, even the most cynical of fans will likely be happy to put their suspicions aside, and simply enjoy the *Runnin' Wild* ride for what it's worth. And what it's worth, dear friends, is classic hard rock gold (if not platinum) epitomized by blue collar, straightforward, pint-lifting anthems like the title track, "Heartbreaker," and the rousing introduction of "Stand Up for Rock & Roll." Interestingly, along with instrumentally spare, mid-paced offerings such as "Diamond in the Rough," "Fat City," "What's Eating You," and even first single "Too Much, Too Young, Too Fast," Airbourne's overall aesthetic draws as much from Brian Johnson-era AC/DC as the more commonly emulated Bon Scott -- and perhaps this too is what helps to distinguish them from their more hopelessly indebted predecessors (hello, Rhino Bucket!). In any case, the biting attack brought to bear by lead shrieker and guitarist Joel O'Keeffe and his crew rarely falls short of electrifying results, but there's obviously an incrementally spine-tingling energy to be found in the album's faster-paced, hard-driving offerings such as "Blackjack," "Girls in Black," "Let's Ride" and the aforementioned title track. Finally, those still refusing to overlook the band's AC/DC-isms and focus on the songs are challenged to keep a smile off their faces during "Cheap Wine & Cheaper Women," which, like the rest of *Runnin' Wild* reminds us that it's really sort of stupid (and pointless) to resist the uplifting power of rock & roll, and therefore Airbourne

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themselves. 'Nuff said -- sometimes surprise is overrated -- let's rock! --- Eduardo Rivadavia, Rovi

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