



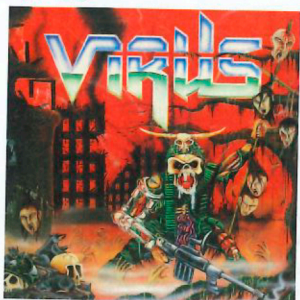
VIRUS

PRAY FOR WAR / FORCE RECON / LUNACY

(Back On Black)

Virus, Spreading The Disease via coloured vinyl reissues.

9/10



FORMED from the ashes of punk/oi! band Criminal Damage, by Henry Heston and Tez Kaylor, who were joined by John Hess and then Coke Findlay, Brighton thrash/hardcore crossover act, Virus were a much maligned band back in the eighties. With UK thrash in its infancy, not to mention several years behind its American counterparts, the likes of Onslaught, Amnesia and Obliteration

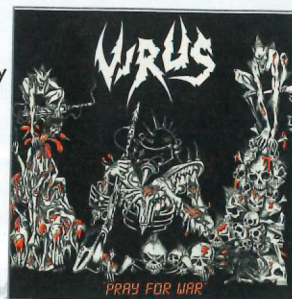
were making waves and creating a scene that was tailor made for the straight ahead thrash of Virus.

Signed by Metalworks, a renowned metal label that had released albums by Deathwish and Devils Meat, Virus's debut, 'Pray For War', was totally self-funded and released in '87 and showcased a band whose roots were well and truly underground. The production is almost none existent, whilst the sound is raw like it was recorded live. It's easy to see why the skateboarding/hardcore crew took to this band more than the average metal fan. If you enjoyed the early works of Onslaught, then 'Pray For War' will be a welcome addition.

By the time 'Force Recon' was released in '88, Virus were evolving into a pretty tight and competent thrash metal band, one that was seemingly moving away from the hardcore sound of their earlier works. By now they were getting a reputation as the bad boys of UK thrash, with most of their gigs descending into drunken brawls and punch ups as they supported the likes of Suicidal Tendencies, Megadeth, Deathwish and Nuclear Assault amongst many others. The album itself is as good as anything that the UK thrash scene gave us in '88, a minor classic that deserves your full attention and it was easy to see why they were getting compared to Canadian thrashers, Voivod.

By the time of 'Lunacy' in '89, Virus had seriously honed their thrash chops, not only getting faster, but pushing the boundaries as far as UK thrash was concerned. The likes of 'My Life' and the lengthy thrash/prog of 'Lunacy' are fine examples of this band's maturity, but back then it was all about the brutality of tracks like the pummelling 'Bad Blood' and 'A Sense Of Freedom'.

Often unfairly lumped in with bands like Lawnmower Deth and Acid Reign, Virus were actually a much better proposition than both. All three albums have been lovingly repressed on coloured vinyl.



ROB EVANS