

MAMMA'S BOYS

Each member of Black Earth took this set of vows before forming the band:

1. No long or colored hair
2. No piercings
3. No drugs or alcohol
4. No tattoos

RAVE ROCK got its hands on a recording of the band at Pecos, which raises serious questions about whether these sacred precepts are actually followed. But it works to keep their families happy, they say. What also works is keeping quiet about their love-histories during interviews. When asked about favorite food, they all begin with 'Mom's...' – mom's paneer, mom's masala dosa, mom's gulab jamun...

THE FARMHOUSE ON M.G. ROAD

The band's jammin' and practice hangout deserves special mention – a farmhouse bang in the middle of M.G. Road – a refreshing aberration in Bangalore's otherwise insane real estate skyline. Where and how this anomaly came to pass we didn't ask, busy as we were taking in the sight of sheep, turkey and chickens hanging about at the jam session.

THE BAND

SUBRAMANI GANESH, DRUMS

The band's most giggly member, who gets even gigglier when reminded of the fact. Favorite word – 'goodal' in its various forms and tenses, including goodals, goodalized, goodaled... and when he gets really carried away, it's the Palghat Iyer curry version – molagoodal. Subbu blew his one chance at getting laid, affectionately telling the girl concerned that she had fat fingers and needed to lose weight.

DENNIS OSTERN, VOCALS

A cold-turkeying coffee addict, Dennis considers organized education a stark mockery of the intellect. Going to college to him is nothing more than a hobby, an uninteresting one at that. Called Penis by those who love him most; we didn't ask why. Dennis is the only band member who can dance, and the only one who bothers about things like band image and stage presence. But he can never remember how his lines begin, even when they're as uncomplicated as 'Mother, mother...' in Bon Jovi's Keep The Faith.

BHASKAR SHENOY, BASS

Normally called Bhaski, but also goes by more entertaining names like Blondy and Pinky. Pinky is unabashedly proud of the fact that he defeated far more experienced female competitors at the flower arrangement and rangoli events in college; is allergic to the strangest things, including tea. Pinky is

unnecessarily insecure about his talent as a bass player and ridiculously superstitious about performances (eg. will not play unless Jason is in red track pants). Pinky will give up anything for some grilled chicken and a glass of badam milk.

VIKRAM SEKAR, GUITAR

His mild mannered exterior conceals a terrifying alter-ego – Iyer Boy! On the surface, Iyer Boy looks no different from Vikram Sekar, but watch his band members tremble as they recount tales of incurred wrath (like the time Pinky turned off his processor to annoy him) and you realize you don't want to mess with this guitar-wielding psychopath. Has one simple principle in life: when angry, eat everything. He spends his placid days talking for hours on the phone and gate-crashing weddings posing as a nadaswaram player.

JASON ZACHARIAH, KEYBOARDS

If Black Earth has a studboy, it's Jason. He's the band's youngest member but has already declined several marriage proposals. He makes up for this fact by regularly going to church to leech at women through sermons about chastity, then going home and pagan worshipping Jon Lord. When not jamming with Black Earth or choking over movies like Beautiful Mind, he can be found perched atop his loo, furiously seeking inspiration for Black Earth's next own comp.