

The Sacramento Bee

Sacramento Bee, The (CA)

December 15, 2008

Ex-Papa Roach member sues band

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Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: LIVING HERE

Page: D1

Article Text:

David Buckner, the founding drummer of the hit band Papa Roach, is suing to dissolve the hard-rock group, which started in Vacaville and later called Sacramento its home base.

The band fired Buckner around Christmas 2007. Buckner filed suit in Sacramento Superior Court last week to recoup hundreds of thousands of dollars to which he says he's entitled.

Buckner would not speak for the record, but his San Francisco lawyer, David M. Given, issued a statement in which Buckner explained his motivations.

"It bums me out that it had to come to this," the release quotes Buckner, who lives in Sacramento. "These guys were my soul mates. But I need to protect myself and my rights."

Papa Roach formed after Buckner met frontman Jacoby Shaddix in Vacaville in 1993. Calls to Shaddix's home and the office of Papa Roach's publicist were not returned by deadline.

The suit accuses the remaining band members -- Shaddix, guitarist Jerry Horton and bassist Tobin Esperance -- of using up assets to Buckner's detriment, sometimes borrowing against assets to finance their touring lifestyle. Also named are Universal Music Group and Cherry Lane! Music Publishing.

In the release, Buckner said his ex-bandmates were "acting like rich rock stars on some ego trip."

In addition to back royalties, the suit asks the court for dissolution of the band and a variety of property, music and touring companies formed by its members.

In the mid-1990s, Papa Roach could be seen in venues like the Guild Theater in Oak Park, where band members sold tapes with handwritten labels and gladly shared the stage with punk fans who danced and dove into the mosh pit.

Later, they signed with Dreamworks Records and their album sales rose into the millions. The band's albums "Getting Away With Murder" and "The Paramour Sessions," both recorded with Buckner, were hits.

Now Papa Roach appears to have done its own cover of the obscurity, success, drugs and infighting story recorded repeatedly by so many bands. Substance-abuse problems have been reported for both founders and have strained band relations on multiple occasions, according to past press reports.

"I was going through some tough times last year, including a divorce," Buckner's release said. "And the guys decided to let me go."

Buckner was married to Mia Tyler, daughter of Aerosmith's Steven Tyler and sister of actress Liv Tyler.

He now plays with Last Angels, a Sacramento-based band.

Call The Bee's Carlos Alcala, (916) 321-1987.

Caption:

Universal Music Group

Papa Roach's former drummer David Buckner, second from left, is suing his ex-bandmates.

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Record Number: SAC_0405252835