

issue 45

KNOX HAMILTON – KEVIN DEVINE – LYDIA – ONE OK ROCK & MORE

HIGHLIGHT

MAGAZINE

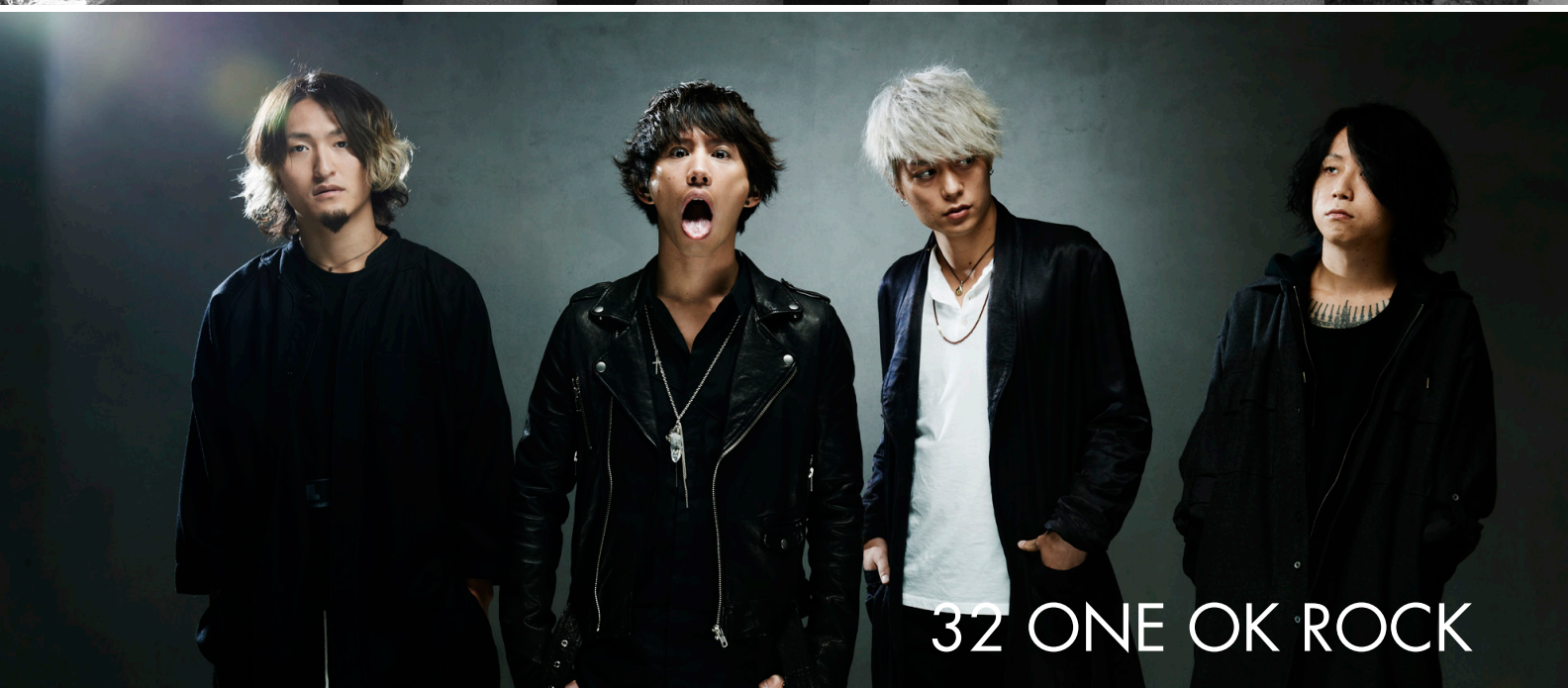
Our Last
Night



24 KEVIN DEVINE



20 KNOX HAMILTON



32 ONE OK ROCK



ONE OK



A photograph of two men standing in a dark, industrial-style setting. The man on the left has short, spiky, light-colored hair and is wearing a white t-shirt under a dark, open jacket. The man on the right has long, dark, wavy hair and is wearing a dark, open jacket over a black t-shirt. A tattoo is visible on the right man's neck. The word 'ROCK' is overlaid in large, white, distressed, block letters across the lower half of the image. The background is a dark, textured wall, and the floor appears to be concrete.

ROCK



ONE OK ROCK_official @ONEOKROCK_japan · Sep 29

The countdown begins for our US Tour!

#oneokrock

photo by @JulenPhoto



ONE OK ROCK_official @ONEOKROCK_japan · Sep 15

Thank you!!



HOME: Japan NOW JAMMING: "Cry Out"

CURRENTLY: On the Back to the Future Hearts Tour with All Time Low, Sleeping with Sirens, and Neck Deep

WE ALL HAVE DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS.

These future selves that we hope to be propel our current selves through hell and back (if necessary) to see our dreams become reality. The four members that make up ONE OK ROCK are no different than the rest of us. Lead singer Taka set out on a mission 10 years ago to take his band and their music past Japan's borders...to the United States. And if their new record or slot on All Time Low's Back to the Future Hearts Tour are any indicators, this dream has come true.

For the past decade, ONE OK ROCK has been self-producing albums in Japan and gaining a loyal fan base in their native country. Now their music is spreading across the globe. The band's most recent album, *35xxv*, was actually re-released in English through Warner Bros. Records, making the deluxe edition their first "American" album to date. Taka, the band's lead singer, explained that he grew up listening to the Used and Good Charlotte—bands that have worked with John Feldmann on quite a few albums. When ONE OK ROCK was given the chance to collaborate with the renowned producer, Taka was able to watch another childhood dream materialize.

When *35xxv* was originally created, the lyrics were all written in Japanese, and despite the band's long-term goals, they didn't really think about how the songs would sound once translated. This is where Feldmann's experience—as well as the aid of a few friends turned translators—was incredibly useful.

In Japan, Taka explains, the music relies heavily upon sounds and melodies, but he claims that American music is "more simple, I think." Despite this perceived simplicity in comparison to Japanese music, ONE OK ROCK still dedicated a good couple of months preparing for their debut in the States.

In addition to being taken under Feldmann's wing and guided towards the best sounds to encapsulate their music, the band was able to collaborate with Kellin Quinn of Sleeping with Sirens, a band that ONE OK ROCK cites as a major influence. The meeting was facilitated by Feldmann's lengthy roster of previous projects and book of well-known alternative musicians. The collaboration culminated into Quinn singing on ONE OK ROCK's song "Paper Planes." This friendship between ONE OK ROCK and Sleeping with Sirens didn't end once *35xxv Deluxe Edition* hit American shelves. One Ok Rock is currently on All Time Low's Back to the Future Hearts tour, where they share the stage with Quinn each night. Not only do the two bands appear on the same tour (another dream come true for Taka), but Quinn also comes out to perform "Paper Planes" each night.

I attended the first night of the tour in Orlando, Florida, because I wasn't passing up an opportunity to see these bands collide on one stage. ONE OK ROCK played first, and despite being a more recent addition to the alternative music scene in America than the rest of the line-up, their music provided the anticipated level of pop-punk and rock to get the crowd ready for the rest of the night. When Quinn came out for "Paper Planes," the audience responded with deafening screams of surprise. However, it was Taka's apparent joy (as well as the rest of the band's clear enthusiasm and pure gratitude to be where they were) that was most apparent.

"I love it! My dream of touring in the US has come true," Taka explained.

I left the concert that night as one would expect: sweaty, without a voice, and with an incessant ringing in my ears. Yet, this American way of going to a concert, or devoting as much energy and participation in the performance as the band, is quite different from what ONE OK ROCK is used to.

"It's totally different. [In the] United States, everyone is singing louder, but in Japan, it's more calm and [people] just listen," Taka explained.

This concept of a concert is hard for my American pop-punk brain to fully understand.

Beyond the fan and musical differences, Taka and the rest of ONE OK ROCK are "loving" each and every moment of their first American adventure. Taka recited some of his favorite cities (New York, Los Angeles and Nashville made the top of the list) and expressed a general wonderment toward his time in the states. As the band's tour manager Levi Tecofsky said, "getting their music across to more people [has been] Taka's big dream" for quite some time.

When asked what the challenges have been on the way to fulfilling so many of his dreams, Taka claimed that they've been non-existent.

"I like difficult stuff. That's why I tried to look for challenges," he said.

The band has encountered its fair share of difficult moments while trying to break into the music scene over the past 10 years, especially gaining access to American ears. But the stadiums packed with screaming, sweaty fans, belting out all the words in Japan combined with their entrance in the States prove that nothing will stop ONE OK ROCK from pursuing their dreams.

PHOTOS: Kazuaki Seki | INTERVIEW & STORY: Alexandra Shimalla