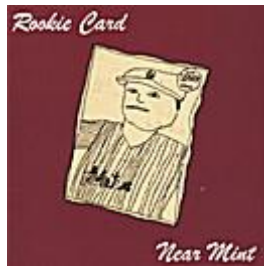


## Mp3 Rookie Card - Near Mint



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2004 San Diego Music Award winner. Powerpop country meets garage, ska and anthemic waltzes. A whole lot of stick in your head smart/fun songs that are WAY better than the band you see listed above and below us. Bet me. 15 MP3 Songs POP: Power Pop, ROCK: Americana Details: THE STORY SO FAR Internationally unsigned recording artists Rookie Card are off to quite a start. Ever heard of a band's first demo getting nominated for an award? Neither have I. Their sound falls somewhere in the alt/indierock world with the slight twang of country. The emphasis is always on good songwriting, smart lyrics, and catchy hooks which means the band can knock 'em dead at an indie snob convention OR a San Diego Padres game. The Rookie Card tale started when, after 10 years of noodling and one-off bands, Adam Gimbel decided to get slightly more serious about rock stardom. After a few solo acoustic shows to get warmed up, John Andrews (ex-Contra Guerra) answered an ad for guitarist that Gimbel had placed in a local weekly. The two hit it off and found a rhythm section in local basher Eric Casas on drums and Tim Peacock on bass. Casas left after a couple of shows and was replaced by Nasrallah "Animal" Helewa. With Andrews and Gimbel switching off on lead vocals, the band played a handful of shows with alt-rock legends galore, performed on local radio stations, charted high on mp3charts, were scheduled to be on a UK compilation and seemed well on their way to...something. With Andrews' status as a San Diego area resident in question, the band refrained from recording and played their last show in August 2001. Peacock had already left to concentrate on his own band, Like Swimming (and later joined Waterline Drift), while Andrews moved to the LA area and continues to shape young minds to this day. Gimbel spent the next few months doing solo gigs, trying to sing classic British blues songs with a North County band and doing a show with side project Cover Me Badd. Helewa played a lot of video games. Jason Hee joined the band full-time and some fun shows were played as the lead guitarist search went

on and on and on, stopped on Eric Daniel's bolo tie for 10 days and then continued on and on and on.....Finally, Gabe showed up with his guitar (no guitar case, though) to stop the power trio insanity. After a fantastic year of guitarin', trumpetin' and keyboardin', Gabe was too busy to carry the Rookie torch. Old friend Dylan Martinez showed up, dangling keys to a plush tourvan and after a few shows as their "temporary" guitarist, he won their hearts and minds. Then Jason Hee shrugged one last time and left, making room for the latest Rookie phenom, Kevin Gossett, who was let into the band after being strung along for a month so he'd REALLY appreciate getting the job. Their debut demo EP, First Day Of Class, was nominated for Best Local Recording at the 2003 San Diego Music Awards, a feat unheard of for a mostly self-produced debut demo. They appeared on the 2003 SDMA CD and were asked to organize and headline one of the pre-Awards Show concerts. In 2004, they released their first full length album, Near Mint on their own Blanco Nino Records. It doesn't sound like a debut album. But it is. The band's energy and kitchen sink influences were perfectly captured by producer Mike Kamoo at San Diego recording hotspot Earthling Studios. Powerpop, country, garage, ska and anthemic waltzes somehow work together thanks to damn strong songs that don't sound like the first tunes someone has ever written (they are). The rockers REALLY rock and the more southern style tunes are rounded out by a host of San Diego guest musicians playing mandolin, harmonica, pedal steel and fiddle. Per usual, the pop culture references are plentiful (i.e. Xanadu, Pole Position, Carly Simon, Press Your Luck, C&C Music Factory, 26 baseball team names in alphabetical order) but the album is full of sly winks instead of coming off ha-ha funny. Even the track order, thank yous and "hidden" song traditions are given a new twist. Definitely not a typical first record. The album immediately received a ton of local radio airplay and glowing press (including a coverstory for SD Music Matters Magazine that showed them eating KFC with the world-famous San Diego Chicken). Within 3 weeks of its release, the band was nominated for TWO 2004 SDMA's invited to play at the awards ceremony, where they took home the award for Best Pop Act. To celebrate its release, Rookie Card played San Diego's legendary Casbah to a near capacity crowd. For a truly memorable encore, they pulled the entire audience outside onto the street for one last song. Being conveniently located in the San Diego Airport flightpath, it wasn't long before a plane flew over and the band broke into the Beatles' "Back In The USSR" without missing a beat. Two minutes and 43 seconds later, another plane flew over. Just like on the White Album. The band manage to do something fun and newsworthy more often than not, whether it's plugging into a Judas Priest guitar on the wall

during a rawk set at the Hard Rock Cafe, doing a Halloween show in Star Wars outfits as Wookie Card or playing acoustic sets before the San Diego premiere of Wilco movie "I Am Trying To Break Your Heart". In their first couple of years, they've got more local press and shows opening for their heroes than most bands ever will. Plus, they're humble enough not to brag about it. BRAG The band was a featured "On The Radar" artist on mp3.com's homepage, getting over 5000 plays in one week and topping their alt-country, indiepop and power pop charts as a result. Thousands of people have visited their website, including tons of Leap Year babies who are now calling the Rookie Card song "2/29" their anthem (a little scary, actually). Their Strokes/Tom Petty medley "Last Nite She Was An American Gurl" was the subject of a national newspiece run by Wireless Flash. Recently, Canadian documentary producers found the band's site and used a Rookie Card song in their film about Jones Soda, Chasing Dane. An advanced copy of their debut album, Near Mint, was named "local album of the week" by 94.9 FM two months before its release and was a featured release on Fox TV's "Fox Rox". The band has played live on Fox TV's Humane Society telethon and Fox Rox, NBC affiliate KNSD's Sunday morning news show, Balboa Park's huge annual Earth Day fair, San Diego County Fair, Adams Avenue Street Fair, Comicon, San Diego Gulls' post-playoff game party, 91X, 92.1 and 94.9's local radio shows and Jack Murphy Stadium for the last weekend of Padres baseball there. NAME DROP Rookie Card has played packed shows from LA's Spaceland Knitting Factory to SF's Independent and all over San Diego (Casbah, Hard Rock Cafe, Cane's, Belly Up, La Jolla Contemporary Museum of Art) The band has shared the stage with Calxico, Bow Wow Wow, David J (Love Rockets), Incredible Moses Leroy, Brothers Creeggan (Barenaked Ladies), Jon Auer (The Posies), El Destroyo (Brian Ritchie of Violent Femmes), the Rugburns, Convoy, Beulah, Elf Power, Clem Snide, the Pernice Brothers, Apples In Stereo, General Public, Tommy Stinson, El Vez and other national touring acts. Gimbel has played solo shows with the Posies, Frank Black, and Imperial Teen. His everchanging covers side project Cover Me Badd is always playing high profile shows (91X's Halloween show, LA's Knitting Factory, El Vez, etc). WHAT'S IN A NAME? By the way, the light bulb over the head for the band name came from the "Heroes of the Torah" trading cards in the movie Keeping The Faith. Check out the real deal Torah Link Collecting Cards. Rookiecardthemovie came from, well, rookiecard was taken and "rookiecardmusic" or "rookiecardtheband" just seemed too obvious. Check the Scram! page for more rookie sites. Here's a few annagrams: I ADORE ROCK RED CAIRO OK AIR ROCK ODE KID A OR CORE A RICK RODEO CARRIE DO OK I CREAK DOOR CIA ORDER OK CAR

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