

Amped

Cool like the stars and sexy people in bars

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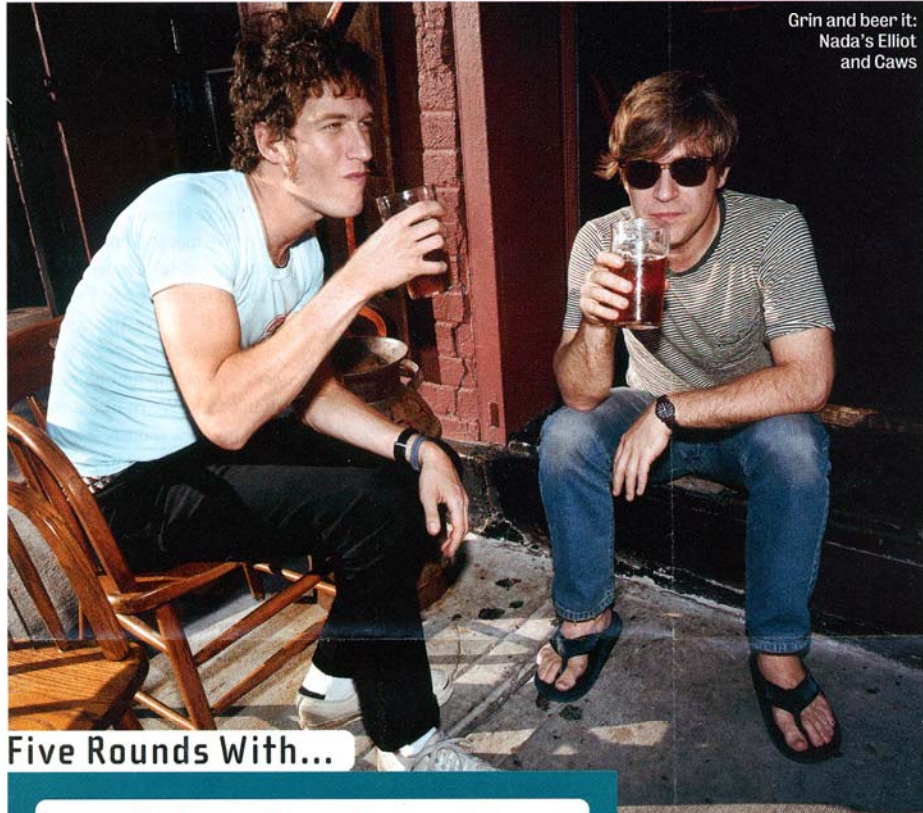
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Grin and beer it: Nada's Elliot and Caws

Five Rounds With...

Nada Surf

SOME GUYS CHOOSE THEIR local bar by its charming patrons, its selection of beers, or a hot bartender with a generous pour. For Nada Surf drummer Ira Elliot, it was far simpler. "I live right there," he says, pointing from his chair at Brooklyn's Zabloski's bar to a building across the street. "It's fair to say I'm in here pretty much every day." Until recently, bassist Daniel Lorca lived in that loft with him, but Lorca has recently relocated back to his home city of

Madrid. Today, that leaves Elliot and singer-guitarist Matthew Caws to represent the talented indie-rock trio, now embarking on the second chapter of the band's life. The first centered on the quirky mid-'90s hit "Popular," a song with a big hook and a bigger video that brought them fame, then misery, as a battle with their record label saw their follow-up album delayed for two years Stateside. (They eventually released it themselves.) Then, in 2003, they resurfaced, older and

wiser, armed with an album of astounding pop songs, *Let Go*, that won over nearly every critic on earth. Caws points out that *The Weight Is a Gift*, their new—and also astoundingly good—record (out Sept. 13), feels like their second rather than their fourth. "We're more at peace now," Caws says. "It's nice to have been around the block." —Josh Dean

ROUND 1

JE SUIS UNE ROCK STAR!

Brooklyn Lager for LTT and *Caws*, *Yuengling* for Elliot.

LTT So, what's up with the singing

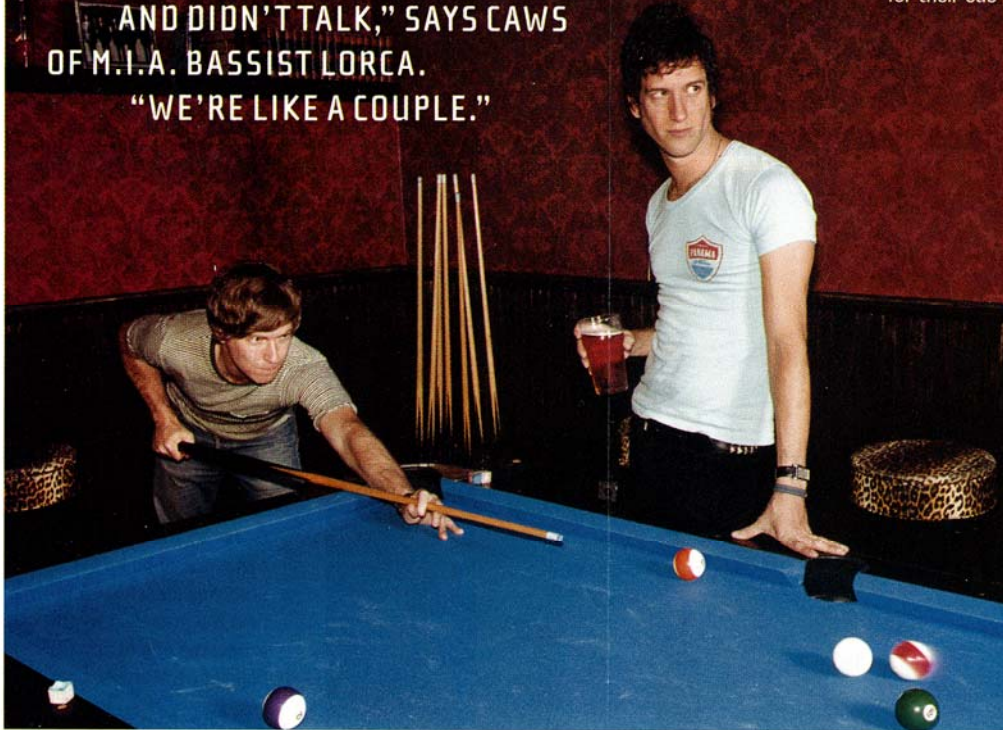
ED.'S LETTER

Last night a few of us here took in one of the last great shows of summer: Death Cab for Cutie, outside, in Central Park, under what stars NYC permits, in uncharacteristically cool weather. DCFC's U.S. tour kicks off in September. Bet you my last Rolo it'll be one of the first great shows of your fall. —Jason Adams

ON THE COVER Death Cab for Cutie photographed for LTT by Ethan Hill in Los Angeles on Aug. 4, 2005

"WE SPLIT UP FOR ONE YEAR AND DIDN'T TALK," SAYS CAWS OF M.I.A. BASSIST LORCA. "WE'RE LIKE A COUPLE."

Caws and Elliot wait for their cue



in French? ["Là Pour Ça" on *Let Go* is sung entirely in French.]

Caws I spent a couple years there when I was a kid. My mom teaches French lit. Daniel and I met when we were 5, at Lycée Français in Manhattan.

LTT Ira, can you, um, *parler*?

Elliot Nope. And I always get hassled by the French. [*Affects French accent*] So you are back and you still don't speak ze French? [*Back to normal voice*] I used to apologize but now I'm like [*affects redneck accent*], "Y'all speak English real well, so why bother?"

LTT So, Matthew, you and Daniel can talk s--- about Ira behind his back.

Caws Never. That's very uncool. I'm ashamed to remember an old band where we did do that.

ROUND 2

EU SOU UM ROCK STAR!

Coronas for LTT and Caws, Yuengling for Elliot. Over a game of pool, talk returns to the

proximity of Elliot's home to the bar, originally rented by Lorca in the early '90s, long before this part of Brooklyn had fully gentrified and become a community of hipsters.

Elliot Ostensibly, Dan still lives there, but he's more comfortable in Madrid or Paris or Vienna or wherever he is. He's so European. I couldn't do that. I'm at home here.

Caws I've never lived anywhere else as an adult. I think it'd be hard to leave because my mom is here. I know it's cliché, but I do wish you could live 200 years. I'd love to spend 10 years in Stockholm, 10 years in London, 10 years in Paris... We just went to Brazil for the first time. We hadn't put out a record there since 1996, so we were expecting maybe 100 fans plus 100 curious onlookers. It was more like 800 at our first show—and they knew all the words! It was fantastic and a lab experiment in the Internet's power for us.

Caws misses a shot and puts his

cue on the table.

Caws Out of shame, I lay down my cue. I forfeit.

ROUND 3

PAL JOEY

Coronas all around.

LTT You guys were on *Where Is My Mind: A Tribute to the Pixies* (1999), right?

Caws Yep. We've done three, actually: Iggy Pop, Pixies, Big Star.

Elliot For the Iggy one, they asked us to back up Joey Ramone at the release party on "I Wanna Be Sedated."

Caws We practiced it a bunch of times at the original speed, but when the producer counted it off it was so fast, like thrash speed. Then Ira played it at the record speed and we won. Joey hadn't played it like that in years. Afterwards, he said, "That was really nice. It reminded me of the old days."

Elliot That was, like, the greatest compliment ever.

Caws So afterwards, Joey says,

"Pick six or seven of your favorite Ramones songs and at your next show I'll come up and sing them with you." We did eight. It was awesome.

ROUND 4

ONE ROCKIN' MARRIAGE

Coronas!

LTT You've known Daniel forever...
Caws We met at 5 but didn't start hanging out until much later. We started our first band when we were 14. We've pretty much played together ever since, except we split up for one year and didn't talk. We're like a couple. He's my rock spouse.

LTT Do you miss him?

Caws Sure. But we see him a lot. And he really doesn't have any reason to be here anymore. He and his long-term girlfriend broke up, and that was really the only thing keeping him in America.

LTT Um, how about the other two guys in his band?

Elliot He comes back when we need him.

ROUND 5

QUITTING TIME!

That's right—more Coronas! An obscure AC/DC track comes on the jukebox.

Elliot I had the greatest idea for a cover band. KC/DC—KC and the Sunshine Band songs played as AC/DC would sing them, and vice versa. Imagine "Back in Black" as KC would play it!

Conversation turns to a particular note Caws hits on the new record that, for some reason, really irks Elliot.

Elliot It's one note out of, like, 8,000. If anyone else noticed, I'd be shocked. But it still bugs me.

Caws [*Standing up*] I quit! ■