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## DEE JAY SILVER KEEPS FASTER HORSES RUNNING

**The country music DJ will debut his new electro-party act, RoadHouse, at this weekend's festival**

Dee Jay Silver has logged more time on stage at Faster Horses than any other artist.

Silver has been the in-house DJ for the three-day country music festival every year since its inception in 2013. He returns this weekend for the fest's seventh go-round, spinning tunes in between acts — Keith Urban, Toby Keith and the Zac Brown Band are headlining — and keeping the crowd's energy level high all weekend long.

"Faster Horses is my favorite time of the year," says Silver, on the phone this week from his home in Nashville, Tennessee. "I'm proud to be a part of it, and I'll play it as long as they let me. It's something I wish we could do more than once a year." "I'm blessed enough that I get to play festivals all over the world, and I tell everybody, 2 p.m. at Faster Horses is 11 o'clock at any other festival," says Silver, who tours 50 weeks a year and has played 300 shows annually for the last 15 years.

"Everything's crazy at Faster Horses. You see guys in American flag thong underwear running around. You see everything."



Silver, whose real name is John Perdue, has been touring as country music superstar Jason Aldean's DJ for years, but breaks off from Aldean for Faster Horses duty. The hard-partying crowd and the energy inside the Michigan International Speedway campgrounds makes the event stand out even among country music fests, he says.

That's because of the campgrounds and the atmosphere inside the festival, he says. During the fest, Faster Horses becomes its own community.

"You live it. It's not something where you're going and staying in a Ritz Carlton and coming back in. You're sleeping in whatever you brought to sleep in, you're eating and drinking whatever you brought to eat and drink, and you're going nowhere else for four days," he says.

Silver spins country, classic rock and hip-hop tunes on the main stage from his laptop, never repeating a song during the weekend, he says. No-brainers that always work well for the Faster Horses crowd include Kid Rock and Bob Seger songs, and Silver says he'll always remember the time he dropped Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'" at the first Faster Horses festival and heard the crowd roar back the "south Detroit" line.

"I don't know how many people, 25,000, 30,000 people, all with their lighters in the air, singing just as proud as they could sing and as loud as they could sing," he says. "I remember looking back at (festival producer) Brian O'Connell and saying, 'holy (expletive), you've got something here.'"

Silver was born in Texas and his family had moved to Arkansas by the time he was in high school. His eyes were opened to the possibilities of live music when he saw a then-unknown Rage Against the Machine open up a concert for the Beastie Boys and Cypress Hill when he was in 10th grade.

"I was in awe, I had never seen anything like it," says Silver, who has a wife, Jenna, and two young children — 2-and-a-half year old Wake and 3-month-old Davis — at home in Nashville. "That day proved to me you can be different and be something. You don't have to swim along the same lines as everyone else, you can do what you do."



Silver began toiling with turntables while working as a bouncer in Springfield, Missouri, and eventually carved his own path as a DJ in the country music world. He linked up with Aldean in 2010, and in 2013 he became the first DJ to sign a deal with a major label in Nashville. That year, he released his debut EP, "Country Club," and he releases his new album "Corners" on July 26.

He now plays his own shows in addition to dates with Aldean, and at Faster Horses he's debuting his new project, RoadHouse, a collaboration with DJ Ikon he describes as the Chainsmokers meets Girl Talk, rooted in country music. "It's mash-ups, party music, everything," he says. "It's the 'Cha Cha Slide,' 'Old Town Road' and Jason Aldean."

RoadHouse makes its debut performance at Faster Horses' Next from Nashville stage at 11:20 p.m. Saturday, after Toby Keith closes out the main stage.

Silver sees himself carrying on the full-time DJ lifestyle for another 10 years, at which time he'd love to turn over the business to a ring of underlings and take a job as an entertainment director at a Las Vegas casino.

First up, though, is this weekend's festival, and having been through his share of Faster Horses, he has a few tips to festgoers to make the most of the experience.

"Stay hydrated, bring sunscreen, make new friends and leave the worries of the world in Detroit," he says. "You're walking into a safe zone at Faster Horses."