

★ CLASSIC ★

ROCK

Let's Get
ROCKED

LIVE

Back in
the saddle:
Paul Rodgers
rides again.



Paul Rodgers

Chichester The Venue

Rodgers' finest earn charity £40k in one night.

PAUL RODGERS IS a remarkable talent, drawing adoring fans from as far as Newcastle and New York to this intimate gig in support of local charity Racehorse Sanctuary, of which he's patron. Set in the middle of an industrial estate, the venue nevertheless feels magical, with an open three-sided stage and crystal clear sound. Former Cutting Crew keyboardist Tony Moore comperes the evening's entertainment and memorabilia auctions, playing an acoustic version of his former band's *Died In Your Arms* before Rodgers takes stage.

Immediately hitting the groove with Free classics *Little Bit Of Love*, *Fire And Water* and amiable shuffle of *My Brother Jake*, Rodgers looks relaxed. Jumping saddle, his backing band tonight are the trusty steeds of charity trustee Deborah Bonham. Earlier, she performed a flawless, spirited set full of grit and soul before joining Rodgers on stage during *Be My Friend* to rapturous applause.

Rodgers' vocals are outstanding throughout as you'd expect, particularly on *The Stealer*.

More notably, the temporary band harness his formidable ability with an astonishing display; bassist Ian Rowley even merits a standing ovation from those seated in the front section for his solo on *Mr Big*. The inevitable inclusion of Bad Company's anthemic *Feel Like Makin' Love* lets Rodgers add a layer of acoustic guitar to the iconic song, matched note for note by guitarist Peter Bullick's skill and sweat.

Free's *Ride On A Pony* is a welcome addition to the setlist, while a magical *Wishing Well* and *Can't Get Enough* bring the house down. Encoring with a pristine *Walk In My Shadow* and sublime *All Right Now*, and returning by himself for an acoustic yet full-bodied rendition of Bad Company's *Seagull*, Rodgers then ushers his daughter Jasmine out to perform a short acoustic set, followed by son Steve who jokes, "Nice of dad to support myself and Jasmine tonight". With nearly £40K raised for the charity, "who needs Wembley when you've got Chichester" concludes Tony Moore. You betcha.

Richard Thompson

"THE 80s ARE COMING
AND WE'RE GOING TO BE
THE SOUNDTRACK."

