

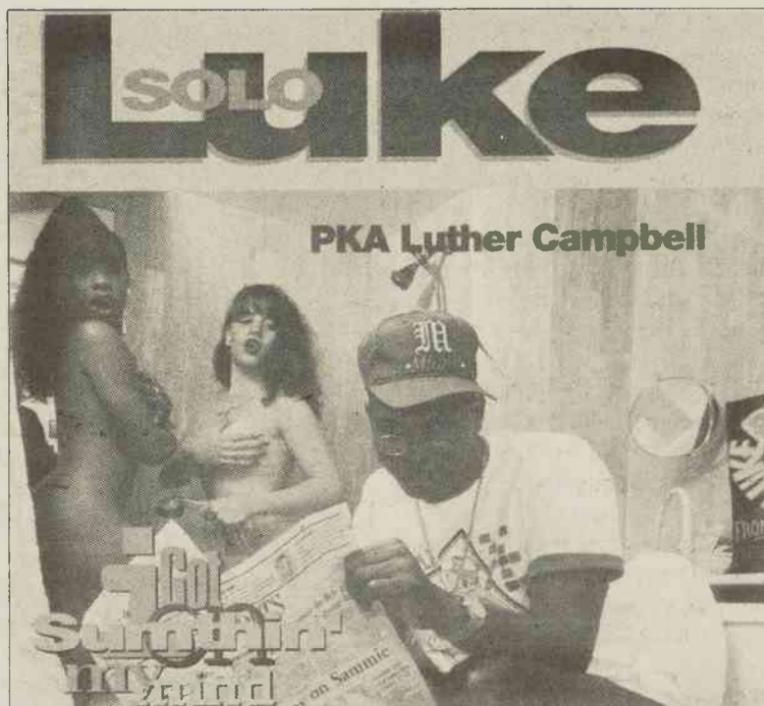
For the Record

Luke is Good, But Powerule is Better

Luke (of the 2 Live Crew)
I Got Sumthin' on my Mind (Clean Version)
Luke/Atlantic Records
Reviewed By T.J. Stancil

Okay ladies, before you say anything, this is the clean version. Luther "Luke" Campbell's second album is a little different from the first, *Banned in the U.S.A.*, which predominantly featured The 2 Live Crew. Possibly legal problems with Crew members concerning that album's royalties had something to do with their no-show on this one. Nevertheless, this album has some certified dance hits even though it is missing three songs that appear on the nasty version.

The album's first single "I Wanna Rock" is the typical Luke "I say it, you say it" cut, with boomin' bass and rhythm scratches by Devastator. It has a video that you will never see on MTV or BET because of its explicit nature, but it is not the best song on the album anyway. My personal "playable" favorite is "Breakdown" with former M.C. Shy D. associate Mike Fresh on the cut. It, like all of Luke's songs on this album, is censored but the reverberation of the words does not take away from the song. Luke invents a new catch phrase with this song, "Don't stop, get it, get it! Don't stop, rock wit it!" which is



Who needs 2 Live Crew? Luke's clean solo effort is somewhat impressive.

sure to be heard on every dance floor in the country in a matter of months.

This album has a variety of styles, though all are nasty in some form or fashion. "Menage A Trois" is a dialogue, where Luke invites two women to his mansion with interesting results. "Faking like Gangsters" features J.T. Money from Poison Clan, ("Dance all night") and takes shots at rappers who appear to be hardcore when they aren't. "Payback is a Mutha"

has J.T. Money and new Luke Records artist Bustdown who slam 2 Live Crew rivals Kid'n'Play.

I got Sumthin' on my Mind gets a B-, but the nasty version, *I got Some S--t on my Mind*, which has more songs and the dirty version of these gets an A. I'm impressed with Luke as a solo artist, so maybe he should cut his losses and forget about 2 Live Crew.

Rating: B-

Powerule
Volume I
Poetic Groove/Interscope Records
Grade: B+

Powerule is a relatively new underground Latino rap group, which is on the fringe of rap's hardcore but retains a "smooth" sound. To date, they are best known for their underground New York hit "Smooth" and subsequent release "Brick in the Wall." Powerule, which consists of rapper Prince Power, D.J. Ax, and skilled beat technician Eric Vill, are not typical of Hispanic rappers, who usually make a big issue of their Latin roots. They can be favorably compared to Cypress Hill, a Cypress, California Rap group who focus on being rappers, not Hispanic rappers.

The album is a marvel, definitely in the upper echelon of 1992 releases to date. The first single is entitled "That's the Way it is" a hardcore rap cut that contains well-used samples of U2 and Lenny Kravitz. The song acts as an inner city Hispanic anthem, one which would foster respect for Hispanics

as a race, which Prince Power doesn't think they have. Several of the album's many promising cuts are "Premises," "Pass the Vibes," "Back," "Rub off the wax," (featuring Leaders of the New School) and "Gots ta get this" (featuring El' Fishbone and Large Professor from Main Source).

Volume I gets a B+, because it is well put together musically and genuinely entertaining. Prince Power still needs to develop his rap style and voice, but D.J. Ax and E. Vill more than compensate on the musical tip.

Powerule is in the forefront of a new breed of hybrid Hispanic rappers, so watch for them in the future. Possible future releases could be the aforementioned "Premises", "Ruff neck style", or "Young Stars from Nowhere," which debuts a hitting Hispanic rap group of the same name comprised of Rebel, Johnny Jay, and Curious Jorge.

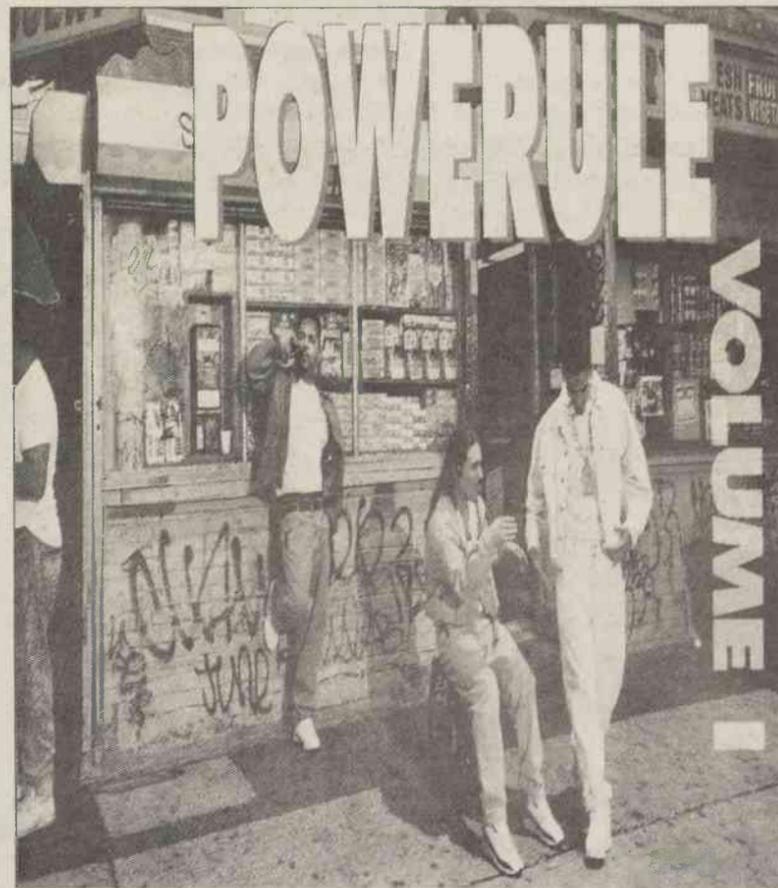
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The smooth-sounding Latino rap group is on the fringe of hardcore.