

DJ Gordon still filling the floor after 40 years

Poptastic career for disabled party man

Report by **Chris Ballinger**

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BE it a wedding reception, birthday party or work night out – for the last 40 years one DJ has been the man to turn to in Crawley.

Gordon Skeggs was just 17 when he started mastering the art of creating the perfect set-list to get a crowd on their feet.

Now aged 60 he is still going strong, having played thousands of gigs over the years and become something of a local legend.

But he readily admits becoming a DJ was not his first career choice, with his first ever performance coming about by chance.

Gordon said: "When I was a lot younger I wanted to be a singer, the only problem was I can't sing.

Limelight

"Because I liked being in the limelight I thought about joining a band, but I cannot play any instruments either.

"I was still at school when I had my first taste of being a DJ. As part of a class project we put on a school dance and managed to get a local band to come along and play.

"The only problem was they would only play two 40-minute slots so we had to organise something to fill the gap. I was the only one who stepped forward with the confidence to DJ."

The show was such a success that when Ifield Comprehensive planned its next disco, Gordon was asked to perform again.

Further requests for him to DJ quickly flowed in and eventually, in 1982, he had enough work to do the job full-time.

Gordon, from Lamberhurst Walk in Furnace Green, has achieved his success despite being born with only one hand.



FLASH GORDON: Gordon Skeggs has been a DJ for 40 years

He said: "To me it is just normal. If I am holding a microphone I obviously cannot pass it over, but I can still press any buttons I need to.

"The biggest crowd I have played to is about 14,000 and if I can do that, nothing is going to stop me.

"I have had a father come up to me at a gig and say his daughter has the same disability and how inspired he was to see anything can still be done."

There are drawbacks to being such a popular performer, as rival DJs have attempted to sabotage his shows.

"Mobile discos were setting up all over the place and rivalries started," he explained.

"One rival tried to set fire to my van and over the years my van was stolen twice."

Although he is modest about his local fame, Gordon still has quite a following to this day.

"I will be walking down the street and people will shout out 'Skeggsy' to me," he said.

"There have been times where I have performed at a couple's wedding and then many years later been asked to DJ at one of their children's weddings."

Gordon currently performs at Lb1, in Gales Drive, Three Bridges, every Friday, and at Legends, in Crawley High Street, every Tuesday night.

He added: "We get between 275 and 300 people most weeks just through word of mouth.

"I am known for playing the oldies, mainly 70s and 80s music.

"I like to interact with the crowd and put on the performance. It is not all about playing songs.

"I am working my way towards using modern equipment. I have moved onto CDs, but I miss using my vinyl.

"However, I refuse to take the next step and use a laptop because that is not my style."

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