

[D125.su](#) PROVIDENCE, 17 APRIL 1997

SOUND Initially good, improving to excellent.

IMAGE Things start poorly with a horribly unwatchable patch (becoming a habit - see [D480.su](#), [D684.su](#)) over indifferent audio. After five long minutes a better still appears, then, finally, on 6:50, we're off and running. Tonight's camera (see first screenshot below) is up in the left-side balcony, with an oblique left-to-right view across the stage, and the film it gives us is another sweet one. Though some of the close footage is a bit grainy, much is fine, as is all the medium and longer range work. Apart from short periods of dither in *Baby Blue* and *Broken*, handling is impressively steady throughout. Obstructions only become a problem during the last song, when people stand - and then not much. Even D's white hat (see below) is on his head for one song only. Our view of Larry comes and goes due to an inconveniently placed lighting rig support and not much is seen of Kemper (check out what Bob calls him during the intros!) but otherwise [D125.su](#) offers a nice balance of band and individual shots, consistently well-framed. Fine fare indeed.



RUNNING TIME Disc One: 83 minutes. Disc Two: 32 minutes. Complete gig.

PERFORMANCE Thoroughly enjoyable. Bob, five and a half weeks away from nearly meeting Elvis and, for some strange reason, playing (in Rhode Island) under a Canadian flag, digs deep tonight to give a performance 100% worthy of his name and reputation. In both *Girls* (i.e. *Big* and *North Country*) he plays lead breaks that verge (for him) on *inspired*. The former song he also frames with tasty harp at both ends, whilst the gorgeous groove of the latter is irresistible. He leans audaciously into the lines of Silvio, then maintains the Dead connection with a restrained *Devil** featuring lots of lovely, languid fiddle from Larry, seen here in only his thirteenth appearance after joining the band just three weeks before. *Baby Blue* (as ever) and *Same Again* are

both on the money. Watchtower, receiving its 1008th (!) outing, stands up whilst Tangled, far more obviously road-weary, and arguably tonight's only miss, fails to shine.

THANKS Dypulan

STARS Splendid upgrade (bad patch forgiven) of a superior show. The thrill of the moment comes forcibly across, making you wish you'd been there, and, as far as these DVDs are concerned, you can't ask for more. A well-earned five.



* Who or what first planted this song into Bob's cerebral songbook? Though only he knows, this much is true: on the 1975 Rolling Thunder tour, the last spot before D came on was given to Ramblin' Jack and, often as not, one of the four songs he'd choose to sing was Friend Of The Devil. That Bob would stand in the wings listening intently as he waited his turn is not hard to imagine ...

