Half a Serving of Laughs at Comedy Night: Mike Mandel Stands Up UNB

By Nathan Weinman

Is it any wonder that UNB can't bring prominent acts to campus? Is it a surprise that even if they did; turn out would be minimal Comedy Night: including Mike Mandel (hypnotist) and the Atomic Improv Company sounds like a good way to pass the time on a Tuesday night, right? Well wrong, at least partially wrong.

With what I thought was a decent turnout of 65-70 people (considering the $7.50 admission price) the show was all set to go at 8:30. Then why were we still sitting there waiting at 9:40? The reason is because Mike Mandel insisted that he needed 100 people to perform. For that reason we had to wait in case 30 or so people mistakenly wandered into the SUB with $7.50 to spare and no place to go. Or possibly it was so that Bar Services could sell more drinks to an increasingly hostile crowd.

Mike Mandel never did appear. I guess UNB just couldn't offer him the atmosphere within which he is accustomed to performing. I'm sorry that we didn't have people sitting in bleachers screaming his name but I think that if you agree to play or show then you perform.

Paul Mather and Donovan Workum, also known as the Atomic Improv Co., saved the night, after the announcement that the main act was not performing these guys had to come on stage in front of an audience that was more in the mood for rioting, than laughing.

This act, which has been together for five years, uses the audiences' input of topics to create hilarious and often seemingly impossible scenarios for them to act out. Their style which can range form serious theatrical performing to off the cuff locker room humour is perfect for the University audience.

By using volunteers from the audience The Atomic Improv Co., let us not only enjoy their considerable talents, but we can laugh at our friends as well. Not many people could write a Don Quixote song about playing Frisbee in the park or perform a skit about shower repairmen in the town of "Bath" even if given time to write a script. These guys do it off the top of their heads, and more importantly, are hilarious.

Hopefully, the Student Union will consider having these guys back as headliners. After all they were so good that most people left laughing even though the Student Union thought that they should only refund $3 of our admission price. Even with the delay and after having the main act cancel I would still have recommended that people see this fantastic duo.

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