

Artist sees off more than 1,000 rivals to take European title

Elvis fan crowned king of tributes

AN ELVIS tribute artist from Northamptonshire was left all shook up after beating off 1,000 rivals to be crowned the European 'King of Kings'.

Simon Patrick, aged 35, triumphed at the 'Walk a Golden Mile in My Shoes' contest held in Blackpool and will now progress to the world finals to be held in Elvis' home town Memphis, Tennessee later this year.

He said: "It was amazing. There were 1,200 Elvis fans, and they got to vote, which meant a lot more. I was absolutely ecstatic."

Mr Patrick, from Wellingborough, thanked his mother for his introduction to Elvis' music and added: "Ever since I was little I have listened to Elvis songs played by my mother Josephine."

"More often than not when I was in the tub she used to have Elvis music on in the background when I was playing with my ducks. I remember it as though it was yesterday. Thirty years on she is still playing the music."

"My mother has a big love for Elvis - I thank her more than anybody. When I am down she keeps me going and she is at every show. She also tells me what I am doing wrong and right. She is my number

By Laura Corcoran
Chronicle Reporter

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one supporter."

Mr Patrick first realised he had a talent when his friend Lee Brown noticed his likeness to the star.

He said: "Ten years ago he said to me 'just give it a go - you have nothing to lose'. He is now my manager."

"I have been doing this now for a decade. Hopefully the theatres will be the next step."

Last week fans celebrated Elvis' 75th birthday and when performing Mr Patrick likes to tell the story of Elvis through song.

He added: "I don't just do one era, I tell the whole story. I am not just a one trick pony."

"My favourite song from the 50s is Mean Woman Blues, 60s, If I Can Dream and 70s, Hurt." The outfits used in his performances are bought from a company called BK Enterprises in America, the same firm that made the stage costumes for The King himself.

As winner of the title Mr Patrick gets £1,500 cash, a suit of his choice from BK Enterprises and a chance to compete in the world finals in Memphis in August.

His next performance will be on Saturday at the Monks Park Working Men's Club, Northampton, from 8pm.



Simon Patrick has been crowned the 'King of Kings' at a competition to find the best Elvis tribute artist in Europe
CE Picture by SHARON LUCEY

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1. The seaside town of Blackpool is home to Europe's largest Elvis impersonator contest and convention: The Elvis European championships

2: The contest is held annually in early January to coincide with Elvis' birthday, this year the event was held on January 8,9 and 10

3: Blackpool also features a busy Elvis Wedding Chapel based at the Queens hotel on the south promenade

4: Memphis, Tennessee will host the Elvis World Championships in August

5: Fans of Elvis unite every August in Memphis for the annual celebration that draws people from around the world together.

6: Elvis Presley born January 8, 1935, died August 16, 1977.

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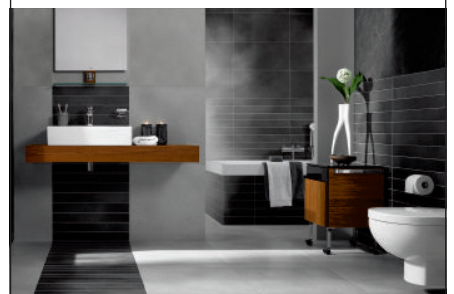
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