

HEAD TO HEAD
The British guitar
greats, onstage
in Japan on
February 21st



Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck Face Off in Japan, More Dates Likely

Yardbirds vets cover Cream, Muddy Waters; consider U.S. tour
By Andy Greene

DAYS BEFORE ERIC CLAPTON and Jeff Beck's joint headlining gigs at the Super Arena in Saitama, Japan, in February, the promoters hit the guitarists with a surprise:

TOURING

The pair were contractually obligated to jam on a 40-minute encore. "When we got the news, Eric began ringing me every

hour," says Beck, who is being inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in April and touring the U.S. afterward. (Clapton launches a U.S. tour with Steve Winwood in June.) "He said, 'Come on, we need some numbers!'" The two settled on seven songs, including Cream's "Outside Woman Blues," Muddy Waters' "You Need Love" and a finale of Sly Stone's "I Want to Take You Higher." Says Beck, "We did two verses, and the rest was the two of us blasting away, just shredding."

It was the first time the duo had ever shared a concert

bill, though in 1965 Beck was hired to replace Clapton in the Yardbirds. "The song he hated back then ["For Your Love"] shot right up in the charts in America," says Beck. "So I was the first of us to go to America, which I think pissed him off, but such is the way of show business."

The success of the gig has the pair talking about booking a tour, including potential stops at Madison Square Garden and the Hollywood Bowl. "My manager heard Eric's people were very pleased," says Beck. "We had a ball." RS