

Ska revival

Are checkered pants next?

BY JULIE JACOBS

SKA IS BACK. Combining elements of calypso, jazz and R&B, ska music originated in Jamaica in the 1960s and has waned and resurfaced several times since then, both here and in England.

CMJ New Music Report (CMJ.com) reports a ska resurgence on college radio, with many albums climbing Radio 200 (the premier college radio chart) and landing in the top 100.

Don't remember or know about ska? Here are some basics:

The bands. In the 1980s, ska reached its height of popularity here with English bands like Madness; in the '90s, U.S. band No Doubt was popular. Today, it's all about groups such as Reel Big Fish, Voodoo Glow Skulls, Mustard Plug and the Toasters.

The fans. Once associated with city-dwelling "mods" of the 1960s, ska now attracts suburban teens. "Ska seems rebellious and fun," says Rachel Weingarten, a pop culture and trends expert and president of GTK Marketing. "It represents the counterculture and lets teens be different."

The clothes. "Ska is still outside of the musical mainstream," says Robert "Bucket" Hingley, frontman for the Toasters. "Kids really get into the ska way of dressing to express themselves." Fans often will wear check-patterned clothing, "skinny" pants or short plaid skirts, in a fashion homage to the ska performers of the '80s.

The events.

Some upcoming ska shows:
3 Floors of Ska

Festival on May 5

in New York City

and Ska Weekend
Aug. 25 to 26 in Knoxville, Tenn. **W**



GOT SKA?
The dress
says yes.

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