



# TAB BENOIT

*nice and warm*

## NICE AND WARM

*Tab Benoit*

Justice Records JR 1201

**T**ab Benoit's new release showcases a variety of styles, including a heavy dose of Louisiana swamp blues, but he also tackles old standards from Howlin' Wolf, Robert Johnson and others. There are also several self-penned r&b/rock tracks which rather let the album down. For example, Benoit's worrying tendency towards the Walter Trout/Gary Moore school of guitar playing (i.e. lots of noise and no taste) on 'Open Book' and 'So High' make both rather pedestrian. This is surprising, because other songs show Benoit to be a talented guitarist and singer, a fine example of his skills being 'I Put a Spell on You' which portrays a real sense of desperation and contains a beautiful solo from Paul English on Hammond organ.

Other covers are less successful; the rhythm section on 'Killing Floor' is rather murky and Buddy Guy's 'She's Out There Somewhere' is no improvement on the original. However the acoustic 'Shining Moon' is delicately handled, with more impressive piano and

great lyrics: 'I tiptoed to the window/ Just to see how sweet she snored!' Benoit's Louisiana roots are represented by 'Down in the Swamp' and 'Voodoo on the Bayou', definitely the more authentic of the two, a song concerned with the delights of crawfishing. Dr John joins Benoit for the CD bonus track, 'Ramblin' on my Mind'; his excellent piano playing along with Benoit's fine harp manage to make this well-known song enjoyable and a great ending to the album.

Although Benoit should cut down on the rock numbers and concentrate on the blues at which he is better, this is still an above average release. One could do a lot worse than buy, as even after editing out the rock tracks I was still left with 45 minutes of blistering blues.

*Rosie Wild*