

Down Home Blues Chicago 1946-1954 CD2 Big World (2005)

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01. *Combination Boogie* - J.B. & His Hawks 02. *So Crazy About You Baby* - Tampa Red 03. *All By Myself* - Willie Nix 04. *Fishing Blues* - Tony Hollins 05. *Worried Man Blues* - Johnny Williams 06. *Four Day Jump* - Little Willie Foster 07. *Things Are So Slow* - J.B. & His Hawks 08. *She Got Me Walkin'* - Lazy Bill Lucas 09. *Big World* - Floyd Jones 10. *My Little Girl Blues* - Lee Brown 11. *No More Love* - Willie Nix 12. *Devil Is A Busy Man* - Sunnyland Slim 13. *The Woman I Love* - Homesick James 14. *Any Old Lonesome Day* - Floyd Jones 15. *Can't Get Along* - Morris Pejoe 16. *Deep In Debt* - J.B. Lenoir 17. *Early Morning* - Floyd Jones 18. *Louella* - Leroy Foster 19. *Pet Cream Man* - J.B. & His Hawks 20. *Farmer's Blues* - Homesick James 21. *Skinny Mama* - Floyd Jones 22. *Should Have Loved Her More* - Jimmy Eager 23. *Mad Love* - Muddy Waters 24. *Ain't Times Hard* - Floyd Jones 25. *Lonesome Ole Train* - Homesick James

4 CDs, 100 tracks. 286 minutes. Absolutely essential. For those helplessly stuck and hopelessly consumed by the immediate Post-war Chicago Blues years, this new, handsomely boxed four-disc set from Boulevard Vintage will become a staple of life, and an item you just may ask to have lodged in your hands when a family member lays you to rest. Clocking in at four hours and forty-six minutes this is a wonderful and extremely important assortment of the cream of Chicago's blues masters - many immediately recognized by the mention of a name - and others whose songs garnered more notice than the people who recorded this timeless material. While most of the 100 tracks present have been issued previously on CD, and even considering the overlap with the recently-reviewed Chicago Is Just That Way set (JSP 7744), this is still an essential purchase. With JSP's recent box focusing most of its attention on artists who left the South before World War II (a good number of them having recorded in the Pre-war years), Down Home Blues Classics - Chicago 1946-1954 casts a bright and defining light on many who were relative newcomers to life in the ever-growing Illinois metropolis.

The second disc features plenty more in the way of top-shelf blues and boogie from these Chicago monsters. Fishing Blues from Tony Hollins is fine with some crafty guitar, plaintive

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vocals, and solid piano from Sunnyland Slim, but it's Hollins' lyrics which are most surprising since he's hoping to catch either a buffalo or trout with his pole and tackle. Four Day Jump (more likely a mistitled 'Fore Day Jump) from the Parrot vaults delivers Little Willie Foster's tough South Side harp with Lazy Bill Lucas supplying driving piano, while J.B. Hutto's Things Are So Slow and Pet Cream Man, both with Earring George Mayweather's rasp-edged harmonica sailing around Hutto's impassioned vocals, are killers of the highest order. Homesick James certainly runs near the top of the list for over-amplified guitar players and it's a safe bet that following his driving versions of Farmer's Blues and Woman I'm Loving that his small amp melted from exertion and excessive heat. Johnny Young and Johnny Williams team up for Worried Man Blues, Baby Face Leroy's stellar Lou Ella has some distinct Robert Lockwood guitar figures, and Morris Pejoe makes his presence fully known (again) on Can't Get Along with the ultra-gritty and slashing guitar break. More from Lazy Bill Lucas, Floyd Jones, Willie Nix, Lee Brown, J.B. Lenoir, Sunnyland Slim, and Muddy Waters. --- bigroadblues.com

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