# Sports Team lead reflects on gunpoint robbery and resilience amid US tour



The lead singer of the British indie rock band Sports Team, Alex Rice, recently shared his thoughts on the unsettling experience of being robbed at gunpoint during the band's US tour. Despite the incident, which took place in Vallejo, California, Rice expressed a continued admiration for America, stating, “It’s still the greatest country in the world.” This deeply contradictory sentiment underscores the complexities of American culture, particularly around its pervasive gun culture.

The robbery occurred while the band was on a break at a local Starbucks, a seemingly innocuous pit stop that quickly turned into a nightmare. Masked thieves targeted their van, threatening the band members with a firearm and making off with personal belongings. Thankfully, crucial touring equipment remained untouched. Following the traumatic incident, the band decided to forge ahead with their tour, performing in Sacramento later that same evening, demonstrating both resilience and commitment to their craft.

Notably, Rice pointed out an eerie irony: the theft echoed themes present in their latest album "Boys These Days LP," particularly in a track titled "Bang Bang Bang." This song tackles the juxtaposition of American culture, capturing the stark contrasts of casual life alongside stark violence, as illustrated by lines referencing both Mickey Mouse and AR-15s. According to Rice, this highlights a cultural dissonance that he finds perplexing. He remarked on the ubiquitous nature of gun violence in America, suggesting that the casual acceptance of its repercussions is indicative of a larger “blind spot” in societal attitudes.

The aftermath of the robbery drew considerable media attention, with various outlets requesting interviews to discuss the broader implications of gun crime. Sports Team found their narrative quickly politicised, with some requests skewed towards framing the incident in terms of California's gun control policies and the governance of state leaders like Governor Gavin Newsom. Rice remarked on the peculiar nature of this shift, noting how the incident was initially treated as a straightforward crime story until politicisation transformed it into a platform for broader legislative discussions.

In the wake of the robbery, the band attempted to engage local law enforcement, yet their experience with the Vallejo police left much to be desired. Instead of receiving immediate assistance, they were directed to fill out an online report. Rice alluded to the systemic issues facing the Vallejo police department, a community grappling with its own embattled reputation in law enforcement. “What would they deal with if they won’t deal with an armed robbery?” Rice pondered, drawing attention to the undercurrents of funding challenges and resources affecting police effectiveness in tackling crime.

The band, comprising Rice alongside Rob Knaggs, Henry Young, Oli Dewdney, Al Greenwood, and Ben Mack, has built a reputation for their spirited performances and incisive lyrics. Since their debut album "Deep Down Happy," which received a Mercury Prize nomination, their trajectory has only improved, culminating in their latest release. Their ability to navigate both the highs of success and the lows of such violent experiences speaks to their resilience as artists.

As Sports Team continues their US tour, their experience in Vallejo serves as a potent reminder of the contradictions embedded in American culture, particularly relating to violence and community resilience. Their story resonates not only as a cautionary tale but also as a reflection on the ongoing discourse surrounding gun culture in the United States.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sports-team-robbery-gun-us-tour-alex-rice-b2759153.html), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy09gkr08lpo)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sports-team-robbery-gun-us-tour-alex-rice-b2759153.html), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/music/2024/dec/03/british-band-sports-team-robbed-gunpoint-tour-california), [[6]](https://news.sky.com/story/havent-played-a-note-yet-uk-band-sports-team-robbed-at-gunpoint-on-day-one-of-us-tour-13266532)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sports-team-robbery-gun-us-tour-alex-rice-b2759153.html), [[4]](https://www.nme.com/news/music/sports-team-robbed-at-gunpoint-in-california-ahead-of-their-us-tour-3818500), [[5]](https://www.sfchronicle.com/entertainment/article/sports-team-robbed-tour-california-19957899.php)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sports-team-robbery-gun-us-tour-alex-rice-b2759153.html), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/music/2024/dec/03/british-band-sports-team-robbed-gunpoint-tour-california), [[4]](https://www.nme.com/news/music/sports-team-robbed-at-gunpoint-in-california-ahead-of-their-us-tour-3818500)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/sports-team-robbery-gun-us-tour-alex-rice-b2759153.html), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy09gkr08lpo), [[4]](https://www.nme.com/news/music/sports-team-robbed-at-gunpoint-in-california-ahead-of-their-us-tour-3818500)

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2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy09gkr08lpo> - The British band Sports Team were robbed at gunpoint on the first day of their US tour in Vallejo, California. While stopping for coffee, masked thieves broke into their van, stealing personal items and equipment. The band attempted to intervene but were threatened with a gun. Despite contacting the police, they were advised to file an online report. The band decided to continue their tour, performing in Sacramento that evening. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy09gkr08lpo?utm_source=openai))
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