

Maddens get a guernsey for big day

Jamie First

Two of the world's biggest music stars, whose recently released record is number one on the ARIA albums' chart, are giving Melburnians a free taste of their new sound.

The Madden Brothers – Benji and Joel – will perform five songs from *Greetings From California* at the Toyota Oh What A Feeling! Live event at Fed Square on Thursday, ahead of the AFL Grand Final.

The boys said they asked to be involved in the biggest day on the sporting calendar because they have a special affinity with this country.

"We feel privileged to ... start the countdown to the game," Joel said.

"Just being a part of the culture is really fun for us. We love being included in something that is so Australian and we ... understand how big a deal it is."

The duo said the record, which they began writing in 2011, was inspired by artists such as The Beach Boys, the Eagles and The Beatles, whom they listened to as kids.

"We were just trying to do something different and special and musical and unique. That was the goal," Joel said.

Benji said the best part was the "artistic freedom".

"A lot of times over the years when we were making *Good Charlotte* records, we had so many people tell us 'you can't do that or you're not allowed to do that'."

He said there were lots of rules, so to finally be able to break the mould was liberating.

The Maddens will only be in Australia for a week this time 'round, but they'll return for a national tour at the end of October.

While musically they're in sync, the same can't be said come bounce down on Saturday.

Asked who they will be supporting on Grand Final day, Joel said "I'll be going for the Swans because I practically live in Sydney", while Benji said "to make it interesting", he'll go for the Hawks.

The brothers will even have a gentlemen's wager with one another, with dinner, or maybe just their pride, on the line.

Thursday's concert will be part of a series of activities that kick off at 2pm, which will include appearances by AFL players, along with competitions and games.

Among the prizes on offer will be a chance to score two Grand Final tickets, with the winner and guest accompanying Benji and Joel on the drive to the MCG.