

Oregon daily emerald

An Independent Newspaper

Vol. 80, No. 3

Eugene, Oregon 97403

Tuesday, June 27, 1978

The Dead pack 'em in at Autzen



It was supposedly the biggest thing to hit the local concert scene since Big Sur, but it really turned out to be a rock promoter's dream when nearly 40,000 people jammed into

the University's Autzen Stadium to dance, look and listen to the sounds of Santana, The Grateful Dead, Eddie

Money and The Outlaws. The Stadium was full, the crowd very orderly and there were no murders.

Photos by Erich Boekeheide

By JOCK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

Oregon Harvest One has been called the biggest thing to hit Eugene since the mill-race was drained in search of a lost corpse. Some called it the merger of California and Oregon cultures, rain and weird. Promoters called it a phenomenon.

For the Franklin Boulevard Sambo's Sunday morning, it was 100 Dead Heads looking for pancakes. And it was the same all over the city, restaurants, grocery stores and motels were trying to cope with the 40,000 heads that had suddenly popped up.

For years, the University Athletic Department has deliberated over whether Eugene could handle a full-scale outdoor concert. Since 1970, various parties have lobbied for one, but partly because the biggest promoter to offer its services was a dairy, the athletic department was apprehensive.

This summer the appeal of money and the appearance of a professional promoter prompted the University to gamble on an outdoor Autzen Stadium concert.

The lights were on over Autzen stadium day and night for a week before the concert, as crews prepared the stage and sound system. A sound system capable of producing a 32-foot note that has to get on its hands and knees to go through doors.

The stage stretched across the stadium decorated with the sun, rainbows and other Californiana. In fact, the whole production had the appearance of a California open-air concert. Three out of the four bands — The Grateful Dead, Santana, and Eddie Money, came from the bay area. Hoping for a massive turnout, the athletic department had advertised the concert all over the West. It expected a crowd of around 40,000 and got 45,000. Even before the gates opened at 9 a.m. lines of 1,000 persons stretched out from each of the stadium entrances.

The athletic department imposed football

game restrictions — no bottles or alcoholic beverages. Fans were required to stay within the stadium all day or leave and never come back. They covered the grass with a tarp.

As a result of these precautions, according to the athletic department, there was minimal damage to the field and no murders.

The restrictions and the cloudy weather did not bother the Dead heads. "If you're high enough, the sky is always blue," one head explained. "You've got to overcome your environment, and enjoy life as it happens."

The stadium stands and three quarters of the field were filled with bodies. As the concert progressed, the center of the crowd became agitated and started to dance like chromosomes having trouble in a DNA molecule. A few spectators got excited in the first hour of the concert, and commenced jumping on each other and hitting each other with their fists. Afterwards the crowd began to calm down.

"Music is the highest art form, a total experience," explained one fan. "This is good music. If you listen to other music about driving fast cars and fucking, pretty soon you'll be living a superficial consciousness. You can feel this good music in your spirit."

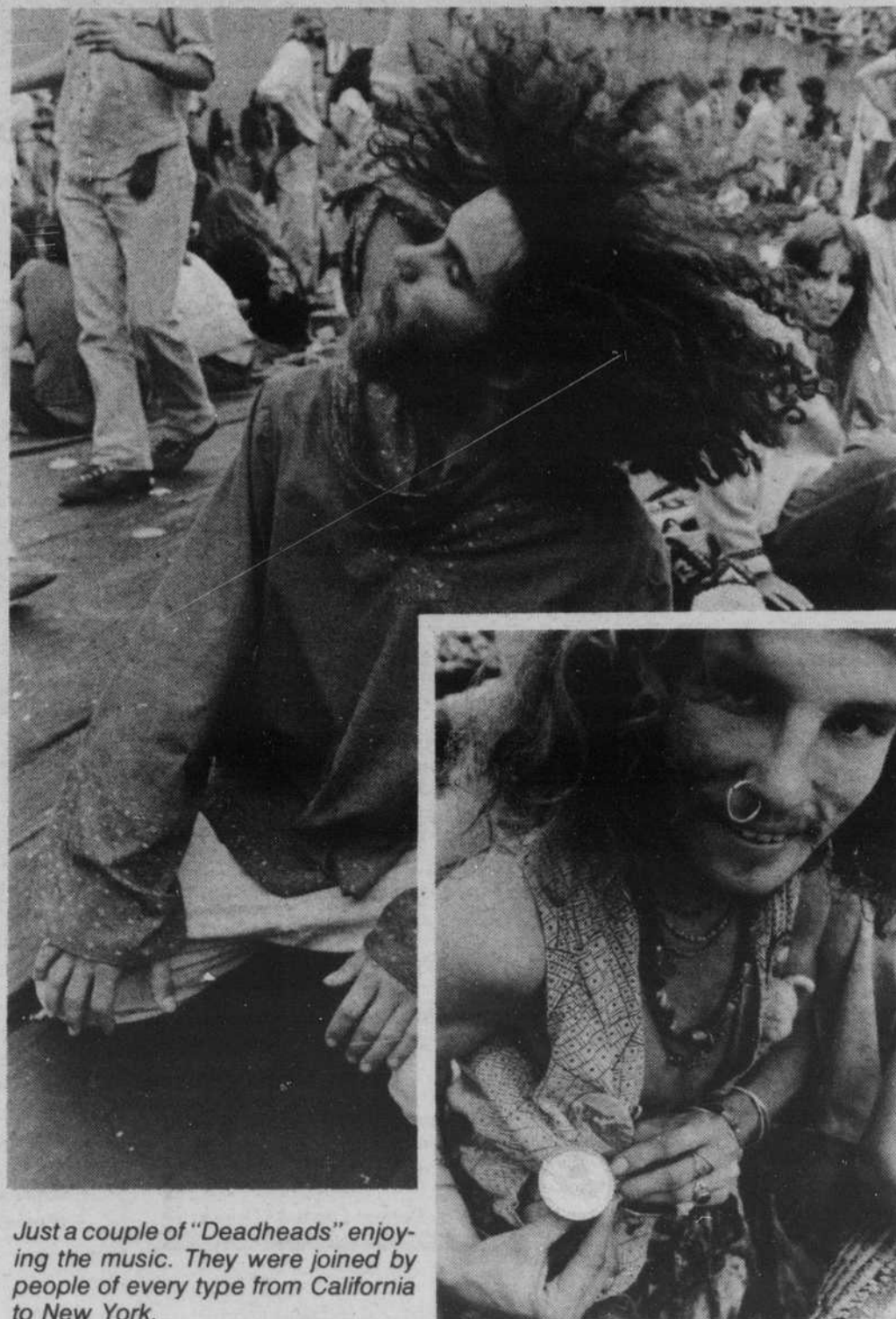
Heads detached from bodies and began floating around the stadium.

"There were some fist fights in the beginning," said University student Michael Connelly. "And some said 'Wooc, I can't handle this' and passed out. But afterwards I felt only good vibrations."

"I saw friends from California I hadn't seen for years. It was a reunion."

Some thought the phenomenon lacked sap. "They get all excited about this up here," said one Californian after the concert. "But at Oakland they have a Day on the Green two or three times each summer."

(Continued on Page 2)



Just a couple of "Deadheads" enjoying the music. They were joined by people of every type from California to New York.