

THOMAS BERGSTROM for the Emerald

Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia led the group through a diverse set of songs during the two shows at Autzen Stadium in August.

Grateful Dead please Autzen Stadium crowd

By Kaly Soto
Oregon Daily Emerald

Color surrounded Autzen Stadium as the sports complex was transformed for two days into a tent city inhabited by the faithful following of the Grateful Dead.

People traveled from all corners of the country to attend one or both of the shows that took place the weekend of Aug. 21 and 22.

They came with tickets, they came without tickets, they came with their families, they came alone, they came on foot, by train, by plane, by car, and on bikes. Those who came only with the hope of getting a ticket camped around Autzen and signaled to other concertgoers that they needed just one miracle (index finger raised, it's also the universal symbol for the number one). In all, 86,000 people saw the Dead perform on their two-day stint.

When the Dead returned to Eugene after a three-year hiatus, some were hesitant to relive the 1990 show that resulted in part in the band being banned from Autzen. This time around nothing was left to chance, the ratio of law enforcement to the crowd was greater than it usually is at University football games, and fans of the Dead voluntarily patrolled the crowd as "Dedicated Volunteers."

People were searched going into the concert, and once inside security was highly visible. Alcohol was the most visible drug and the one that most people were cited for abusing at the concert.

Both shows began with a stellar performance by Georgia's Indigo Girls. On Saturday they ended the show with their most visible song, "Closer I Am to Fine," and ended Sunday's show with the same song. They also played an emotionally charged rendition of Buffalo Springfield's classic "Get Together."

After a short intermission, the Dead took the stage, and the crowd went wild. Sunday's show began with "Jack Straw." The song also signaled the beginning of an afternoon of community that harkened back to the 1960s.

In the first set they also covered Robbie Robertson's "Broken Arrow" and Bob Dylan's "When I Paint My Masterpiece." These covers were interspersed between classics "Little Red Rooster" and "Bertha." The first set — which was an hour and a half long — set the tone for the second, which lasted for the same amount of time, making Sunday's show the longer of the two.

People who possessed tickets to both Dead shows were allowed to camp in the parking lot at Autzen for a cost of \$30. For the past five years camping had been frowned upon by the Dead and their management because of the cost incurred by the band for sanitation and related expenses. Vending was prohibited in the parking lot at Autzen, but those who were not allowed in found many, many customers on the foot path to Autzen.

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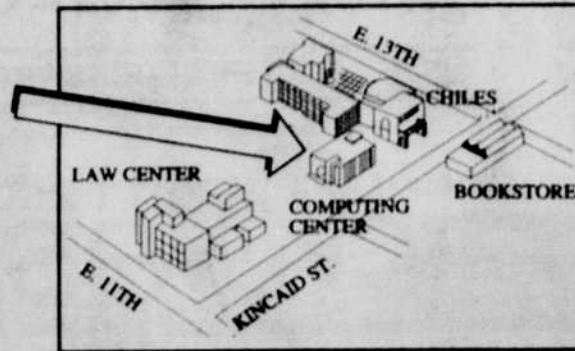
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