

Crowd

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unflappable Cardinal squad made playground mistakes.

"It was extremely loud and I think it rattled people," said Stanford's coach Tara VanDerveer.

VanDerveer is a big part of that tradition when the Big Red machine rolls into Eugene; she led the U.S. women's basketball team to a gold medal in the 1996

Olympics. Which is just another reason to hold a grudge toward Oregon's Pac-10 rival.

"She's too good, she never loses," said Lisa Gardner, who received a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Oregon. "Plus, it feels like [Stanford] has an unfair advantage because it's not just good basketball, it's also a good academic school, so they're a natural nemesis."

An aura of invincibility does

seem to swirl around the California school.

"I think there's a perceived arrogance, mostly by their supporters," said Scot Ferguson, a teacher's assistant in the law school.

Au contraire, responded a visitor from Palo Alto, Calif., home to the alleged smug opponents.

"Us? At Stanford?," said Dana Stewart, in a mock tone. Stewart is a member of the Cardinal Fast Break booster club. "It's really

noisy [here], and we knew there was going to be a huge revenge factor after the last game."

That subtle jab was in reference to the first game at Stanford, when the Cardinal won 78-62 after being down 36-10 with four minutes left in first half. This time the visitors fell short in making up a two-point deficit with two minutes to go.

"It's good [to have that crowd noise] at the end of the game," Oregon's Shaquala Williams said.

"Those were important possessions for them and when your team can't hear, it makes it difficult to run your offense."

As big as the win was for the team, Williams liked the idea of giving back to the raucous crowd.

"Well, they whupped on us for about 20 years," she said, referring to Stanford. "So I guess the fans are happy now that we're starting to be on even ground with them and beat them."

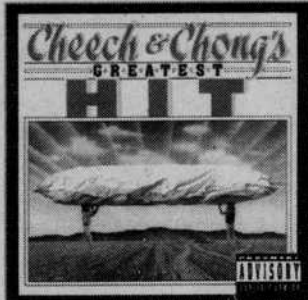
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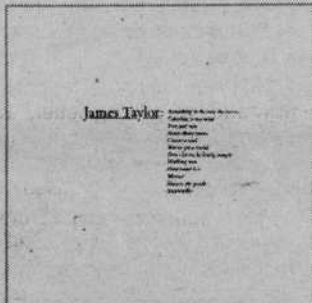
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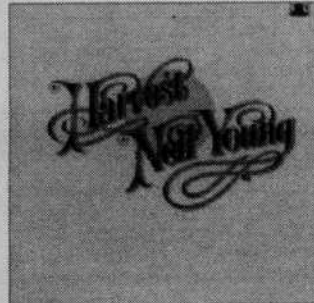
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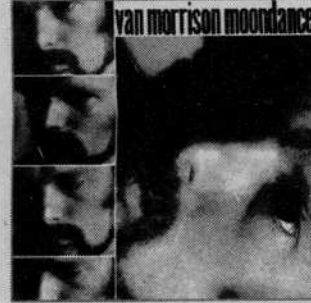
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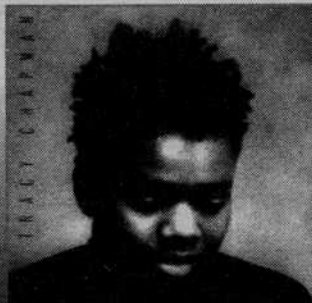
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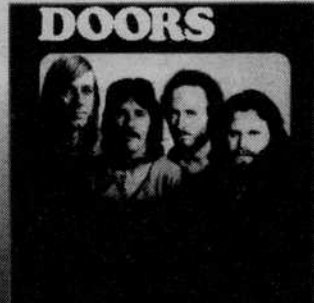
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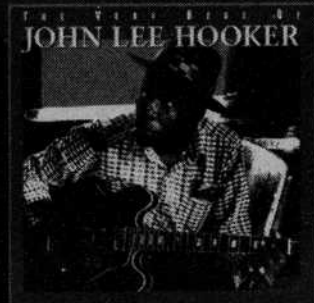
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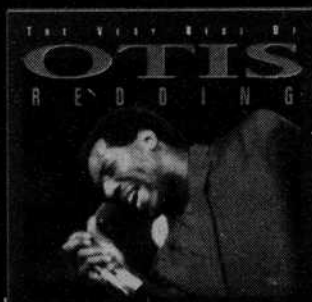
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