

# Matthews' Gorge concert floats sounds across canyon

■ Majestic backdrops and a smattering of contemporary classics makes the Dave Matthews Band's visit to the Gorge a worthwhile treat for die-hard fans of all ilks

By Kristy Hessman  
Oregon Daily Emerald

After four months, a six-and-a-half hour drive in 100-degree weather with almost nonexistent air conditioning and a misplaced hotel reservation, I finally got my birthday present — a Dave Matthews concert at the Gorge.

The setting, to say the least, was perfect. The orange sun dipping down between the craggy mountains cast a gorgeous sunset glow across the sky, creating an intoxicating backdrop to listen to the addicting sounds of Dave.

I had attended one Dave concert prior to this, but for the first time I realized how loyal many of his fans actually are. A guy from Walla Walla, Wash., who parked next to us with "I (heart) DMB" painted on his back window, informed us that he had tickets for the whole weekend and that the band had only played two of the same songs each night.

"I didn't stay here last night, but drove back up for the last show," he explained.

Fans were also willing to pay big money for tickets. Apparently Dave has been auctioning off front row seats through the Internet search engine Yahoo, with the proceeds going to charity. The girl who won the auction for Sunday's show paid \$1,010 for her two front-row tickets.

According to a recent Rolling Stone article, "By the summer's

end Matthews is expected to sell 170,000 tickets, including two straight sellouts of Soldier Field [in Chicago], which is a feat accomplished only by the Stones, U2, Pink Floyd and the Grateful Dead."

At the Gorge, the Friday and Saturday shows sold out so fast that they had to add a Sunday show, which was the night I attended; I

hoped it would be the best because it was his last show until Aug. 19th. The band is headed home for a short break and will start the tour again on that date in Troy, Wisc.

The crowd at the Gorge ranged from Abercrombie-clad college students to armpit-haired, Saturday Market, Eugene types, along with a middle-aged yuppie couple in our area who broke out the weed halfway through the show as if their lives depended on it.

The concert opened with the Mavericks, who combine Latin rhythms and horns with a Vegas-style country feel. I would have to say that the most entertaining part of the opening act was the sight of a shirtless college-aged guy who danced in front of his chair in one of the front rows through the band's entire set,

shaking his head and inviting others to stand and join him. I found out later he was from Montana, and pretty drunk at the time.

As the sun dropped behind the mountains, the stage was prepared for Dave. The crowd roared as the band came onto the stage, Dave in a black shirt and loose tan slacks, providing a perfect look for his fast-footed dancing.

Boyd Tinsley, the band's violinist, came out donning a cross between camouflage and zebra print pants, which added to his already high intensity playing. Band members include Carter Beauford on drums, Stefan Lessard on bass and Leroi Moore on the saxophone and clarinet.

Butch Taylor, who is not a member of the band but has been with them for most of the tour, played keyboard. Dave also invited Mitch Rutman to play electric guitar during one song. He's a member of the band's catering staff who has been with them for a while and is retiring.

The band started out with "Seek Up," a mellow song, and continued to jam with it for quite a while. It wasn't the way you would think they would open the concert but then they made the crowd go wild with upbeat songs like "Dancing Nancies." Dave and Boyd went crazy dancing around the stage in the unique way that only they can.

The band played "I'll Back You Up," one of my personal favorites, and also treated the



courtesy of RCA

Tickets to the popular Dave Matthews Band's shows sell out in a matter of hours.

crowd to three new songs that have only been played on this Summer 2000 tour. One is called "Grace is Gone," which was incredible; another is called "Bartender," and the third is "JTR." Overall, they had a nice mix of old and new songs.

Partway through the concert, Dave randomly told the audience that Hawaiians consume more Spam than any other state. According to a friend who accompanied me to the concert, when Dave talks to the audience like that it is known as Davespeak. After making the remark, Dave

casually mentioned that he liked Spam. As an afterthought he added, "Now don't go and send me Spam ... that's too much Spam for one man."

The audience loved that comment and roared once again.

"Satellite" was another crowd-pleaser. To my disappointment he didn't play "Crash," but ended with an energy charged one-song encore — "All Along the Watchtower."

All in all, the concert was excellent and was well worth the long drive, loss of sleep and contact high.

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