Hot Rush Heats Up A Cold Night

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Certain followers of musical trends insist that pure, unadulterated, heavy metal rock was a craze of the seventies which overstayed its welcome. It supposedly bowed out rather ungracefully a few years back with the inception of disco, country rock and the rising popularity of teeny-bopped "pop" stars.

These musical trendsetters rightfully realized that rock 'n' roll was no longer faddish enough for AM radio but it did not go six feet under.

ATTERTSGING TO this, the strictly rock 'n' roll Rush concert Wednesday at Veterans Memorial was by no means an exception to the straight and narrow.

Approximately one week after the first tickets went on sale the show was sold out and it was apparent Rush fanatics wanted still more. Another gig was added to the bill and this seemed to temporarily soothe Columbus' rock and rollers.

But this show was also sold out and the Capital city's rockers were at their best.

OPENING WITH a high-powered version of Bastille Day, Rush's lead singer/guitarist Geddy Lee quickly established a rapport with his audience that built like a downhill snowball as the evening's performance progressed.

Semi-garbed in a loosely-flowing, knee-length kimono and jeans, Lee exposed his high-pitched vocals as well as his bare chest. With his sweat-drenched torso and face he tantalized, teased and pleased his fans with his instrumental dexterity of tight, quick bass guitar licks.

The audience, a predominantly young crowd undoubtedly out past their 11 o'clock curfews, particularly enjoyed Rush's employment of the coxcomb, a device which focuses on a given sound, delays it a beat or two, then echoes it for any number of beats.

OTHER RUSH members consisted of guitarist Alex Lifeson, who took a back seat to Lee's more dominant performance and drummer Neil Peart, who twirled his drum sticks as well as he beat the skins with them. These two men provide the sustaining force and the guts of the group, but did not come close to Lee's style or charisma. In any event, all three worked together as tight as any team possibly could.

Unfortunately, a large portion of the show was plagued by a faulty loudspeaker which gave off a rather unsettling and annoying buzz.

Opening acts were a double-dip treat. For starters, the Max Webster Band from Toronto frenzied the audience with their crazy, Frank Zappa-like stage antics, and their choice of diverse selections seemed unharnessed.

SPECIAL GUESTS, Starcastle, injected the crowd with tunes from their latest LP, soon to be released. Their vocal and instrumental resemblance to the British group Yes was striking and somewhat eerie. But, any similarity to such accomplished musicians is commendable.

Like icing on cake, Starcastle's stage/light show accentuated their musical talents superbly. Vonadic flashing strobes and a giant five-foot star hung suspended over center stage.

Wrapping up, anyone who braved snow and winds to experience the show was far more than warmed up. They were fried to a frizzle by Rush.