

reviews

Rush, REX, Max Webster In Rock Music Concert

By JOHN S. CULLINANE

A Canadian rock band called Rush was appropriately loud in a concert last night at Kiel Auditorium. Like the lighting and the cryptic lyrics, a good measure of volume is an important part of this progressive rock band's art. It wouldn't sound right any other way.

REX, one of two other bands that played on the program with Rush, had no such excuse. The band's set consisted of an undiluted blare for almost an hour. It advanced the cause of rock 'n' roll not a whit and may even have sent it momentarily into the Dark Ages.

Rush received a hero's welcome from an audience of about 7000 persons before any member of the three-some had struck a note. Once the music had begun, Big Brother couldn't have commanded the attention of the audience any more effectively. Canadian rock bands tend to fare very well in St. Louis.

The music was full of stops and starts, stutter steps and feigned endings. Drummer Neil Peart and bassist Geddy Lee went through the obstacle course of changes stride for stride and made it look easy. Surely that's partly because Rush has been more on than off the road for 2½ years.

Geddy Lee was, as usual, the only one who sang. Good or bad, it is his screechy

pop

tenor than gives the band its unmistakable sound. He sounded best, that is, unstrained, when he sang in the mid-range.

Alex Lifeson's guitar work seemed to be more flash than substance on the first few songs. It was only later noticeable that there was a great deal of melody mixed in with the technique, as it should be. Lifeson had help on the lead part of "The Twilight Zone" when Lee chipped in with some synthesizer parts played on a set of foot pedals. It added nothing musically but darn few other bass players could have managed such a feat of footwork.

Preceding the set of mish-mash by REX, was music of a weird sort from another Canadian band, Max Webster. The band began with an electronically induced groan and ran through some hard rockers laced with sarcastic lyrics. One was "Hangover," a tune definitely not likely to help you get over one. The band showed a lot of imagination even if some things came off poorly and left many in the crowd wondering if they liked it — I did — or if they wanted an encore.

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RUSH

REX

MAX WEBSTER

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