Crowd small but loyal as Rush rocks Coliseum

By James Chute

Waiting for the stage crew to finish setting up equipment on the Riverfront Coliseum stage Tuesday night, two teenagers, dressed in tattered jeans and T-shirts proudly unfurled a huge, blue banner, lettered in red: “Rush is No. 1.”

Earlier this year, Rush’s album, “Permanent Waves,” did crack the Billboard top 10 album chart. The tour supporting the album only a month after the Dec. 3, 1979, Who concert in Cincinnati tragedy.

Rush played in Dayton rather than Cincinnati but members of the city manager’s task force on crowd control and public safety attended the concert and later interviewed the rock group. According to Rush drummer Neil Peart, the group had a clause in its contract outlawing festival seating well before the Dec. 3 Cincinnati tragedy.

NINE MONTHS LATER, “Permanent Waves” has disappeared from the Billboard top 200 chart and Rush’s following has dropped out of sight. The Canadian rock group attracted only $406 paying customers into the Coliseum Tuesday, perhaps the smallest crowd to attend a rock event by a major group at the arena within the last two years.

Police cited approximately 100 persons for drug, alcohol and other violations, with 18 actually being arrested. Coliseum ushers and security personnel actively enforced smoking regulations. Rush cooperated with fire officials and omitted the flash pots and explosions that are a regular part of the band’s act.

Saxon, the fine, heavy-metal, bone-jarring music

British rock group that opened the show, normally closes its set by battering an electric guitar and then burning it. The ritual burning was eliminated in the coliseum.

DESPITE THE SIZE OF THE CROWD, Rush held nothing back. Energized by the excellent time-keeping of drummer Neil Peart and vibrant, performances by guitarist Alex Lifeson and bassist Geddy Lee, the trio played a full, 90 minute set. Lee’s bright, high voice was cut just below the form he displays on “Permanent Waves” and the vocal line, however, is not the primary thrust of Rush’s music. The words for Rush classics like “2112” and “Cygnus X-1” set up a framework for Rush’s elaborate, full blown musical representations of epic and science fiction tales. In concert, the tales were reinforced by projections flashed onto a screen behind the stage.

Each musician created a wide range of colors and effects. Lee and Lifeson both used double neck guitars during certain points in the show and were equipped with foot pedals that added bass notes and chords to the band’s musical texture. Peart sits behind a huge drum set and is surrounded by racks of other percussion instruments.

Together, the trio appears to combine the resources of a rock orchestra and a high energy rock band. Many of the songs are divided into sections involving rapid time and dynamic changes. Inherent in all of Rush’s music is a sense of energy that lies just barely beneath the surface until it finally erupts like a tidal wave of sound.

Garbo may return to films

Irv Kupcinet

Greta Garbo, who has rejected all inducements to return to the screen, may come out of retirement to portray Mother Teresa, India’s Nobel Prize-winner. Hollywood’s Hank Grant reports Garbo is interested enough to declare that if she decided to make the movie, she would turn over her salary to the nun’s noble work in India. (But rumors about Garbo’s making one more movie have been so recurrent that her agent shrugs."

Richard Burton’s “Camelot” established a box office record at the Arie Crown Theater in Chicago with a whopping $502,000 gross for one week. That also may be the biggest gross for a musical anywhere.

Wednesday marked a red-letter day for Betty Hutton. She made her comeback on Broadway by taking over a role in “Annie.” Also in the big Annie: Producer David Merrick.

Tip on travel every Tuesday in the Post

DRIVE-IN THEATERS

ACADEMY 863-3592
17539 HANKERSON RD
LOVELAND OPENS AT 7 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"WHEN A STRANGER CALLS" (R)
"HOLLYWOOD KNIGHTS" (R)

ACME 874-3388
2000 GOODWIN ST
LOVELAND OPENS AT 7 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"WHEN A STRANGER CALLS" (R)
"HOLLYWOOD KNIGHTS" (R)

BENT 574-6323
62906 OHIO 711
PETTITT, OHIO OPENS AT 7 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"BIG BRAVLO" (R)
"SHARKS" (R)
"TOM HORN" (R)

DIXIE GARDENS 581-2222
1654 DIXIE HWY
WINDSOR OPENS AT 7:30 P.M. STARTS AT 8:30 P.M.
"THE BIG BRAVLO" (R)
"TOM HORN" (R)

FELTGEN HILLS 451-7270
32150 WUSON RD
"SUFFER GIRLS" (R) 7:30 P.M.
"HAPPY PORKY" (R) 9:30 P.M.
"THIRTY GREAT COMEDY" (R) 12:30 A.M.
"THE BIG BRAVLO" (R)
"TOM HORN" (R)

FLORENCE 377-9500
2401 DIXIE HWY
FLORENCE, KY OPENS AT 7:30 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"WHEN A STRANGER CALLS" (R)
"HOLLYWOOD KNIGHTS" (R)

OAKLEY 271-4600
530 LINDEN ST
OAKLEY, OH OPENS AT 7:30 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"TOM HORN" (R)

WHAT A COINCIDENCE

4255 ALEXANDRIA PKWY
COLD SPRING, KY OPENS AT 7:30 P.M. STARTS AT DUSK
"TOM HORN" (R)
"BEN HUR" (R)
"HOLLYWOOD KNIGHTS" (R)
"TOM HORN" (R)
"A TALE OF THE TIGER" (R)