

Weekend...

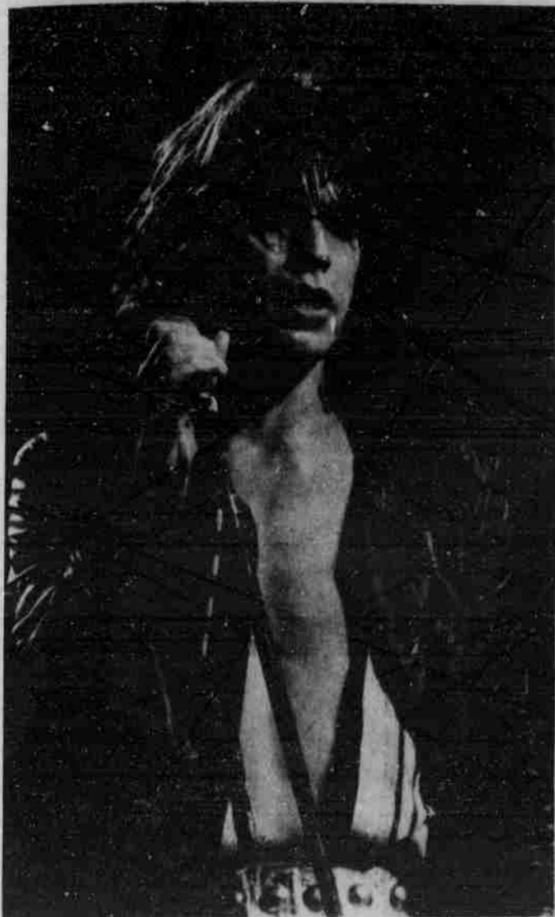


Photo by Kevin Higley

Mick Jagger in concert in Kansas City last June during the Rolling Stones Tour of the Americas '75.

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Susan Scorpio was addicted to concert meccas. Surprisingly, this was the first time she had heard the Stones. She had hit Elton John, Led Zeppelin, George Harrison—almost every other major tour that had passed through in the last three years.

If only she had been at a Woodstock, Altamont, Concert for Bangladesh. Any of the landmark concerts in rock history would do. She would then be more than a spectator, she would be part of a historical event. Instant status. So, Susan goes to as many as she can, hoping one will ignite into something that transcends music.

Susan's husband was having a tough time, his head hopelessly addled by an opium/cocaine/sun combination. Taking center stage among freak buddies, he showed them his scars. "Vietnam," he said, indicating seams criss-crossing his chest.

The Vietnam war officially had ended. Already, the MIAs, the refugees, anything reminiscent of the mess, were passe . . . out of sight, out of mind. The canyons of division caused by a 15-year abomination have magically healed.

But this stoned freak knew better; he had his gnarled seams as proof that the ugliness lives on. So, he did as an Ayn Rand hero would do. He laughed.

4 p.m.: Bob Stewart of Des Moines, Iowa, was teed. He was standing on the second blanket to the left, his lips and teeth flipping off explosive fricatives. The band Rufus had started to play. Stewart was jumping onto the boogie express, when—WHACK!—a Frisbee nailed him below the cranium.

When Wham-O unleashed the discus for home consumption, it created a symbol of summer, and, an instrument with hidden boomerang potential. It brought out the venality in man.

Nobody likes to be clouted by one of these things. But then again, no one lets a Frisbee lie.

So Stewart grabbed the Frisbee—it was OK, nobody was watching—yeowled with pain and hurled the thing with as much fury as a 5'9" frame can muster. Maybe it hit the next person as hard as it hit him.

7:45 p.m.: It began: Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the

third dimension | rock concert weekend

Common Man" . . . thousands strained for the moment . . . out they came, Mick last, wearing the striped baseball uniform-like outfit . . . We fought for the binoculars . . . Richard started "Honky Tonk Woman" . . . The boogie machine roared with Satisfaction . . . And Jagger began strutting, waving, clapping.

For the next two hours, nothing else mattered as 53,000 persons forgot fatigue and sweat and lost themselves to a force that could only be felt, not understood.

The next morning over greasy omelets we read the list of casualties in the Kansas City Times: over 600 treated at the first aid station; three hospitalized, surprisingly, none for drug overdose; temperatures had hit 130 degrees on the playing field.

"I don't think I'll ever complain about anything again," S'wanski moaned. "I'll just look back on this, then nothing will seem so bad."

"We sound like a groups of diehards from the Veterans Hospital talking about the war and trying to convince themselves it was worthwhile," Craig said.

On the way back to Lincoln Sunday evening, we stopped at the La Grande Cafe in Marysville, Kan., to wash down Mexican food with Coors. S'wanski and I ordered the hot sauce, which we assumed was midway between mild and superhit.

Mid-tostado it hit us . . . a thousand hot pepper scrub brushes eat our lips. We dashed out, slobbering toward a grocery store to snatch up a catalog of home remedies. Gum, water, beer . . . nothing worked. We chug-a-lugged to Lincoln, alternatively pressing ice packs to our lips and swigging Coors.

It has been three weeks since I first sat in my kitchen and watched my backyard. I've recovered, almost—the rainbow bruises on my legs have healed, my sunburn has faded into a farmer's tan (the line of demarcation between t-shirt sleeves and skin), the dentist refilled my cratered molar for nothing, and, although I don't understand it, I found my right contact.

I had removed my one and only contact, replaced it . . . something was still wrong. I took out my contact again, and, there it was, my right contact, sitting on top of the left one. I have no idea how it got there. Maybe it's a sign. Things are going to pick up.

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