

Van Halen creates a worthwhile experience

By Michael Deeds
Senior Reporter

Plenty of speakers hung from the ceiling but the roof never caved in as rock monster group Van Halen played at Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday night.

Van Halen started on time and proceeded to blast out many of its recent hits as well as a few old tunes from its David Lee Roth days.

Vocalist Sammy Hagar sounded strong, although the mix on drums and guitar seemed to muddy things up a bit.

But nobody seemed to notice while the band cranked out hits like "Why Can't This Be Love" and "Best of Both Worlds."

Drummer Alex Van Halen's huge, surrounding drum set, which periodically rotated and rose off the stage, proved to be an impressive piece of the band's puzzle.

His 10-minute solo attracted applause from all sides of the auditorium.

Michael Anthony did a wild, fall-down bass solo that practically wrenched the guts right out of his audience as the low tones shook the arena.

But the solo that proved to be the most impressive of all was the one for which the audience chanted, "Eddie, Eddie."

Edward Van Halen provided 12 minutes of screams, yowls and melodic shrieks from his guitar as he walked slowly around stage, unshaven and wearing blue jeans. His guitar prowess was unbelievable, as usual.

Surprisingly, the most dominant figure of the show was not

Edward, but Hagar.

Hagar came across as a very amiable, big-mouthed wild man. He screamed at the audience about everything from Nebraska's 51-16 whumping of Iowa State to Jimmy Swaggart's genitals.

He jumped around, fell down and generally was frenzied through the show. He also showed a fetish for trying on every single piece of clothing thrown onstage, from caps to jackets to brassieres.

But everybody seemed to love it all, and he retained voice control amidst this craziness.

Van Halen seemed to genuinely enjoy the show, even though the seated crowd could do little but stand and shake their "headbanger fists" when they got excited.

Hagar told the crowd that the "Monsters of Rock Tour" had really tired the band out, but that playing in auditoriums by themselves was making them feel a lot better.

Van Halen was much more likeable in concert than Def Leppard, who played at the Sports Center in October, simply because the group members seemed to be happy guys.

Anthony was the epitome of this attitude, taking swigs of Jack Daniels or sipping a Budweiser and giving the rest of it to a fan.

The light show was not spectacular and there were no lasers or fancy holograms. It was just Van Halen, a few explosions and a lot of fun.

Best of all, the doors to the show opened on time and no arguments ensued between the road crew and

sports center manager Jerry Lott.

According to John Fremstad, University Programs Council major concerts coordinator, everything went "smoothly."

Opening act Private Life looked like it wanted to be the next Heart, with two women and a three men performing their songs in a hard rock fashion.

Vocalist Kelly Breznik's pow-

erful lungs and aerobics instructor body proved to be the focal point of the band. Watch for Private Life in the near future.

Private Life played for 30 minutes, a short time compared to Van Halen's nearly two-hour show. However, the interesting thing about Van Halen's length was that it never dragged toward the end like many concerts do.

And boy, was it nice to see a concert without a vocalist conducting a yelling contest between different sides of the audience.

Overall, Saturday night's show proved to be a worthwhile experience. Def Leppard may never come back to Lincoln, but judging from the quality of the Van Halen concert, these rockers are welcome guests anytime.



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Sammy Hagar (left, both pictures) and Edward Van Halen rock the Bob Devaney Sports Center Saturday night.



Politics, Herbie Husker hinder band's album

By Andy Upright
Staff Reporter

Editor's note: Mannequin Beach members did not give any last names, citing past misunderstandings with Lincoln press.

Lincoln's Mannequin Beach recently released its first album, "Don't Laugh Your Next."

Producing the album was a stepping stone to accomplishing one of the band's long-term goals, band members said.

"Our goal is to get our message across to people," said Randy, percussionist for Mannequin Beach.

Part of the band's message deals with the amount of waste in society. "Overconsumption is a silly thing," said Danny, writer/vocalist/

guitar player. "Our goal is to not be a part of this."

Danny said he writes about "the human face," or people's actions and the way they interact within society, in his songs. "What else is there to write about?" he said.

Mannequin Beach's album is on Mordam Records, an independent California-based label that has signed six bands.

Mannequin Beach and Mordam Records shared the cost of producing the record, Danny said. Because the label is small, the band has surrendered the royalties of the album to Mordam, until Mordam's share of the bill has been covered.

"It's more of a partnership," Danny explained. "Since we're more concerned with distributing music than making money, it works out."

"Financially, we're just Joe Schmoe," Randy said. "Nothing's changed since the album came out as far as that goes."

Mannequin Beach and Mordam have been busy working on the distribution of the 2,000 albums and 1,000 tapes produced, Danny said.

Ruth Schwartz, affiliate of Mordam Records, has been doing most of the distribution, he said. The band has sent 30 demo tapes out to bars and concert halls in hopes of setting up tour dates.

"We're trying to get everywhere our album is for sale," Randy said. "We're doomed to death if we stay locally." In addition to working on the distribution of records and tapes, Mannequin Beach is also busy making music.

"Busy as bees," Heath, the band's

bass player, said.

Since the album came out, Heath has taken over as bass player. Jeff, who used to play bass, has stayed on to promote the band and help out where ever he is needed, Danny said.

"Heath has been a large addition to our band," Danny said. "He has a big heart."

Despite the transitions that the band is undergoing with personnel and with the new contract, the members are getting along well. They attribute the comradeship to a reason not often used by bands.

Despite the album as an accomplishment and the cohesiveness of the lineup, not everything is looking up for the band.

"We've been together for two years under Reagan," Randy said. "It's getting harder and harder all the

time. If Bush gets elected we'll probably be arrested."

This nationwide conservatism is hitting home with the band on other levels as well. Danny said the tour has been hard to set up in part by the "skinhead problem," referring to fights and disturbances caused by part of a subculture known as "skinheads."

The skinheads are reputed to be a loosely-organized group of neo-fascists with a strong belief in white supremacy.

When skinheads don't like a band, they tend to disrupt the concert by throwing things and starting fights.

Also, Heath is concerned about the influence that football has in the state of Nebraska.

"We're just hicks on the underside of Herbie Husker," he said.