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Precinct

Continued from Page 9

surroundings, the Precinct is the best Lincoln has to offer, and, by the way, the Lycra definitely is optional.

-- Lisa Maul

Funnybone

Bored on a Sunday night in Lincoln, no! One could choose from the plethora of bars open, go to a movie or go to the Funny Bone, 808 P St.

Waiting in line was a bit of a pain, but no more than waiting in any line. The price is comparable to a movie (\$4 Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday; \$6 Friday and Saturday).

Going in, one notices an attractive bar with pictures of the comedians that have performed at the club. The lounge in front is separate from the showroom.

The doormen, looking sharp in their tuxedo shirts and bow ties, escorted our group in. We were seated near the back, but amazingly we still could see quite well.

The floor of the showroom has rows of small tables that seat four. It seems tight at first sight, but when we sat down there was more than enough room.

The stage is centered along the longest wall and people are seated all around it.

The lights go out. The music starts. A loud voice bellows out, "Good evening ladies and gentlemen..." As each comedian's name is announced, the neon sign displaying the "Funny Bone" logo -- the penis with a hat -- is flashed.

The emcee, Jim Dixon, came out and did 10 to 15 minutes of material to warm up the crowd. All in all, he was pretty good.

Next, from the hidden room in back, the feature act, John Decosse, sprang forth. Decosse was funny, but didn't give the audience a gut-wrenching laughter kind of com-

edy routine. He did do some cliché routines, but to his credit, he did them very well.

The emcee came back on stage to give the crowd a chance to relieve themselves.

Finally, it was time for the headliner, John McDowell. McDowell came dressed in red, green and white plaid pants and a white shirt. His humor was unqualified and inventive, although he did harass the two middle-aged couples in front of the stage quite a bit.

When the bill came (yes, they run on a tab system), we had to decide who drank what. Isn't it always a surprise how much you drink when you drink on a tab? Drink prices range from \$1.50 to \$3.50.

-- Troy Falk

Oscars

It was Saint Patrick's Day at Oscar's, 800 O St.

The, uh, "interesting" band, Project S was playing. A few of the pseudo-Irish partiers were dancing. Green beer flowed and merriment went 'round.

The garden was closed, but the inside was filled but not packed. The waitresses did a fine job of keeping the patrons "buzzed."

Remember when Oscar's used to be the place to be? Now its not even in the top five. One reason could be the large, often mean looking bouncers at the door. They look as if they are just waiting for someone to screw up so they can pummel the offender.

The owner and manager, Rich Wendelin, always seems to be pissed off about something. It doesn't matter whether you are responsible for his problem or not.

The prices are as cheap as, if not cheaper than, other college bars. Drink specials on Wednesday are 75-cent well drinks and 85-cent call drinks. Thursday specials are 50-cent draws and \$1.50 for 32-ounce draws.

See OSCARS on 11



Joe Heinze/Daily Nebraskan

Inside Cliff's Lounge, 140 N. 12th St.



William Lauer/Daily Nebraskan

On stage at the Zoo Bar... 17-year owner Larry Boehmer surrounded by some of the nearly 40 portraits of performers who have played there. Clockwise from bottom left: Carey Bell, Jay McShann, James Harmon and Hollywood Fats, J. B. Hutto and Matt "Guitar" Murphy.

The bartenders are friendly and quick, a good sign for someone who likes to party.

Oscar's needs something that is unique, something only they can offer. They will have to do better

Oscars

Continued from Page 10
than the run-of-the-mill bar in Lincoln.

The crowds at Oscar's do not socialize. If a person goes in with friends, do not expect any other group or people to socialize with that person. It's as if one is transported back to a junior high dance, with little cliques standing off together.

Oscar's used to be fun, now it is just there.

-- Troy Falk

Zoo Bar

The Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., has a reputation.

First-class blues musicians throughout the country feel right at home on the tiny Zoo Bar stage. The Zoo Bar is widely regarded as THE blues bar in the Midwest outside of Chicago and Kansas City.

It seems kind of odd to find a true house-rocking blues joint in a relatively safe, quiet, college town like Lincoln. Maybe that's part of the magic of the Zoo.

The Zoo Bar is a long, dark, narrow room with worn wooden floors. It has a high, tin-relief ceiling painted black. Behind the bar hang scores of photos and drawings of some of the biggest names in the blues. Otis Rush, Sleepy LaBeef, Charlie Musselwhite, Big Twist. All are musicians who played at the Zoo at one time or another.

Cliff's

For those with a penchant for a quiet, but not intimate atmosphere, a lively, but not obnoxious clientele, and the most extensive flavor list of kamikazees this side of the Platte, then Cliff's at 140 N. 12th St. fits the bill.

Cliff's has an exceedingly inviting flavor to it. It's comfortable enough to let the first-time visitor feel at home enough to belly up and get sloshed to the bejeezus without making a scene. Heck, the majority of the bar is there for the same reason.

Prices and portions are set with the college student in mind. When ordering one of Cliff's famous

kamikazee's, customers get an entire pint-glass full of the mix, complete with an icemaker and extra high-ball glass for sipping. Classy, Cliff, real classy.

Everything from the bookshelved walls to the shagged floors is user-friendly at Cliff's. It's for the serious drinker with the light wallet.

-- Lisa Stankus

Cigarette smoke hangs in the air like an old black-and-white movie. And the place smells like beer and varnish -- and an old, pleasantly-musty, comfortable aroma -- like a sad, beautiful memory.

At any rate, the Zoo reeks with the blues.

The Zoo Bar feels like a piece of blues history. Things happen at the Zoo. That's probably why important blues figures like Buddy Guy, John Hammond, Charlie Musselwhite, Matt "Guitar" Murphy, Magic Slim and others play regularly at the Zoo.

Many musicians popular outside of the blues world, such as Robert Cray, played at the Zoo before they were "discovered." And after one night at the Zoo, many up-and-coming bands, such as Ian Moore and Moments Notice, can't wait to play there again.

Or that's part of the reason the Zoo Bar is a great blues bar, anyway. The Zoo also attracts a pretty diverse crowd of hard-core blues fans. On any given night, the Zoo is filled with student people, working class people and professional office people. All of them bit by the same blues bug.

Often, the diminutive dance floor is filled and sometimes people dance in the aisles between tables all the way back to the bar.

The bartenders are friendly, the beer flows freely, and the music always is good

at the Zoo. Guaranteed.

-- Mick Dyer



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