



**LEFT: HAN SOLO** (Harrison Ford) has a never-before-seen run-in with a computer-generated Jabba the Hut in one of the new scenes from "Star Wars."

**BELOW: MOS EISLEY**, the space port where the audience first meets Han Solo and his co-pilot, Chewbacca, is now populated with a number of computer-generated creatures in the new release of "Star Wars." The upper photo shows the scene before the effects were added, the lower photo shows the scene after. (Photos courtesy of Lucasfilm Ltd.)

## In a galaxy not far away ... 'Star Wars' returns for big-screen re-release

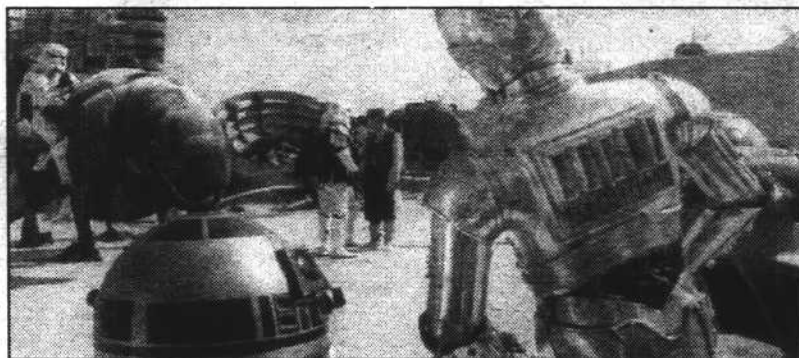
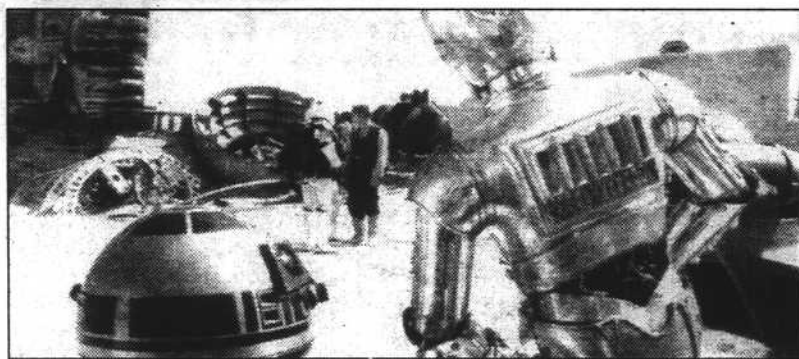
By **GERRY BELTZ**  
Senior Reporter

The wait is over. "Star Wars" opens today, complete with new footage, revamped special effects and bigger, better sounds from its original release in May 1977. Doug Kinney, city manager of Douglas Theatre Co., said he has gone through a change of heart over the last few months concerning this re-release. "About three months ago, I would've said that it would do all right," he said. "Now, it's tracking off the charts." UNL students have been overheard

planning to skip all their Friday classes to sit in line to pick up their tickets for the first show. Some plan on showing up as early as 8 a.m. "I'm expecting it to be insane," said Marilyn Hallinan, manager of the Stuart Theatre, 13th and P streets. "I thought we'd just have the fanatics calling up, asking about the movie," Kinney said. "However, we've been getting people of all kinds asking about it. "Maybe the pre-release hype of 'Jurassic Park' could compare. Maybe." Still, Kinney said, he doesn't think every show of "Star Wars" will be sold out during its three-week run at the Stuart.

"It's going to be huge for the first week," he said, "but it won't hold." The run of "Star Wars" will close Feb. 20, and "The Empire Strikes Back" will open the following day for a two-week run, and "Return of the Jedi" will close out the trilogy of special editions with a two-week run starting March 7. For "Star Wars," additional footage will include Imperial Stormtroopers riding around on lizard-like creatures (called "dewbacks"), a much wilder group of patrons at the cantina sequence and

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## She's with the band



LANE HICKENBOTTOM/DN  
**JON TAYLOR**, guitarist for Mercy Rule and new father, performs with the rest of the band at Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St., last week.



## Mercy Rule celebrates baby's birth

By **BRET SCHULTE**  
Staff Reporter

While you won't see Mercy Rule contributing to the soundtrack of an amicable purple dinosaur or even break into a searing "Rock-a-Bye Baby" guitar riff on stage, the impact of their newest member, the 5-month-old baby girl Zoie, remains to be seen. Although band members disagree on the extent of the influence, guitarist and father Jon Taylor insists it will be negligible. "I always wondered if the music would sound different after the baby," Taylor said. "I'm making a conscious effort not to write songs about babies — we'll just talk about her during shows."

Please see **MERCY** on 14

## Shakur, Roth shine in brutal, ironic film

By **JEFF RANDALL**  
Film Critic

### Movie Review

#### The Facts

**Film:** "GRIDLOCK'd"  
**Director:** Vondie Curtis Hall  
**Stars:** Tupac Shakur, Tim Roth, Thandie Newton  
**Rating:** R (violence, nudity, drug use, language)  
**Grade:** B  
**Five Words:** Tupac, we miss you already

Tupac Shakur was no angel. This oft-jailed rapper who met an untimely end a few short months ago not only had the words "Thug Life" tattooed across his stomach, he lived by those words; and his death by gunfire was perhaps a sort of payment for his life of crime, violence and misogynistic rantings. So, no, Tupac Shakur was no angel. But he was one hell of an actor, and "GRIDLOCK'd" may prove to be one of the greatest testimonies to what Shakur could have been — not only as a recording artist, but as one of the brightest acting talents of his generation. Shakur stars in the film — which was written and directed by Vondie Curtis Hall — with British-born actor Tim Roth as Spoon and Stretch, respectively. They are a pair of junkie musicians who, after seeing their friend and bandleader Cookie (played by Thandie Newton) slip into a coma following a drug overdose, decide to kick their shared habit. The only problem is that every time they try to enter a rehabilitation program, they are turned down or told to wait indefinitely by the extensive bureaucratic mess that represents the American welfare and health care systems. So the entire film is spent with Shakur and Roth wandering from of-

rice to hospital to office to hospital in search of help, shooting up along the way so they can keep their energy levels high enough to keep looking. And while the irony of this situation is not easily lost after one scene, the film manages to drill that message into its audience long after its point has been well taken and thoroughly understood. Granted, the nonstop meandering of Stretch and Spoon is the main reservoir of this film's comic strength, but even the humor begins to wear thin after 90 minutes. This said, the film is nearly flawless on most other points. It is beautifully photographed by Bill Pope, who turns the dirty and dark cityscape of New York into a twisted jungle where doom seems to lurk around most — if not all — corners. Hall's direction is equally master-

Please see **GRIDLOCK** on 13