

Alabama leads audience to boot-stompin' cheers

By DANIEL LUEDERT
Music Critic

Concert Review

There is a sincere beauty in good country music and living that Alabama showed in their performance Friday at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. The returning Nebraska State Fair favorites did not disappoint the crowd either.

The crowd was mixed and of differing ages — from the older generations that loved Hank Williams and Patsy Cline to the younger that grew up listening to Garth Brooks and Hank Williams Jr. Alabama played a southern country that reminded me of nights I would spend with my friends on deserted country roads, stopping on the tops of hills to get better reception on the \$75 Kraco radio in my first bomb of a car.

The group had fun, a good-hearted fun — something that is missing in a lot of the concerts today. There was no hostility, no moshing, just dancing and clapping and the stomping of leather boots.

Lead singer Randy Owens received several roses and letters of invitation for Ferris wheel rides from several of the ladies present. The band lightheartedly handled these intrusions into the

show. Although they seemed tempted by the Ferris wheel invitation, several band members ran off the stage in mock pursuit.

The band played many newer songs to the regret of some fans. The only criticism of the evening was just that. From the aisles of people surrounding the stage came an echo of the lyrics through most of the show that set the older songs apart. When the band broke into "God Bless the USA," the auditorium stood and sang in response. As soon as the words "If your gonna play in Texas, you gotta have a fiddle in the band" were uttered, the feet of audience members came down in a thunderous beat of approval.

The band played a good mix between the old and the new.

The stage was set on the end of the auditorium, not in the center as in years past. This was to the discouragement of the band. Owens, after commenting on this, wandered around the stage. This was the only time those sitting behind the stage had a good view. The stage performance was good — simple, but good. The lighting was of average quality, unlike the sound, which was rich, clear and pure.

'Kull' falls short from 'Conan'

By BRET SCHULTE
Film Critic

Movie Review

Never a sweater guy, or even a T-shirt guy, Kevin Sorbo brought his amiable beefiness to the big screen this weekend in the anxiously anticipated trailer-park event, "Kull the Conqueror." A film designed for those viewers who felt "Red Sonja" was needlessly complicated and far too character-based, "Kull the Conqueror" simplifies the potential-rich fantasy genre into a rock 'n' roll aerobic-exercise video.

Kevin Sorbo essentially plays Hercules once again, but instead yields a battle-axe of immortality for this adventure against unstoppable forces of evil. Designed as the quintessential good-natured, beer-drinking and half-naked Every man, Kull has gone from slavery to piracy to freelance warrior in his career. In an attempt to stop the murderous king of Valusia, Kull inherits the crown and is forced to defend his reign against royal assassination attempts and a sorceress "demon bitch" determined to force the kingdom of Valusia back to the dark ages. However, it doesn't seem like it would be much of a trip, as Valusia generally resembles the backyard of an IBP plant.

Featured as the reincarnated demon ruler, Tia Carrere plays

Akivasha, who seduces Kull (poor fellow) and usurps his throne with the help of vying parties in the palace. Always convincing and generally underestimated, Carrere is the highlight of this film, along with a small part played by Harvey Fierstein — the talented gay rights activist and humorist with the voice of a happy dump truck. Kull spends the majority of the film in an attempt to regain the throne and propel Valusia into a happy Utopian age, which sounds suspiciously American.

The character Kull is frequently confused throughout the movie. While he possesses the ability to break free from chains, liberate himself from slavery and resist supernatural suggestions, he consistently fails to defeat some little Viking-clad warrior who hopes to capture the throne for himself. While a confrontation between the protagonist and antagonist is generally required in the beginning of a movie and once again at the end, four or five clashes along the way not only became a bit tiresome and predictable, but completely nonsensical.

On the throne, Kull is a determined working-class king. He abolishes slavery and sports a gold-plat-

The Facts

Title: "Kull the Conqueror"
Stars: Kevin Sorbo, Tia Carrere, Karina Lombard
Director: John Nicolella
Rating: PG-13 (violence, adult situations)
Grade: C
Five Words: "Kull" kills itself with clichés

ed sleeveless undershirt (in the few scenes where Sorbo is clothed; there is generally plenty of skin elsewhere) and also tells stories of his days cavorting with women and drinking irresponsibly — much to his chagrin.

Ultimately, "Kull the Conqueror" is a fun, adventuresome romp set to the pace of a tractor pull. The script is intentionally light-hearted and unfortunately trite, but the players shrug their way through the movie and try to have the fun that is possible in fantasy films. The glam-rock soundtrack and much of the imagery — snakes, fire and ice — are ridiculous and cliché, intended to draw an audience that only puts down their "Magic" cards to see skin-heavy fantasy films. Few films of this nature have approached the unanimously-recognized king of the genre, "Conan the Barbarian," and "Kull the Conqueror" is no threat to the throne.

Exhibit reveals life of plains through photos

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by-state setup, she said. North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas are the featured states.

While the book, "People of the Great Plains" won't be sold at the exhibit, it is available at Nebraska

Bookstore, Lee Booksellers and Barnes and Noble Booksellers. A few copies also will be available for purchase at the exhibit's public formal opening Sept. 19, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Great Plains Studies Art Collection's permanent bronze sculptures also are on display. The

three-dimensional bronze sculptures compliment Miller's sharp black-and-white photography displayed in the same room, Kennedy said. "People of the Great Plains" runs Sept. 2-Oct. 15. Gallery hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 1:30 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

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