

# Endless touring gives Seattle band a boost

JOHN ARMSTRONG

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**P**EARL JAM guitarist Stone Gossard is calling from Boseman, Mont., which he describes as "just over the hump" in the Seattle band's seemingly endless tour schedule since the release last summer of its debut album, *Ten*.

"We're hanging in pretty well," Gossard says of the slog from town to town, and *Ten*'s sales figures support the adage that if you want to sell copies, you hit the road.

At interview time the album is in and out of the top 10 sales charts locally and flirting with the *Billboard* Top 20. The band plays The Plaza of Nations on Monday at a special all-ages show.

"You just have to go out and do it," Gossard says. "The funny thing is someone's voice will be shot, or you're just so tired from travelling that you think 'I just haven't got it in me tonight,' and then you'll go out and it'll be a great show."

Aside from raising the band's profile and boosting sales, one of the benefits of the tour — which included an appearance on Saturday Night Live — is Gossard's half-joking threat to compile a Michelin-style guide for travelling bands.

"I've got a pocket-computer diary and I'm keeping a list of which hotel's showers suck, what restaurants to eat at, which ones stay open late."



**PEARL JAM: Stone Gossard (left), Mike McCready, Jeff Ament (in hat), Eddie Vedder and Dave Abbruzzese play The Plaza of Nations Monday**

The other gratifying thing about Pearl Jam's success is that all this seemed to be about to happen once before. Gossard and bassist Jeff Ament were members of Seattle's legendary Green River and went on to form Mother Love Bone, touted as the next big thing and the band that would put the Northwest scene on the map. That honor ultimately

went to Nirvana. After recording a first album, *Apple*, Mother Love Bone singer Andrew Wood died of a drug overdose before it could be released.

"I think a lot of people expected us to just go sit in our rooms and cry forever," he says of that period. "And I still feel terrible about it, but because I lost someone I loved, not because of the band."

After a period of mourning and reappraisal, Gossard and Ament decided to carry on with a new name and recruited drummer Dave Abbruzzese and second guitarist Mike McCready. Mutual friends introduced them to San Diego singer Eddie Vedder and Pearl Jam

(Gossard prefers to leave the name open to individual interpretation) were in business.

As for the reported feud between Nirvana and Pearl Jam — some of the more printable things Nirvana's Kurt Cobain has said about his homeboys in recent interviews are "corporate whores" and "fake grunge" — Gossard says he's more confused by it than angry.

"I don't know him, although we've hung out with the bass player and drummer and they're both really cool guys. Maybe it's just been too much too fast for him and he's losing it or something. I think they're a good band and everything but if they don't like what we do, fine. Lots of other people do."