

The beats, feats go on and on

Lollapalooza '92 'sweet'

By Dave Larsen
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CINCINNATI — A side show performer lies face-down in broken glass and invites audience members to stand on the back of his head.

Another breathes fire onto a pile of television sets enclosed in a chain-link cage and drenched in lighter fluid; the televisions are then bashed to bits by a pipe-wielding San Francisco-based musician who calls himself M.C. Whitey Ho.

"Lollapalooza '92," a traveling nine-hour alternative music festival featuring seven eclectic acts and a Midway filled with "curiosities and oddities," arrived at Riverbend Music Center on Tuesday like a surreal circus of modern youth culture.

Just down the walkway, about 20 men and women beat on the "Rhythm Beast," a large metal structure festooned with battered oil drums and hub caps. On the lawn, slam dancers are hurtled skyward by their fellow concertgoers using taut sheets as trampolines.

"This Lollapalooza thing is like a big monster that changes the shape of the city once it gets in," Pearl Jam vocalist Eddie Vedder told the capacity crowd of 17,500 during the Seattle-based band's explosive mid-afternoon set.

Pearl Jam performed second on a diverse roster that included the metal-funk mayhem of the chart-topping Red Hot Chili Peppers and controversial rapper Ice Cube.

Also featured were Seattle's prototypical "grunge" band, Soundgarden, along with Ministry, Lush and the Jesus and Mary Chain.

The young crowd was every bit as diverse as the lineup of acts. "There's yuppies, punkers, hard rockers," said Anna King, 17, of Cincinnati, who described the scene as "Sweet!"



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A Lollapalooza concertgoer gets tossed in the air at Riverbend Music Center

The event "opens you up to everything you're going to hear," said Ric Cengeri, co-host of "The Breakfast Club" on 97X, Oxford-based WOXY-FM. "Even if you don't know all seven bands, after everything you've been through out here (on the Midway), you're willing to listen to and accept some new forms of music."

"Everything is entertaining," said Erin Rajkovich, 17, of Centerville, who relaxed between sets in a shady spot behind a row of ethnic food, jewelry and clothing vendors on the Midway.

Cheryl McBee of Piqua tried her luck on the Midway's "Safe Sex Wheel of Fortune," hoping to win a tape featuring music by the Lollapalooza perform-

ers. She took five spins for \$5, but didn't mind walking away empty-handed. "It's for AIDS," McBee said, "so it's a good cause."

Other booths on the Midway offered information on subjects such as handgun control, legalizing cannabis and music censorship.

Noelle Celeste of Columbus, daughter of former Gov. Richard Celeste, registered more than 500 new voters by mid-afternoon at the non-partisan "Rock the Vote" table.

Fans overwhelmed by either the heat or the scope of the festival could relax with "Smart Drinks," vitamin and amino acid cocktails "perfect for something like this where you need to be going all day long," according to vendor Jo Sweet, a native of England.