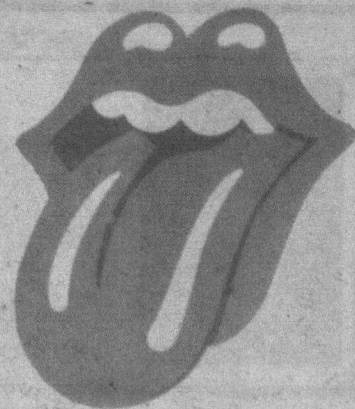
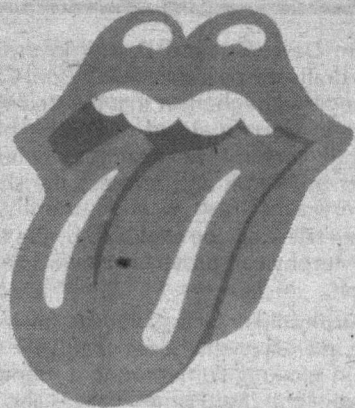


STEEL WHEELS '89



The Rolling Stones
BC Place
Wednesday, November 1

review by Ron Sears

Some poor boys from London town let it loose last Wednesday. The Rolling Stones took us down their musical main street of hits and pulled out a few from exile. They literally did hang fire.

The fire started as fireworks gave way to the more explosive opening riffs of "Start Me Up" — the Stones have not faded away. In fact, the Steel Wheels Tour will railroad rock and roll into the nineties, and it has railroaded The Rolling Stones into their fourth decade as the world's greatest rock and roll band.

The Stones packed 26 years of history into a two-and-a-half-hour time capsule. On this night, that capsule was BC Place Stadium. They definitely did shine a light. The light show was something from *Close Encounters* — of a Rolling Stone kind, however.

Musically, the Stones were tight and deep. With accomplished musicians Chuck Leavell on keyboards and long-time fave of the Stones Bobby Keys on Sax, the individual arrangements had a life of their own. Bill Wyman and Charlie Watts put together their usual solid rhythm background for strummers Keith and Ron. These boys in turn traded solo and rhythm duties throughout the night. However, when it came to such classics as *Sympathy for the Devil*, Keith showed us close-up his impeccable picking via three large video screens.

The Stones found themselves between a rock and a hard place deciding which songs to perform for the tour. No matter what they chose, they still could not give everyone satisfaction. Songs like "Let's Spend the Night Together," "19th Nervous Breakdown," and "Beast of Burden" were left out of their



repertoire. But you can't always get what you want.

There were many gratifying moments throughout the show. During the chorus of "Gimme Shelter," Mick was helped by scorching backup vocals. In "Midnight Rambler," Keith's enchanting guitar playing gave way to Mick during the song's lull. Mick then began stalking around the stage, lurching at the audience — at any moment he could attack.

Moving pictures of past great rockers were shown on the giant screens as the Stones played "It's only Rock & Roll." Fans cheered as footage of John Lennon, Elvis, and Chuck Berry graced the screens.

Mick challenged the crowd to outdo the best so far (Toronto) in singing the chorus of "You Can't Always Get What You Want." A chorus of 60,000 voices ensued and filled the dome with the chorus of that 1969 classic.

The highlight of the show was an outlandish version of "2000 Light Years From Home" enhanced by a psychedelic light show that mesmerized the audience for minutes. Without ending that song, they started into "Sympathy for the Devil." Mick appeared eight stories above the band on an elevator platform surrounded by flame, as the whole stage showered itself and the audience in red light.

The Stones ended the night with their traditional one-song encore, pounding out "Jumping Jack Flash." Mick, with as much energy as ever, covered the expansive stage repeatedly during the final minutes. The last of the pyrotechnics flared and burst. Lights were flashing into the crowd and jumping back to the stage that looked like an abandoned industrial mega-project. The show was over and more rock and roll history was made.

Satisfaction.

photos by

Ron Sears

