



## PEARL JAM TOUR FAILS

Pearl Jam have cancelled the last eight dates on the first stage of their USA tour but different reasons have been given for the abrupt halt to the tour.

At the San Francisco Golden Gate State Park concert on June 23, before a 50,000 crowd, Eddie Vedder left the stage after seven songs due to stomach flu. Neil Young who was standing by for an encore appearance, joined the band for a 90 minute set. Fans were vocal when later it was announced that Vedder would not return.

The following day the band released a statement cancelling the remaining eight shows due to "business problems and controversies surrounding the band's attempt to schedule an alternative tour." The statement did not mention Vedder's ill health.

It appears that the tour using unorthodox venues (stadiums not aligned with Ticketmaster) has been a logistic nightmare.

*Billboard* commented "It's not a stretch to assume some band members became irked when the topic of ticketing overshadowed Pearl Jam's music."

Law enforcement authorities in San Diego recommended cancellation of two shows at the Del Mar fairgrounds due to the possibility that 50,000 fans might show-up without tickets. After talk of changing their concerts to the afternoon, Pearl Jam then moved the shows to a Ticketmaster venue, after the much-maligned company waived their exclusive contract with the San Diego Sports Arena.

Vedder denied on radio that they would consider going back to selling their shows via Ticketmaster, even though the large company is now reducing their margin for price-aware bands like Offspring.

As the Pearl Jam tour floundered around the country frustrating fans, their stubborn battle ceased to be a popular cause and the USA Justice Dept decided to drop its investigation into the Ticketmaster monopoly stating, "this was not an appropriate time to bring a case."

The shows the band will now have to reschedule are Salt Lake City, San Diego, Phoenix, Las Cruces, Austin, New Orleans, Milwaukee and Chicago.

One frustrated fan wrote, "Those 'kids' have let their little boy egos supersede the happiness of their fans. They've gone too far; I'm done with them."

## MOUNTAIN ROCK PRODUCTIONS IN TROUBLE

**Mountain Rock Productions Limited (MRP), the company behind the annual Mountain Rock Music Festival, claim to have been defrauded to the tune of \$500,000 in ticket sales after this year's concert, and due to the alleged theft, MRP has debts of over 180,000, and a substantial creditor has indicated their intention to shut the company down.**

The organisers of the annual festival, first staged in January 1992, estimated a crowd of 35-40,000 people attended the 1995 event on January 14 and 15, but say ticket sales indicated a figure of just 13,000, and they believe that is where the shortfall lies. Discrepancies in numbers were discovered on the second day of the festival, and Palmerston North Police were called to conduct a head count on site. But despite MRP's claims, Detective Inspector Doug Brew declined to launch an inquiry into the allegations of theft, judging the ticket receipts matched the Police estimate of the crowd present at the venue. Days after the event, Brew told the *New Zealand Herald*: "They [Mountain Rock Productions] got a figure and thought they would have been short. It is fair to say that they estimated the crowd in excess of what it was."

According to Paul Campbell, a director of MRP, the Police arrived too late to make an accurate assessment of the crowd size.

"They started the head count at one o'clock on the Sunday morning, and half the crowd had left by the time they started it. As an indication of the number there; we had 28,000-30,000 people at Mountain

Rock Three, and we sold 30 pallets of beer, we sold 42 at Mountain Rock Four. If there was only 14,000 people at the last festival, they'd have all been dead from alcohol poisoning."

Campbell believes a counterfeit ticket operation was involved in the theft, but says his requests to the Palmerston North Police to investigate have been unanswered. The Palmerston North Fraud Squad have since handed the file on the case over to their Auckland counterparts, who have not been in contact with Campbell, and who would not make any comment to *RipItUp*.

On June 27 1995, MRP indicated it was their intention to go ahead with plans to stage the 1996 concert. They asked those parties owed money from the 1995 festival to wait until January 1996 to receive full payment. By July 6, the Auckland branch of the Australasian company Show Travel Ltd, had informed MRP they would seek to wind them up. Show Travel's decision prevents Mountain Rock Productions from continuing to trade, and therefore the company has shelved plans for a future festival.

However, Campbell says there is a new company in place who are planning to ensure the concert will go ahead. The company has five directors, all of whom have been involved with MRP in the past, while Campbell is acting in consultancy role. He states that Coca Cola and DB Breweries have been confirmed as sponsors of the 1996 Mountain Rock Music Festival, and he has every confidence the event will proceed.

JOHN RUSSELL



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