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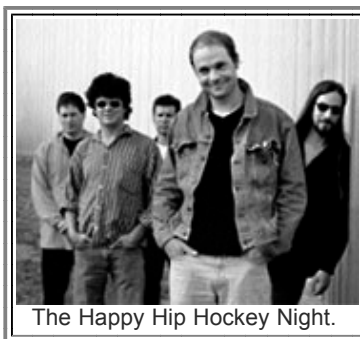
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NEWS

The Hip Rock Out At "Secret" Show

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By: [ChartAttack.com Staff](#)

Lee's Palace
Toronto, Ontario
February 20, 2002
by Jim Kelly



Wednesday night, when the Canadian Olympic men's hockey team was set to play a must-win game against Team Finland, nationalistic fervour was running high inside Lee's Palace in Toronto. But that was only partly because of the impending hockey showdown. The 500-capacity club was filled with fans who had come to see Canada's favourite band, **The Tragically Hip**, in a rare club show — a surprise charity concert that had been announced only that day at noon, prompting diehard fans to line up for hours in the rain until the doors opened at 5 p.m. All proceeds from the show (everyone paid \$25 at the door) went to the Special Olympics. Ostensibly, it was also a warm-up gig for the band's February 23 concert in Salt Lake City, where they'll be performing for Canada's Olympic athletes and contest-winners.

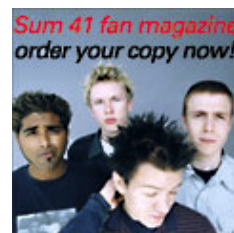
The feeling inside the club was that of a near-perfect confluence of Canadian cultural expressions. We celebrate the Canadian-ness of The Tragically Hip in much the same way that we cling to the game of hockey as a touchstone of our way of life. When I arrived at Lee's, a full hour-and-a-half before the band was set to take the stage, the crowd was already singing "O Canada" (in between the obligatory chants of "Hip! Hip! Hip!" of course). Maple Leaf regalia was on display everywhere: Team Canada hockey sweaters, big, tall, red-and-white flag-emblazoned cat-in-the-hat chapeaux ("Canuck I am"), flags big and small, toques, etc. Throw in a beaver, a mountie and a Royal Commission, and we would've had the complete Canadiana spectrum covered. Oh, and there were also a few beers being consumed.

But there was no time for cultural accounting. The band had a mission: to rock this eager crowd into a sweaty, Canadian rock fervour (that's the kind with a "u"), and wind it all up in time to catch the opening face-off of the big hockey match, set to begin shortly after 10 p.m. Fans were invited to stay and watch the game on the bar's television sets.

With lead singer **Gord Downie** in familiar denim jacket and toque, they kicked things off with "Poets" — "Spring starts when a heartbeat's



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pounding..." — and we were transported; the steady, insistent beat and the heady, intoxicating guitars flinging us forward into the warmth of balmy days to come. Considering the boys hadn't shared a stage together since the Music Without Borders concert last October, they sounded as tight as ever.

It was a set designed to stoke the fans' glowing hearts, stacked mostly with crowd-pleasers like "New Orleans Is Sinking," "Fully Completely," "Grace, Too," "At The Hundredth Meridian," "Gift Shop" and "Courage." By mid-set we were soaking up the warm, acoustic groove of "Ahead By A Century," awash in the buoyant vibes of the prolonged jam at the end. "Fireworks" provided some resonance for the impending hockey game ("If there's a goal that everyone remembers, it was back in ol' '72"). And the band played three new songs, presumably tracks from their as-yet-untitled album that they've just finished recording in The Bahamas with producer Hugh Padgham (**The Police, Phil Collins, XTC**). One, which may be titled "Use It Up," was a fairly steady, churning number, featuring a tribal drum beat, and another, whose title I couldn't ascertain, sounded almost like something from the Fully Completely sessions.

After a very brief respite, they returned with a three-song encore set, starting with the coiled energy of "Lake Fever," followed by the third new song, which may be called "Tore It Up," a frenetic, hard-driving number that appears to be aptly named, and then they ended the night with a rousing run through of the now-classic "Blow At High Dough." Despite efforts to call them out for a few more encores, the band was sticking to their plan. It was just after 10 p.m. and the puck was about to drop in Salt Lake City.

So the Hip got to warm up their chops, the fans got a pretty hot show, and the Special Olympics got the cold cash for a cool cause.

Oh, and Canada beat Finland 2-1.

On this night, everybody won.

Set List

- "Poets"
- "New Orleans Is Sinking"
- "Fireworks"
- "Fully Completely"
- "Grace, too"
- "Courage"
- new song (Use It Up?)
- "Gift Shop"
- "Ahead By A Century"
- new song (no guess at title)
- "Putting Down"
- "At The Hundredth Meridian"
- "Bobcaygeon"
- "Nautical Disaster"
- "My Music At Work"

Encore:

- "Lake Fever"
- new song (Tore It Up?)
- "Blow At High Dough"

