CATCHING THE HIGH AGAIN



Woodstock. y of blasting n v people mad the 20,000 fan on Aug. 19, it get through. e ranging from ng Pumpkins to d Quest, the m metimes excr

g, Lollapalooza estite to a girl tape — the c ty amusement

distort voices, A fan goes "crowd surfing" during a Roguish Armament performance at Woodstock '94 in Saugerties, New York. The New York-based band helped open the three-day event. four more band ment.

maker, with ve me to call it an " BY MACK HARRISON Special to The Battalion

drugs

Woodstock.



)'sa, n.

No way, people said, that you excellent. [Sla could ever duplicate the original Woodstock. Not today. Different ne who mun generation, different music. Wrong.

And it all started e charge on them umorously-titled ction with the co vs entertaining. ne found particu I. When the far

weekend-long party. THE SECURITY well as Soundga Advance coverage and convent, singing "Black tional wisdom had suggested masy the rain/The hip sive security measures at the site, got the crowd go

but our group boarded the shuttle buses after an hour's wait, a cursory aradise," recent outstanding, thanks sweep of the metal detector wand and some perfunctory questions:

No.

To our left were the food booths, the port-a-potties, the south stage and the Eco-Fest area - where all the tree-hugger groups had their booths. To our right stretched more tents, food, restrooms and the Surreal Field - a computer geek haven of computer company pavilions and a couple of "virtual reality" attractions which were the equivalent of the Star Wars ride at Disneyland.

THE DRUGS

Woodstock '94 seemed to redefine the term "casual drug use." No one worried about cops. Marijuana was everywhere. You couldn't walk five feet without stumbling over someone smoking weed.

In an odd parallel to the first concert, announcements from the stage warned the crowd about tainted drugs - not bad acid this time, but laced marijuana.

One unconventional intoxicant came in gaseous form: Peddlers sold balloons filled with nitrous oxide - laughing gas. People would buy the balloons and breathe the gas; it didn't make your voice highhed like helium, but it did pro vide a lift of its own. Entrepreneurs offered any manner of intoxicant desired — and the crowd desired. Individuals carried handmade signs reading "need acid," "need 'shrooms," or "need doses." Possibly the best sign rested in the hands of a young man seated next to a main path: "Don't need anything," it read. "Just like to hold signs." And those substances - although of dubious quality or au-thenticity — were available. For a price. Single hits of acid sold for three to five dollars; one young entrepreneur sold hashish for \$15 a gram.



Concert-goers stand atop some of the 2,800 portable toilets at Woodstock '94 in efforts to get a better view of the stage. The swelling crowd strained the carefully laid plans of the festival's organizers.





join him in pl visted Sister's "We on you?" s "Eye of the Ti Eye of the Tiger" te fit, but it prov

ing. Nick Cave & ess than impressive Called Quest mad tely alternative line hife Dawg wowed heck the Rhime,"

a history lesson P-Funk All Stars. Funkadelic group Red Hot Chili Pe point with his tru owd moving with the Funk (Tear the ' "Flash Light" see mind, as Clinton's

the Houston Roo

drug rap was easi ines like "There's

than selling it." to the stage wit But the band's vocal styles of M elligible screams play their own realize it's been 4 d they've said. Bu t" and "Sabotage. ner Smashing Pur ith the band's hu 's voice was just a

scream. Renditi impressive, but Con stage, the crowd lo of the extreme her terribly uncomfo er, we peeled off the npassed our bodies

Richards looks, nce is just that - an ow. One that will^b palooza alum Ice d day."

BATTALI

you have any contraband

"Any guns or knives?" No.

AUGERTIES, N.Y. — The peo-ple. The music. The mud. The

Woodstock is dead. Long live

Through the three days in the

mud and drug-induced haze, con-cert-goers at the festival Aug. 12-14

in Saugerties found the same expe-

rience as their spiritual ancestors

did 25 years earlier at the original

Woodstock in Bethel, N.Y. - a

"Any drugs or alcohol?" No, of course not.

The rules said no weapons, drugs or alcohol, no aerosol sprays, no open fires, no this, no that. In reality, however, security was lax enough that people brought in pretty much whatever they wanted.

Once ticket holders stepped off the shuttle bus at the concert site, another brace of security guards wearing Woodstock "Peace Patrol" T-shirts casually searched the disembarking passengers' belongings, looking for any contraband, drugs or alcohol hidden in bedrolls or tents.

As we trekked down the path toward the stage, we saw swarms of people scaling the fences around the woods.

"Environmentally Sensitive Area," the signs mounted on the fences told the ecologically apathetic crowd as hundreds of people broke through the barrier to camp in the wetlands under the trees. We continued down the path to-

ward the music. As we topped the rise, the sights, sounds, smells and spectacle of Woodstock '94 embraced us.

I HE SCENE

We wandered into the field, adrift in a sea of tents. Far, far away, we could make out the north stage and the twin towers of speakers flanking it. Overhead, helicopters carrying VIPs swooped toward the backstage area, a cameraladen chopper swept over the crowd and a blimp floated high above in stately silence.

> PHOTOS GRAPHICS BYAP

THE COST

In fact, capitalism seemed to run rampant at this so-called "revolutionary" event. Evidence of the "corporateness" so dreaded by detractors of Woodstock '94 was all around. From the Pepsi logo slapped on the concession stands and paper cups to the Phillips Electronics CD-I pavilion in the Surreal Field, sponsors abounded.

Prices were not outrageous, however — they were usurious. The \$135 tickets were just the start. Soft drinks went for two dollars and meals cost anywhere from six to eight dollars. Our group, unwilling to spend \$10 on lunch, had brought in canned goods and granola bars, which lasted us through the weekend.

Beer, of course, was banned from the festival, so its price went up accordingly. People jumped the fence, bought it at nearby convenience stores and smuggled it back onto the site. Back there, budding brewmeisters sold two beers for five dollars; a 12-pack went for \$20.

But this was at the start of the fes-

tival. By Sunday all the local stores there actually was a sense of brothhad sold out of beer, and those lucky individuals who had some stockpiled wouldn't part with it for any price.

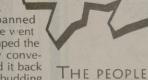
Souvenir booths sprouted like psychedelic mushrooms across the festival area. Vendors offered everything from tie-dyed shirts to jewelry to clothing made from hemp. Some individuals braided hair or sold jewelry on blankets spread on the ground. One woman with only a chair and a sign read palms by

flashlight.

THE BODY COUNT

- Estimated population at Woodstock '94: 350,000
- Tickets sold: 200,000
- Deaths: 2
- People treated for first aid at the event: 5,000
- People taken to area hospitals: 75
- Arrests: 24

 Marriages: 1 - Source: MTV New



At night, after the music ended, we returned to our tents along with 300,000 of our closest friends and neighbors. As cheesy as it sounds,

erhood among the people at Woodstock '94. Everyone felt a kinship with everyone else at the festival, and people were happy to help each other out.

In fact, the wide variety of individuals in attendance is what made the event unique. All age groups from infants to senior citizens were represented. Bikers, hippies, rednecks, Yankees, parents, children, students, professionals — all contributed to the synergistic gestalt that defined the event like some Aquarian melting pot.

THE PARKING

The situation at Woodstock made parking at Texas A&M seem like some kind of nirvana. Man, what a mess.

> When we arrived at the site we followed the directions on the back of our parking pass. Unfortunately, our assigned lot had filled up and the parking powersthat-be had taken the sign down. We drove around for an hour until we asked a worker where to park.

The lot we pulled in was already over capacity, and the ground soft as we left our vehicle. Little did we know we'd have to spend the Sunday night after the concert in the car. The ground was so muddy after all the rain that we couldn't leave until a tow truck winched us out of the mud the next morning — for \$50.

I HE MUD

It just wouldn't be Woodstock without the mud, would it? The first day, the mud was a result of runoff from the water fountains, which the concert planners had thoughtfully placed at the tops of the hills. The overflow ran straight down the dirt paths leading up to the faucets, immediately turning them into Slip'n'Slides.

Apart from these inclines, things remained dry - until the rains came down. We heard the thunder and saw the lightning as we huddled in our tents Friday night. The next day we looked out at the tents, floating like pond scum on a sea of mud.

Rain and thousands of footsteps rendered all bare ground nearly impassible. The only grassy areas remaining were hidden under tents. The mud was so deep and thick it sucked people's shoes off their feet.

As hikers walked up or down the treacherous slopes, many lost their footing. At several inclines, people hurled themselves down the muddy slopes, skidding 50 yards or more and transforming into the infamous Mud People.

HE NUDITY

Some people - male and female — who got caught in the rain and mud decided to shed their clothing, without much reaction from their neighbors. Although most of the nudists were men disrobing to take a shower at the water fountains, the atmosphere convinced many women to go topless.

In addition, this reporter will always remember the sight of one man and two women walking past the campsite wearing nothing but backpacks.

THE MUSIC

Sorry. Don't remember too much about this one.

Did Woodstock '94 have the same cultural significance as the original concert? Not yet.

It won't achieve that importance until the people who attended are able to see the movie and hear all the media hype. Then they'll realize what a defining moment it really was - a realization they weren't able to make at the festival itself, because they were too busy having fun in a sea of mud.

