

## The first of many concerts



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BY DAVID WILLBERG

Anybody who questioned whether Spectra Place could be used for more than just hockey games had their doubts erased on April 15.

Canadian rock legends Tom Cochrane and Red Rider, along with opening act Kim Mitchell, performed during the building's grand opening concert, to the delight of approximately 2,000 fans, many of whom watched the concert from the venue's floor.

Mitchell warmed up the crowd with a raucous, energetic collection of 12 songs that featured such well-known hits "Go for a Soda" and "Patio Lanterns," and some of his more recent songs, such as "Ain't Life Amazing," which was the title track of his most recent release in 2007.

Cochrane did not disappoint, either. He opened three of his most popular songs – "Victory Day," "Sinking Like a Sunset" and "Big League," and had the crowd singing along with several more songs. The biggest reaction came for his final scheduled song, his 1991 chart topper "Life is a Highway."

(Incidentally, has it actually been nearly 20 years since "Life is a Highway" was released?)

To the delight of the audience, Cochrane and Red Rider returned for a two-song encore, which wrapped up with "Boy Inside the Man."

For the spectators, it was a terrific night. They had the opportunity to attend a historical event, and listen to a pair of Canadian rock icons perform their most popular songs.

For the concert's organizing committee, and for the Spectra Place building committee, there had to be the sense of overwhelming satisfaction during, and after, the concert. A lot of work has taken place during the last five years to make Spectra Place a reality; the Cochrane/Mitchell concert was a culmination of those efforts.

Was it a learning experience? Absolutely. There are improvements that can be made for the next concert, whenever it happens.

Will there be another concert at Spectra Place with a headliner as well-known as Tom Cochrane and Red Rider? That's hard to predict. Estevan now has the venue to attract performers who have even more name recognition than Cochrane, but some of them will fall outside of the community's price range.

But Cochrane was the perfect performer for Spectra Place's grand opening concert: a prominent Canadian musician who has had a lengthy career, who has released many beloved songs, but is also affordable, which means that spectators didn't have to pay \$100 for a ticket.

It was also the first opportunity for many spectators to see the interior of Spectra Place, sample the food at the concession, stroll through the expanded lobby and seating arena, and see the overhead scoreboard and private boxes.

Everyone now knows that Estevan can stage a successful concert inside their spacious, spectacular new venue. And they now know that Estevan has a legitimate events centre, and not just a new hockey arena.

