

Sellout shows sweet to underrated band

By Alan Kellogg
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For a couple of years, Tom Cochrane's Red Rider has been Canada's most underrated successful rock band.

In the era of the corporate accountant-musician, Cochrane looks to Rimbaud or Neruda for inspiration. When it occasionally seems that we've drifted back into the McCarthyite '50s with mindless "love songs" pandering to a perceived lowest common denominator or worse, Cochrane's lyrics mull over alienation — whether in Central America or Yonge Street.

For a group that obviously still believes in and **understands** the awesome power of rock and roll — to save, to shout a clarion call, to simply bore by playing it safe, last night must have been sweet for Red Rider.

Selling over 5,000 tickets in two virtual sellouts, Red Rider is big business in Edmonton, which speaks well for us. And the band delivered — on every count.

Mixing favorites like White Hot and Cowboys In Hong Kong with the excellent material from Neruda, the latest album, Cochrane and confreres demon-

Red Rider
The Deserters
Jubilee Auditorium

strated that Red Rider's concert potency matches its studio victories.

Songs like Napoleon Sheds His Skin, Power and You Can't Turn Back received tough, well-executed readings, enhanced by powerful, intelligent lighting effects and crisp sound.

Perhaps this is all part of a bigger philosophy, which stretches back to the roots of the music itself. Watching a mob of young listeners rush to the stage for the encores (it's great to hear a rock show at the Jube for a change) was gratifying. Running for quality is a pleasure to behold.

In appealing to the audience's higher instincts while keeping its music accessible, Red Rider has managed to balance mainstream and progressive tendencies without demeaning either sensibility.

It works, it rocks and it makes you think a little bit. May Red Rider have a long and fulfilling run — this is an important band.

I would have preferred to hear fellow Capitol recording act The Deserters in a club setting. Somehow, the memory of hearing four of the

Toronto band's numbers seemed to vaporize the moment Red Rider walked onstage. Tight and straightforward with an eye to new music, The Deserters' potential was lost on these ears last night.