

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

REVIEW - 5/21

By Tim Finn

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Jason Aldean machine roars through Bonner Springs, ignites a country-rock inferno

More than 13,000 fans attended show at Providence Medical Center Amphitheater

In 2012, Aldean broke the attendance record at the Sprint Center

More than 13,000 fans showed up Friday night at the Providence Medical Center Amphitheater in Bonner Springs to watch Jason Aldean and his five-piece band charge through a set list of nearly two dozen heavy country/Southern rock songs drawn from a catalog that comprises six full-length albums and goes back more than 11 years. Susan Pfanmuller Special to the Star

The Jason Aldean machine keeps rolling along.

In 11 years, the country music star has sold more than 11 million albums in the U.S., put two dozen Top 10 songs on the country charts and won more than two dozen awards, including entertainer of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards in April.

Friday night at the Providence Medical Center Amphitheater in Bonner Springs, he lived up to his hype and record of success.

More than 13,000 fans showed up under a full moon on a balmy, late-spring night to watch Aldean and his five-piece band charge through a set list of nearly two dozen heavy country/Southern rock songs. It included such favorites as "Hicktown," "Amarillo Sky," "Big Green Tractor," "Crazy Town," "Dirt Road Anthem," "Night Train" and "1994." Throughout the set, which lasted more than 100 minutes, Aldean coaxed the big, rowdy crowd into several sing-alongs.

He opened with "Just Gettin' Started," which set the mood for the rest of the show. It's a hard-rock tune bathed in guitar riffs so heavy that they nearly washed out the pedal steel guitar.

Aldean primarily sings about four subjects: partying, love and romance (and by innuendo, sex), the country life, and the country landscape.

Sometimes he sings about two or three in the same song, as in 1994, a country-rap plea for a get-together that name checks Joe Diffie: "I'm just a country boy with a farmer's tan/So help me girl, I'll be your man." Opener Thomas Rhett joined Aldean on that one.

Or "Burnin' It Down," a song about wanting to "get a little tangled up" with someone with whom he's cuddling (naked), drinking Jack Daniel's and listening to Alabama.

His music is built on a heavy-rock foundation. At times the riffs that opened or populated his heaviest anthems, like "Take A Little Ride" or "My Kinda Party," evoked the sounds of Metallica or AC/DC. "She's Country" rides a riff that borrows heavily from "Back in Black." He also played "Lights Come On," the single off an upcoming album that sounded much like the rest of Aldean's material.

Aldean doesn't waste a lot of time chatting with his audiences, but he knows how to push the right buttons. He briefly replaced his cowboy hat with a Royals cap. And he walked the Kansas/Missouri tightrope perfectly, acknowledging he was in Bonner Springs and most everyone was from Kansas and Missouri but he would be calling his locale Kansas City.

The crowd was big, but not as large as other Aldean shows in Kansas City. His previous appearance was last August at Arrowhead Stadium, where he co-headlined with Kenny Chesney, which set the stadium's concert attendance record (more than 56,000). In March 2012, Aldean set the attendance record at the Sprint Center (more than 18,000).

He brought the show to a close with a few of his signature songs: "Dirt Road Anthem" and "Hicktown," both homages to the small-town country life, and then "Crazy Town," a song about Nashville, "a crazy town full of neon dreams / Everybody plays, everybody sings."

That's the truth, but few live the dreams as large, loudly and successfully as Aldean.

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SET LIST

Just Getting' Started; Gonna Know We Were Here; Take a Little Ride; When She Says Baby; Night Train; Big Green Tractor; Lights Come On; Tattoos On This Town; Fly Over States; Tonight Looks Good On You; Asphalt Cowboy/Why/The Truth/Don't You Wanna Stay; The Only Way I Know; 1994; Amarillo Sky; My

Kinda Party; She's Country; Dirt Road Anthem; Hicktown, Encore: Burnin' It Down; Crazy Town.