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Jason Aldean brings "We Were Here" tour to Grand Forks

Grand Forks, ND - Jason Aldean had his opening song set the tempo for the thousands in attendance at his show Thursday night at the Alerus Center.

As he was lowered from high above the stage, Aldean and his backing band lashed into "Just Gettin' Started," letting everybody know he was doing just that.

The country superstar navigated through both traditional country music and the country rock filled with screeching guitars he's become known for.

Early in his set, Aldean got the crowd on its feet and singing with several of his No. 1 hits, including "When She Says Baby," "Big Green Tractor" and "Fly Over States."

One highlight midway through his set featured Aldean bringing opening act Thomas Rhett on stage for a duet of "1994," which both Rhett and Aldean helped write.

The country singer, wearing a cowboy hat, button-down shirt and jeans, wrapped up the main set with a cluster of his biggest hits, such as "Amarillo Sky," "My Kinda Party," and "She's Country" before closing his set with "Hicktown."

His two-song encore of "Burnin' It Down" and "Crazy Town" capped off Aldean's set that left nearly everybody in attendance up on their feet and screaming his lyrics.

Aldean last played at the Alerus Center in March 2013 during his "2013 Night Train Tour" in front of 14,552 fans. That show also featured Rhett as an opener.

Though this was his second time in Grand Forks, Aldean said he was no fan of the winter weather that greeted his arrival.

"I know you're feeling like you're in a heat wave right now," Georgia native Aldean said, alluding to the 20 degree temperatures outside. "But this is hell to me."

Before Aldean took the stage, Rhett wowed the Alerus Center crowd with his 11-song set that included "Die A Happy Man," which currently sits at No. 1 on the Billboard country charts. During the song, Rhett led the crowd in a singalong, with many in the arena pulling out their cellphones and waving them in the air.

The up-and-comer, who released his album "Tangled Up" in September, followed two songs later with "Vacation," where he went into the crowd, before closing his set with "Get Me Some Of That" and "Crash and Burn."

A Thousand Horses began the evening with a crisp seven-song setlist, highlighting the

band's rock and country mix with "Travlin' Man," their most recent single "(This Ain't No) Drunk Dial," and a raucous cover of Otis Redding's "Hard to Handle."