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Review: Thomas Rhett plays country pop for pumped crowd at packed Omaha show



Thomas Rhett is ready for a vacation, but he wasn't about to phone in his last show.

To close out his Home Team Tour, the country star packed his concert with a host of hits and even invited his dad, country star Rhett Akins, for a surprise set of his hits, too.

Rhett's set featured his brand of pleasant country pop such as "Die a Happy Man," "Crash and Burn," "Star of the Show," "Get Me Some of That" and "Unforgettable" as well as "Around Here," a No. 1 he wrote for Florida Georgia Line.

And then he welcomed Akins to the stage as a little surprise. Akins was a country star on his own and later turned to writing smash hits for Luke Bryan, Blake Shelton, Jon Pardi, Jason Aldean and a host of others. And so Akins and his son played a bunch of his songs including "That Ain't My Truck," "Dirt On My Boots" and "Boys 'Round Here."

Rhett celebrated the end of his tour, toasting his bandmates and thanking the crowd for helping him close out this run of dates.

"You are the best crowd I have ever seen in my whole life," Rhett said. "This is our last show of the year. We couldn't imagine spending it with anybody else but y'all."

Saturday's show was sold out, and CenturyLink Center was filled to the rafters with enthusiastic fans who sang, danced and held up signs requesting their favorite Rhatt songs. More than 15,000 fans, some of whom snapped up extra seats made available that morning, filled the arena.

Rhatt performed in Omaha later than originally planned after he rescheduled the show due to an illness. He apologized to the audience, but then he thanked them.

"You guys are so loud. Holy crap," he said in the middle of "Get Me Some of That." "Obviously the reschedule did nothing to your energy."

Later, Rhatt marveled at the size of the crowd. He recalled a few years back when he and his band played the tiny Single Barrel in Lincoln.

"I'm pretty sure it held about 300 people and we sold 48 tickets," Rhatt said. "And here we are. (Thousands) of y'all. What in the world?"

Rhatt's style of country, at least at Saturday's show, was without most of the elements you'd associate with country. His five-member band was more of a rock and funk outfit playing polished versions of his smash radio hits.

They even did a version of Bruno Mars' R&B hit "24K Magic," and as funky as the song was, it certainly didn't feel out of place in the set. Same with Mars' "That's What I Like," which Rhatt wove seamlessly into the middle of "Unforgettable."

That tells you a lot about the rest of the show, which featured songs like the straight-up radio-friendly pop of Rhatt's "Vacation."

Of course, a few songs had that classic country feel.

Akins' mini set as well as a series of songs including "Sweetheart" and "Marry Me" were performed from a tiny stage in the rear of the arena and took on a more living room feel with acoustic guitars.

Even if his stuff is more pop fused with his southern vocal twang, that's cool. Fans loved it, and they screamed throughout the 90-minute performance.

Rhatt continually thanked the audience for its enthusiasm.

"Omaha, thank you for giving us the best ever last show," he said as his band played the last notes of "T-Shirt" to close the show. "God bless you."