

Swollen Members Go Limp

By Mariève MacGREGOR

The hype had been building for weeks. Everyone knew. Everyone wanted a piece. After the advanced tickets sold out, people were anxious to get reserved tickets. The bartenders were going mad with phone calls about tickets. People were searching the Student Union office high and low for a ticket, but the only way was to wait at the door before show time.

At 7:00pm, there was already a line forming at the door. By 9:00pm there were hundreds of people. By 9:15pm, tickets were sold out. At 9:15 the lights went low in the dance space, and the music kicked up— an atmosphere of drink, dance, and suspense. The energy in the room as the ticket bearers strode in was intensifying.

What the ticket bearers did not know was that Swollen Members would not be tearing up the stage until midnight, and were only going to play until 1:00am. People expected a full concert from the guys, especially at \$12-15 a pop. The energy of the room began to slacken.

As 10:00pm hit the room, the buzz circulated that the Members weren't going to show for another two hours. Scratch Bastid, a DJ with a knack for song



alteration (he did a wicked version of Micky J's "Billy Jean"), would play from 10:30 until midnight, and then finish the evening once Swollen Members did their bit.

As Scratch Bastid slowly won the crowd's affection, the anticipation for Swollen Members subsided. By midnight, people were either too tired from dancing to care, too impatient to truly enjoy, or too drunk to remember. The hard-core fans were still pumped and their energy slightly elevated the rest of the room, but the anticipation and suspense was gone.

Their show was well-performed. They did their thing. They had the energy and the moves and the sex appeal. People screamed and rapped along. They hip-

hopped when Swollen Members hip-hopped. It was nothing beyond what could have been expected. No mishaps, no surprises. The only real problem was that the ventilation system was turned off early by mistake, and the room became sweltering hot. The boys on stage, though, started to strip down, so it wasn't a total catastrophe. They were also nice enough to sprinkle water from their water bottles over the crowd. A welcome shower.

The Wave took excellent care of the crowd. This was probably the best-organised event The Wave has ever had. The staff is learning to manage people more safely in the widespread space, which is an understandably difficult task.

Throughout the night, a certain

company was ever present. Benson & Hedges, a tobacco company, were the sponsors of the night's event. They paid for Swollen Members to perform, and therefore had the right to advertise. There were beautiful girls in shiny gold dresses and black hooker boots walking around toting trays of cigarettes. They stood around smoking, with their pretty hair and silver tinted makeup and flirtatious smiles. There were cigarette vending machines. There were video screens with the goldclub series logo in the corner. It almost felt like a freak sideshow element to the event.

Several people attending the event told me how appalled they were by the overt presence of the cigarette company, and that they would never have attended had they known. It is true that the cigarette company brought Swollen Members to Charlottetown, but their in-your-face approach to advertising their products to the crowd was distasteful.

Overall the night was a success, but also anticlimactic. The band played too late, the sponsors were too self-righteous, and the cost-entertainment expectancy ratio was unfair. But kudos to DJ Scratch Bastid. I think the man has accumulated some new fans.

