

Jason Aldean keeps fans on their feet all night

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Sunday night Gilford was transformed into "Crazy Town." Or maybe it was "Hicktown."

Country music star Jason Aldean, who has hits with both of those names, roared into Gilford for a sold-out show at the Meadowbrook US Cellular Pavilion on Sunday and brought down the house with his intense live show.

Aldean, who is coming off the most successful year of his young career, didn't take long to get the crowd pumped up, as he opened with his latest hit, "Crazy Town," bringing fans to their feet. The song is about a young singer looking to make a name in Nashville, something Aldean lived through just a few short years ago.

With his band rocking away behind him, Aldean continued with some of the hits that have made him one

of the hottest stars on the country scene over the last few years, including "Amarillo Sky," "Why" and "The Truth."

Aldean slowed it down a bit for an album cut, "Asphalt Cowboy," which is a cult favorite of many truck drivers who tune into XM Radio's The Highway. For that song, the band took a break and Aldean simply sat on the stage with his guitar and sang along.

Some of the loudest cheers of the night came when Aldean took a little venture into the rock world. Country Music Television hosts a series called CMT Crossroads, where country and rock artists share a stage and sing each other's music. One edition of the show featured Aldean and Canadian rocker Bryan Adams and Aldean took a few moments to pay homage to Adams, performing a pair of tunes he sang on the show, "Heaven" and "Cuts

Like a Knife."

Aldean went right back into his own hits, ripping off "Relentless" and "Johnny Cash" before taking it down a notch for the poignant "Laughed Until We Cried," and finished up his main set with his first big hit, "Hicktown."

The crowd was on its feet for most of the night and that continued as Aldean raced back out on stage for an encore, which included the singer's biggest hit, "Big Green Tractor." The encore set also included a cover of Kid Rock's anthem "Cowboy."

Newcomer David Nail, who scored a major hit this past year with his tune "Red Light," was the opening act on the card for Sunday evening and he had the crowd on its feet for the performance of his first hit and kept them on their feet with a great cover of Tom Petty's "You Wreck Me." Nail also told the crowd that Miranda



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Jason Aldean had the Meadowbrook US Cellular Pavilion crowd on its feet for his entire show Sunday.

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him on his new album and he performed the tune the two recorded, "Strangers on a Train."

Nail closed his set with his newest single, "Turning Home," before turning the stage over to Aldean.

The first act to take the main stage had a more local feel, as Eric and Sherry Grant, members of the Gilford-based Eric Grant Band, took the stage to perform a few songs and hopefully pick up a few new fans.

The band has opened for other country stars in the past at both Meadowbrook and Indian Ranch in Webster, Mass., and was part of the second stage show for the first Zac Brown Band

performance at US Cellular Pavilion on July 18. The group is also booked for many local events around the region through the next month, including Gilford Old Home Day and WOKQ's Prescott Park Countryfest, as well as performances at the Broken Spoke Saloon, the Lodge of Belmont and Patrick's Pub.

Jeremy Brown was perhaps one of the most vocal Eric Grant Band fans in the audience, as he roared his approval from the third row alongside his girlfriend.

"He's one of my best friends," Brown stated of Grant as he sang along with the band's tunes.



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