

Lollapalooza leads crowds to live music acts

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Over 250,000 music fans descended upon Grant Park from August 5-7 for what has become a Chicago summer tradition – Lollapalooza.

For weeks beforehand, event production companies had worked to turn the open grassy areas and baseball diamonds of the park into a mini-city to host the music festival. With over 130 acts, 2011's Lollapalooza was the largest one to date. The concerts and headliners at this year's Lollapalooza had something for everyone.

Day 1 of Lollapalooza started off the festival with a bang by quickly achieving the festival ground's maximum attendance of 90,000. Early acts, such as Wye Oak, were plagued with technical difficulties that made the performers visibly angry. These early issues were worked out as the day went on, however.

Day 1 also offered a glimpse at just

how much mainstream popularity electronic music has gained, with the Perry's DJ tent being constantly jam-packed all day, even between performances. Highlights of this day included OK Go, who played a raucous concert that fired up the audience, and Ratatat, who played a trippy-rock concert that went so late that the event staff shut off the stage lights on the band.

Of course, the other highlights of the day were that night's headliners: Muse and Coldplay. Both bands played good concerts that made use of all the special effects possible. Lasers could be seen all across Grant Park, and Muse even had fireworks accompanying their concert at one point.

After such a strong first day, the second day of Lollapalooza was a letdown. It wasn't the fault of the performers, though, but the fault of the event organizers. Compared to the lineups of Friday and Sunday, Saturday's lineup was quite weak. There were still some killer concerts on Saturday, however. Some of the best included Fitz & The Tantrums, who

the audience was rocking with them, despite the high temperatures and humidity. Minneapolis-based rap group Atmosphere played a set so strong that some people, myself included, thought they outperformed Eminem, that night's headliner, whose performance seemed off.

Southern rockers My Morning Jacket, the night's other headliner, played a great concert that didn't need special effects to get the audience pumped up.

Day 3 was a proper close to Lollapalooza, with an awesome lineup and powerful performances. Cage the Elephant's singer dove into the audience 3 times in the first 5 minutes of the performance, and Irish band Flogging Molly played so infectious that they made every member of the audience wish they were Irish. The day got interesting as it started pouring rain around 5 p.m., causing a rain delay.

While waiting for the concerts to start back up, fans resorted to sliding and wrestling in the many mud puddles. Concerts resumed after the rain ended, but that wasn't

ing rain again while Deadmau5 and Foo Fighters were on stage, but both played through the downpour.

Cold War Kids were playing a side concert during the headliner's shows, and the stage they played on was one enormous ankle-high puddle. But just as with the earlier rain, the festival-goers seemed to make the best of the weather.

Overall, Lollapalooza 2011 seemed to be a huge success. With the biggest crowds Lollapalooza has ever seen, the vast majority of the people seemed to be having a good time and enjoying themselves. In a sign of the times to come, the most buzz was generated by the DJs performing in the Perry's tent as opposed to the rock outfits playing everywhere else. It will be interesting to see how this affects the lineup of the next Lollapalooza. And speaking of the next Lollapalooza, not even a week after Lollapalooza 2011 was over, the dates for Lollapalooza 2012 were announced. So be prepared to descend upon Grant Park for another three days of music on August 3-5, 2012.

