

Urban a legend to country fans in Tahoe



Keith Urban is a master on guitar. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Susan Wood

STATELINE – Country superstar Keith Urban rocked the Harveys Lake Tahoe outdoor concert arena Wednesday night with a show of shows from an amazingly personable, highly talented artist.

Urban, 48, brought a mix of hits spanning his quarter-century career such as “Days Go By” and “Long Hot Summer” as well as new songs on tour off his 10th album “Ripcord,” including the sensational duet with Carrie Underwood “The Fighter.” (Note: A cute version in the car with his wife and actress Nicole Kidman posted on Facebook received millions of views.)

The Aussie entertainer delved deep into the latest album,

performing the driving tune “Sun Don’t Let Me Down,” bluesy “Blue Ain’t Your Color,” sway-induced “Gettin’ In the Way,” banjo-picking “Wasted Time” and beat-heavy “John Cougar, John Deere, John 3:16.”

Much to the delight of screaming, mostly-standing fans, the guitar-player extraordinaire even tuned up hits from other artists such as the likes of John Cougar Mellancamp and Bob Marley. With the latter, the stage screens lit up in reggae colors green, red and yellow.

In his signature playful, boyish style, Urban engaged the audience often – addressing it as a collective “Tahoe,” which he acknowledged was good to return to.

“Love you Tahoe. You might not know the words, but you give it a shot,” he bellowed.

The feeling was mutual at the concert that doubled like a love fest.

“I love him,” one woman dancing in Section 17 said with a serious deep adoration.

What she was about to learn about three-quarters of the way through the show is that Urban was about to move his road show down the aisle to a mini stage feet away from her seat near the back of the arena. (Urban did the same thing at the giant Sleep Train Arena years ago in Sacramento, appearing in the middle of a mob that flanked him from all sides.)



Keith Urban has no problem connecting with his appreciative fans. Photo/Kathryn Reed

In Tahoe, adoring fans soon crushed in the empty space close to the mini stage, where Urban launched into his rhythmic, No. 1 2002 hit “Somebody Like You” while facing the back bleachers. He enlisted the help of one of his opening acts Brett Eldridge, a rising country singer with a personable style. The whole place erupted in cheers, singing and dancing.

At one point in the show, Urban also brought up to sing with him his other opening artist, Maren Morris, who had performed her smash hit “My Church” earlier that evening.

But July 27 at Harveys was more like Urban’s church, where thousands seemed to worship his brand of performance known for total play and an equally fun, guitar-heavy back-up band. Urban plays the electric guitar – and sometimes the bass and acoustical version – like it’s a part of his body.

Often arching his back and practically kissing the microphone, Urban looks to be the epitome of a blissful man and high-energy fun on stage. And during that relationship, the audience reciprocated to the glow of a huge lights display and precise audio music engineering.

The artist who essentially launched his career out of Nashville, never slowed up; delivering two encores – his 2006 chart-topping “Stupid Boy” and another No. 1 blockbuster “Raise ‘Em Up” from 2015. It’s like the audience was not about to let him go down off the stage.

“God bless you,” he said to the persistent clapping.

Urban extended a heartfelt thank you to the crowd before walking off into the evening. The performer has another show scheduled for tonight, which may have residual, day-of tickets remaining.

Other outdoor summer concerts scheduled at the Harveys arena include: pop artist Lionel Richie on Aug. 13; rock group Steve Miller Band on Aug. 18; red rocker Sammy Hagar on Aug. 26; alternative rock band The Killers on Aug. 31; and soul singer/keyboardist Stevie Wonder on Sept. 2.