

# Petty performance makes fans proud



ALEX RUSSELL

Tom Petty kept the crowd on its feet last week at Merrweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Md.

By **CLAY JONES**  
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

**COLUMBIA, Md.**—The Mad Hatter himself dropped in on Merrweather Post Pavilion in Columbia last week to perform to a sold-out audience.

Tom Petty announced that he and the Heartbreakers had just arrived at the venue after spending the majority of the day on a tarmac in New York. It seemed as though he was still there through

most of the performance, as the band appeared to walk through several numbers in its sleep.

But the crowd didn't mind if Mr. Petty was just going through the same motions he's been repeating for the past 30 years. The audience was on its feet from the opener, "Listen To Her Heart," to the final encore, "American Girl."

The Black Crowes opened the show to great

crowd support, displaying the same tightness they exuded in the '90s while they were still selling records and selling out their own tours.

Petty took a few short cuts on some of the vocals, and the crowd picked up the slack, singing every word.

The only confusing moments came when the Heartbreakers covered The Animals' "I'm Fine" and played "Melinda," a new song

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# sounds

## PETTY: Still going strong after 30 years

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of their own, which sounded similar to another Petty hit, "Yer So Bad."

Exhibiting the influences of the legendary Bob Dylan, the Heartbreakers covered Dylan's "Knocking On Heaven's Door," which has been done to death by artists from Jimi Hendrix to Guns N' Roses to whoever is playing this Saturday at The Bourbon Room on William Street in Fredericksburg.

One highlight was the performance of the Traveling Wilburys' "Handle With Care," with Petty tackling the George Harrison vocals and utility player Scott Thurston handling the Roy Orbison vocals. Petty dedicated the song to "all of the Wilburys, wherever they may be traveling," which was a sweet touch.

Mike Campbell, introduced as the co-pilot, and sporting a new and confusing dreadlock look displayed all the guitar skills he's delivered for three decades. His guitar and mandolin playing were as tasteful and complemen-



ALEX RUSSELL

Tom Petty showed off the guitar skills he's delivered for decades at last week's show.

tary to each song as they are on the recorded versions.

The Heartbreakers didn't use many theatrics during the lengthy breaks they took to change guitars between each song. There was only one instance between songs where Petty and Campbell didn't change instruments.

Keyboard player Ben-

mont Tench filled up a good chunk of time with a solo long enough for Petty to smoke a cigarette onstage with his back to the audience. He would occasionally look over his shoulder to make sure the audience was still there.

Original Heartbreaker Ron Blair has returned on bass, and with drummer Steve Ferrone, rounded out the rhythm section.

Despite the tired look and slowness of the band at times, it seems Petty's following in this area wouldn't mind if he and the Heartbreakers "came around here" more often.

*To view more Tom Petty photos and order prints, visit [fredericksburg.com](http://fredericksburg.com).*

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