

THE EAGLES STOP SQUABBLING LONG ENOUGH TO TOUR AMICABLY

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MEMO: Despite past spats, the group is on road for first time in 14
years

TEXT: NEW YORK - THE EAGLES 'Hell Freezes Over' Tour

IN the middle of their 70-date nationwide ``Hell Freezes Over'' tour (the name refers to Don Henley's statement about what would have to occur before the group got back together), the reassembled rock group the Eagles touched down recently for two shows at New Jersey's Giants Stadium. The group, consisting of Glenn Frey, Don Henley, Don Felder, Joe Walsh, and Timothy B. Schmit, has taken a bit of a hiatus - 14 years, to be exact - after a career in which they had four No. 1 albums, including the second-biggest selling album of all time, their ``Greatest Hits.''

The group has long been known for its contentiousness, particularly between Frey and Henley, but they seemed to have patched things up. At one point, Frey announced to the crowd, ``This is not a reunion, this is a resumption,''' and went on to say that the band would continue to tour and would record. Their new album, also titled ``Hell Freezes Over,''' will be out this fall on Geffen.

One would hardly know that the group had ever broken up from the show, which contained flawless, note-perfect versions of many of their greatest hits. Some have complained about the lack of spontaneity and the faithfulness to the recorded versions, but considering that we haven't exactly had the opportunity to hear this group perform live lately, it seemed the proper choice. Experimentation and retooled versions of songs are expected from bands that are constantly on the road, but in this case some fidelity to the recordings was called for.

Not that there weren't some powerful moments of playing, particularly from Don Felder. And it wasn't a traditional Eagles show, since a good part of the second half was taken up with hits from the various band members' solo careers. Henley's songs are the highest in quality (there was a particularly moving version of his ``Heart of the Matter''), but there was plenty of excitement in the harder edge given to Frey's ``Smuggler's Blues,''' and Joe Walsh led the way in a version of his old James Gang hit ``Funk #49'' that had the stadium rocking. Walsh was the most eager to play around with his songs, singing with a balloon sculpture on his head and offering hilarious new lyrics to his hits ``Ordinary, Average Guy'' and ``Life's Been Good.''

BUT it was the Eagles hits the crowd came to hear, and they got a fair dose. Beginning with the definitive classic ``Hotel

California," they also included "Lyin' Eyes," "Heartache Tonight," "Life in the Fast Lane," "Already Gone," "Desperado," and many others, all delivered flawlessly. One memorable highlight was a short acoustic set, with all five members sitting on stools down front, that included such songs as "Tequila Sunrise."

The show also included several new songs that made fairly minimal impact on first listening, including a country song called "Girl From Yesterday" that would fit George Jones easily, and a lovely ballad, sung by Timothy B. Schmit, called "Love Will Keep Us Alive." The best new song, and the first single from the forthcoming album, was the rocking "Get Over It," a ranting, very funny response to what Henley called "the age of whining." CAPTION: PHOTO: BOYS OF SUMMER: (l. to r.) Joe Walsh, Timothy B. Schmit, Don Henley, Don Felder, and Glenn Frey. The Eagles' tour began last May in Irvine, Calif., and will take them to 70 cities., JOHN HALPERN/GEFFEN RECORDS