

"IT DEFINITELY WON'T BE THE SEATTLE THING ALL OVER AGAIN."

alternative band, for a standing-room-only crowd. Their diverse following ranges from middle-aged paternal types to men with mohawks, swathed in black and covered with tattoos.

After Cup a Joe, it's off to Local 506, a club in Chapel Hill near the UNC campus. The club boasts a '70s disco ball and a looming papier-maché pterodactyl.

On stage is local band Smog, a group whose mingling of styles — from slow and melodic to hard-core — brings a lukewarm response from a thinning crowd.

Just a half-hour drive away at The Record Exchange in Raleigh, Chapel Hill's Two Fish Blue performs an acoustic set for a browsing crowd. Their somewhere-between-folk-and-rock style brings them one of the biggest followings in the area.

Drummer Ian Schreier plays both a snare and an upside-down water cooler jug mounted on a Christmas tree stand. The band is easygoing and amenable, and they play without a list.

The last show for the weekend is back in Chapel Hill at the Hardback Cafe and bookstore, a college-age bohemian hangout.

The main act, Spatula, cranks up at 1 a.m. to a sleepy but appreciative audience. Lead singer and guitarist Chuck Johnson, dressed casually in jeans and a Marshall U. football shirt, leans into the mike and passionately sings/screams.

It's 2 a.m., and even though half of Chapel Hill appears to be gone for the long weekend, there's still enough artistic aggression to keep everybody going until the next weekend.

ROBIN CAGLE, THE DAILY TAR HEEL, U. OF NORTH CAROLINA
Summer Burkes, The Daily Tar Heel, also contributed.

MINNEAPOLIS

If you attend school at the U. of Minnesota, you plant yourself in the midst of one of the most celebrated local music scenes in the country. Though the legends are still around — on Saturday, ex-Replacement Tommy Stinson turns in a low-profile set at the 7th Street Entry nightclub — the newer bands are cause for the most celebration.

A trio of wide-eyed, slightly tortured-looking guys known as Trash Gordon warm up the Entry crowd Thursday. A vexing range of guitar noise rumbles through the tiny room, while beats from a crowded funk party seep in from the adjacent, much larger sister club First Avenue. But Entry occupants are wrapped up in the spectacle of the guitarist's sample loops and the drummer's creative use of a power saw blade on his cymbals.

Following Trash Gordon are the appropriately named Peasants. At various points in the show, three to seven of the biggest outcasts and losers possible take the stage. Some are full-time band members, others are part-timers who jam when they feel like it, mixing guitars, drums and a saxophone into noisy deconstructions of Jugg and the Stooges-style punk. Several audience members even join the spectacle.

A somewhat brighter but equally interesting scene is going on Friday at the Whole Music Club underground at the university's student union.

The club is a plush, nonprofit weekend venue run by student volunteers, and one of tonight's bands is Saucer, a staff favorite. Vocalist/guitarist Pamela Valfer stands out for her fairy-like appearance, Raggedy-Ann dress and sweet warble. Behind her, the frenetic band plays mad, quirky melodies. During a climactic jam, bassist Howard Hampton runs a toy phonograph and a bugle through his pickups, coaxing previously unknown sounds out of his instrument. On the basis of pure originality, the opening band wins an encore.

Tonight's headlining group, the Hang Ups, are cele-

brating the release of their debut album, *He's After Me*. The band entertains the tightly grouped crowd with impossibly pretty melodies and harmonies. Just when it seems that the Hang Ups are the most conventional, low-key band of the weekend, guitarist John Crozier lashes out a blissful wash of distortion to keep the audience smiling.

After two varied nights in the local underground, the Minneapolis scene reveals itself — diverse personalities and musical styles peacefully clash, creating fertile ground for new sounds by encouraging innovation.

"If it's just redoing the formula of verse-chorus-melody, that seems to be not enough," says Hang Ups front man Brian Tighe. "We've got to experiment and find new sounds."

SIMON-PETER GROEBNER, THE MINNESOTA DAILY, U. OF MINNESOTA



Seattle: The members of Dr. Unknown kick out a grinding set.

ATHENS

With so much stiff competition in town, diversity and ingenuity are key to success in the Athens, Ga., scene — a musical mecca for studios, independent record labels and artists.

On this October weekend, more than 30 of the almost 350 local bands are playing live in the clubs of Athens.

"It's difficult to break through because there are so many groups and the students are accustomed to seeing live music," says singer/guitarist Alex Wolf, whose hard-edged improvisational band Both Sides is jamming at one of the premier venues in town, the Georgia Theatre.

From the Theatre we head over to Frijoleros, a Mexican eatery and bar popular with U. of Georgia students. The Red River Ramblers are here, pickin' and grinnin' with members of Athens Grass.

"The friends amongst the bands play with other people, and those turn out to be really hot shows," says Kathy Parrish, singer and guitarist for the Ramblers. "It's a tight-knit group of people."

Conveniently located in the center of "Barmuda Triangle," where three bars are just steps away from each other, Frijoleros is a necessary pit stop on the block between the Georgia Theatre and the Roadhouse, a classic smoky dive and a good place to drink.

All over town, students barhop, and the fans are as disparate as the musical styles they appreciate.

Though the differences in personality and style between, say, jazz freaks and metal heads are often striking and conflicts do occasionally arise, acceptance is vital to the Athens scene.

"There's a wide range of open-minded people with varying musical interests," says the Ramblers' Parrish.

Once regarded as simply the home of R.E.M. and the B-52s, the Athens roster has other successful national

acts like the psychedelic grooving Widespread Panic, hard-driving 5-8 and country singer John Berry.

But the up-and-coming Athens bands are what make the music scene distinctive. Athens' devotion to cultivating fresh talent pays off, as evidenced by local boys the Vigilantes of Love, recently signed by Capricorn Records. The band closes out another long evening of music at the illustrious 40 Watt Club with their eclectic brand of folk, rock and gospel-influenced pop.

Afterwards, it's time to wind down with a fine import and kick back on a sofa at the Globe, a European-style pub frequented by grad students and professors, delving into profound conversation with local heavies on music and life.

BRIAN GERBER, THE RED & BLACK, U. OF GEORGIA

At San Diego State U., students groan at the mention of their city becoming "the next Seattle," but the local music scene has slowly snowballed from backyard parties and garage shows into the national spotlight.

Both musicians and fans are recovering from last weekend's music blowout, the Independent Music Seminar, which showcased 250 bands, two-thirds of which were from

San Diego. But that didn't keep them at home.

Students look off campus for the underground acts which make up the local music scene and gladly make the 10-mile trek downtown to see who's playing.

On Friday night, a crowd consisting mainly of students in baggy jeans and oversized T-shirts gathers outside Cafe Chabalaba, a downtown coffee house and one of the few remaining all-ages venues in San Diego. Most stand outside before the music starts, debating whether to pay the \$4 to see power-pop band Project or the heavy post-punk sounds of Whack. About half the crowd forgoes the cover, catching the bands from a side angle through the large windows.

Those who remain outside see Whack bassist Joseph Garcia running out the door in the debut of his wireless amplifier cord. The band continues to play, but one wonders about the purpose of a cover when the musicians come to you.

Inside, the laid-back crowd spreads around the club, some sitting on a couch, others dancing in their own personal space in a sort of anti-mosh pit.

A few blocks away another young crowd, marked by tattoos, trucker wallets and goatees, piles inside the Casbah, a small bar near the airport. Most came to hear the indie rock sounds of Velocity Girl, Hazel and Tripping Daisy, while a few show up to hang with friends no matter who's on stage.

Despite its small size (the bar holds only 75 people), the Casbah has become the focal point of San Diego's indie scene. Locals flock to the club almost every night of the week to check out the touring and local bands.

Although the shows finish two hours apart, they end on a similar note. The audiences spill onto the sidewalks to talk with friends as the bands finish loading their equipment. Students gather as it's time to head back to campus and the conversation, as usual, turns to "Who's playing tomorrow night?"

LARRY HARMON, THE DAILY AZTEC, SAN DIEGO STATE U.

SAN DIEGO

BRIAN POBUDA, THE MINNESOTA DAILY, U. OF MINNESOTA