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Rocker Ozzy Osbourne performs before a Valentine's Day crowd Monday at the i wireless Center in Moline.

Ozzy thrills Q-C audience with energy, rock classics

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ON THE WEB: See more photos of Ozzy Osbourne at qctimes.com.

The Prince of Darkness hasn't lost his energy or exuberance for riling a crowd. Ozzy Osbourne cast his magic spell on the about 9,700 fans in attendance for his Valentine's Day concert at the i wireless Center in Moline.

Ozzy hadn't played in the Quad-Cities since Dec. 4, 2001, when he appeared at what then was called The Mark of the Quad-Cities during his Merry Mayhem Tour, featuring Rob Zombie.

This time around, former Guns N' Roses guitarist Slash opened the show Monday for the Godfather of Heavy Metal. Slash's set gave the virtuoso guitarist and opportunity to flex his talents in front of the crowd with a cast of extras to fill out the band.

The opening act closed out on "Paradise City," a standard Guns N' Roses tune, popping the crowd one last time before intermission.

Then, Ozzy's crew took the stage.

The pre-show video on the big screen, something under-utilized for Slash's performance, played through various parodies of pop culture, Ozzy subbing in for hilarity. "Jersey Shore," Lady Gaga's music video for "Telephone" and the movie "Iron Man" all were lampooned by the former Black Sabbath frontman. Two videos, which weren't PG friendly, elicited laughter with cleverly orchestrated and explicit humor.

Ozzy, in his long flowing trench coat,

and company took to the stage, the lead singer encouraging the audience to clap along with "Bark at the Moon."

Throughout the night, the veteran performer charmed the crowd, enticing them into a call-and-response, although it was easy to fall under the hex of Gus G's brilliant guitar playing. The big screen projection gave the swarms of enthusiastic fans not in stage-front an closeup view of the action.

Ozzy asked how crazy the i wireless Center could get, before screaming "All aboard!" the telltale introduction to "Crazy Train." A CGI skeleton drove the audience on a locomotive via the screen projection. The singer stalked back and forth, half hunched over before taking the center stage and belting out the lyrics, and pointing the microphone at the audience to finish out the second half of each verse.

He turned the intensity level down a few notches with "Mama, I'm Coming Home," the lighting matching the melodic song.

No way would Ozzy end his concert on such a slow note. Instead fireworks exploded from behind the stage and the rhythmic opening to "Paranoid" filled the air, the crowd bursting into pandemonium.

The audience roared in appreciation, but he shared the final bow with his crew — all five taking center stage arm-in-arm and saluting the crowd as fireworks burst into the air behind them.