

# Change of Venue



ON AUGUST 6, 2005, Pizza Hut Park opened to rave reviews. The \$80 million and 20,500-seat facility is one of the country's finest soccer stadiums. But it isn't only a great place to watch the world's most popular game, it's also ideal for concerts with seating for close to 26,000. The stadium has hosted six concerts to date in 2006, all in front of great crowds. But that's only the start of what promises to be a long run as one of the top concert venues in North Texas.

"When we opened Pizza Hut Park, we knew we had a world-class soccer stadium," said Michael Hitchcock, president and general manager of Pizza Hut Park. "We certainly hoped we also had a world-class concert venue. What we've learned after our first few shows is that we've got the best concert venue in the metroplex."

On April 29, Pizza Hut Park hosted its first-ever concert as popular Latin group

RBD, born out of the Spanish-language soap opera *Rebelde*, entertained over 20,000 fans. Then, on May 26, nearly 28,000 came out to see country superstar George Strait, who in previous years had played at Irving's Texas Stadium, home to the Dallas Cowboys.

But June saw the concert season come into full swing. Country stars Rascal Flatts visited on June 16 and played to a crowd of 25,000. Just two days later, a similar number of fans came through the turnstiles for the always-popular Edgefest, an event named for and sponsored by a long-time, local alternative rock station. Edgefest is now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year.

Landing this all-day concert featuring local favorites The Toadies plus headliner Staind, was a big coup for Pizza Hut Park as most previous editions were held at the Smirnoff Music Centre near downtown Dallas.

In July, the facility hosted the popular Fourth of July celebration Frisco Freedom Fest for the first time. This event included an FC Dallas soccer game, a headlining concert with 1980s stars Kool and the Gang and opening act Everlife, a young female Christian group. The evening's finale featured a spectacular fireworks display.

Country music star Kenny Chesney, a two-time Academy of Country Music Entertainer of the Year along with *American Idol 4* winner Carrie Underwood, popular Texas artist Pat Green and up-and-comer Diercks Bentley appeared in the sixth concert of the season on July 22.

After the first six concerts of the year, the one thing that hasn't changed is the great response those attending have given the facility. "The feedback from the bands, their management teams, the fans, vendors and sponsors has been so overwhelmingly positive in respect to the concert