

"Le Cajun" Performance schedule

Today

- 8 p.m. 'til — Rodney Thibodeaux et Tous Les Soir

Saturday

- 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. — Matthew Courville & The Cypress Knees Band
- 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. — Jesse Lege' & The Southern Ramblers
- 1:30 - 3:00 — Kevin Naquin & The Ossun Playboys
- 3:15 - 4:45 — Kenneth Thibodeaux & The Cajun Dance Band
- 5:00 - 6:30 — Steve Riley & The Mamou Playboys
- 6:45 - 8:15 — Balfa Toujours
- 8:30 - 10:00 — Jackie Callier & Cajun Cousins

Sunday

- 10 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. — Le Bande Feuillet
- 11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. — Walter Mouton & The Scott Playboys
- 1:30 - 3:00 — Don Fontenot et Les Amis de la Louisiane
- 3:15 - 5:00 — Wayne Toups & Zydecajun

(All performances will be held in Blackham Coliseum.)

Danish Cajun band two-steps into a CFMA award

By Marsha Sills
Staff Writer

Everybody's doing it. Even cold Scandinavia has warmed up to the two steps and waltzes from accordions, fiddles and washboards thanks in part to the efforts of Cajun du Nord.

The band made an impression on the Cajun French Music Association, which will anoint the Scandinavian musicians with the title Best Foreign Cajun Band for 2000 tonight at its "Le Cajun" Music Awards Ceremony in Blackham Coliseum. Cajun du Nord is in town for its victory tour, playing at various venues from Sunday to Aug. 26.

"We look forward to listening to new beats and (what) bands are doing. Since we play the music we're very interested in hearing new songs turn up and of course, we go out and have some good gumbo," joked one of the bands Danes, Jorgen Hansen, who plays guitar and contributes his vocal chords to the group.



Northern exposure

Hansen joined the band in 1999 after meeting Eibeeth Krogh, the band's leader on fiddle, washboard and vocals. Krogh, out of her intense appreciation of the Cajun culture, started the band after meeting Cajun aficionados at a Scandinavian folk festival. She picked up Göran Lomax, a Swedish bass player, along with the way and two Norwegians, Arve Haland on accordion and vocals and Harald Aanes on drums to complete the Scandi-Acadian quintet.

The band sticks to the Cajun standards on its debut album, *Cajun du Nord* in Louisiana, released on the Swallow Records label. "Darse de Lincroade," "Flammes d'Enfer" and Nathan Abshire's "Blues de Tac-Tac" are some of the classic tunes found on the disc, recorded after the band's performance at Festivals Acadiens last year.

The excitement of the Cajun culture is spreading in Denmark, said Hansen. Like in South Louisiana, Cajun culture observers are finding their own niche in appreciation.

"Being foreigners you try to understand what's going on," he said. "We have three ways

of appreciating Acadian traditions: playing music, if you like to dance, you can join the dance. We have many people who dance as their only entrance into the Cajun culture. And then there's the food."

A friend introduced Hansen to the Cajun genre about 20 years ago and he immediately was transfixed by the contrasting beats.

"He asked if I wanted to play some very exciting music that was with an accordion and had a contemporary, modern swing to it," said Hansen. "In Denmark, when we talk about accordion playing it's more of a traditional accordion style for Danish folk songs which is not

what I call contemporary, but because the Cajun accordion has a swing, it's danceable. I got attracted to that."

One of the main dance-evident differences is the waltz.

"The Danish music has a different beat, a different swing. If you have the Cajun waltz it walks out. You would never see people walking in the Danish waltz. The Cajun waltz is much smoother. If you play the music, you can hear the snare drum on every beat and mellow it out. In Denmark, you would really feel like you're on the boat with the beat, rum, ta, ta," he explained.

Hansen came to Louisiana in 1999 on a trip with Krogh, who leads tours of Cajanland for those interested in the culture. She's known as "Cajun Mama" in her native land because of her knowledge of the Acadian heritage and music. Her collection of the history and songs of Cajun music is used by those in Denmark starting out in the style. Hansen said he thought the reason the style was progressing in popularity in Scandinavia was simple human emotion.

"The reason, I think, is it has a joy in it. When people play it they get so happy they smile. If you hear it, you dance to it," he stated. "People are coming more and more to Louisiana to be here where there's good food and good music. Actually, my wife and I

Catch Cajun du Nord at:

- Vermillionville, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday
- Randol's Restaurant, 7 p.m. Sunday
- Café des Amis, Breaux Bridge, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Wednesday
- D.I.'s Restaurant, 6:30 p.m. Thursday
- G.J.'s, Branch, 7-10 p.m. Aug. 24
- Museum Cafe, Erath, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Aug. 25
- Café des Amis, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., Aug. 29

went down to the Tabasco factory to smell the pepper in the air. That was nice. We love the food and we're learning to dance, as well."

Even though the traditional music of Denmark is rooted in folk songs, Hansen said he was surprised at how much Louisiana music is filled with the Cajun culture.

"I was surprised at how much music you are actually surrounded by," he said. "When we listen to radio in Denmark we have music of all kinds, but the music is not about the culture."

The radio here is filled with culture. What surprises me and amazes me is that the music plays that big a part of people's lives. And that's nice for someone who likes playing music."