

Traffic

lan Av. had stop-and-go traffic, the vehicles on other streets in the downtown area were moving easily.

Koeki also said the parking lots on Washington Av. were filled while ramps and other lots between the stadium and downtown had available space. If fewer people park in the Washington Av. lots, he said, the traffic congestion there would be eased.

Koeki said the stadium was emptied and "most people were in their cars and their cars were moving within 20 minutes" of the end of the game.

There were virtually no traffic or parking problems for fans heading toward the stadium before the game, Koeki said.

"It worked smoother than I thought it would," he said. "We didn't see any traffic jams anywhere."

Koeki said he did not see any parking lot or ramp cars away before the game. The Government Center parking ramp at 5th St. and 4th Av. was only three-quarters filled, he said.

While parking lots near the stadium had spaces available, others on 1st Av. N. at 5th St. were full by 6 p.m. And, lots a block further north, on 2nd Av. N., had space available by 7 p.m.

At 7:30, as the game was about to start, there were seven empty spaces at parking meters on 1st Av. N. between 5th and 6th Sts., one block from the stadium.

The first ambulance to make a run through Metrodome traffic reported no problems.

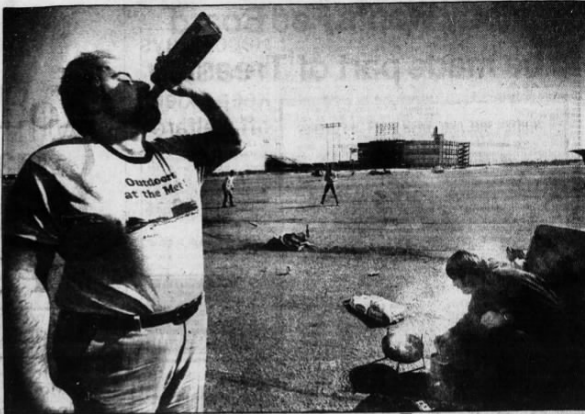
Two heart attacks were reported during the game, but Hennepin County paramedics and first-aid crews stationed in the stadium were able to stabilize the victims and transport them to nearby Hennepin County Medical Center, where they were hospitalized last night.

Ed Justilla, head of the traffic unit, said fans flowed into the Metrodome from 6 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. "I still don't know where they parked or how they got there," he said.

Last night was billed as a major test for the city's park-and-ride and park-and-bus plans. Police and bus officials said ample parking and a 15-minute walk of the stadium was available despite the crowd.

The parking and traffic plans will be tested again tomorrow night when fewer officers and police reservists will be on duty, and Thursday afternoon, when Metrodome traffic is combined with the evening row hour. Police said the anticipated smaller crowds should not cause many problems.

Columbia Transit Co., which used 28



Staff Photo by Merlin Lewison
Dave Anderson, left, slaked his shins yesterday afternoon in the Metropolitan Stadium parking lot where he and friends from Cottage Grove had a tailgate party before going on to the Twins game at the Metrodome.

to shuttle fans to and from the stadium, said it had no problems equipping evening traffic. As during last weekend's games, the biggest problem was keeping pedestrians off the streets within a couple blocks of the Metrodome.

Charter manager Dick Waltrich said his drivers made an average of four runs each, carrying about 7,000 fans an hour. The shuttle rides cost 35 cents each way.

The increase in fans also kept police busy. About two dozen people were tagged for liquor-related violations, mostly drinking in public, Lutz said.

Police also broke up what was believed to be the first attempt to tailgate near the Metrodome. A group from Stillwater headed a keg of beer from the back of a bus parked on Washington Av. near 8th St. Lutz said the keg was put back on the bus without incident.

A little before 7 p.m., water started leaking from plumbing in some areas of the dome, and workers with brooms were dispatched to try to sweep it away. At one point, water in some areas was reported to be several inches deep. In at least one instance, water seeped into one of the dome's private suites.

John Noble, who was having a party for about 30 people in Suite 127A, said he noticed water coming in and bought a couple of shirts from a vendor to plug the leakage coming in under the door.

"I knew they spent \$50 million on this and said it came in under budget," he said, "but what's wrong with coming in on budget?" He said he was not worried about the suite because it figured to get \$30,000 invested in it and \$25,000 in its equity. So if the carpet got wrecked, somebody will pay for it.



Staff Photo by Neil McGuire
Ralph Mandenhall, center, led his band outside the Metrodome last evening. Mandenhall's group traditionally plays at the Twins' opening game.

Man, 20, dies 2 weeks after police subdue him

Los Angeles, Calif.
A 20-year-old man has died two weeks after police subdue him with a chokehold, although he became violent when they tried to cite him for a broken windshield.

James Misco Jr., of Pomona, suffered a heart attack during the March 22 incident and lapsed into a

Manufacturers optimistic

coms. Officials at Pacima Memorial Hospital said he died Monday.

The U.S. Supreme Court is reviewing police use of the carotid artery hold, which cuts off blood to the brain. Police contend it is justified when suspects struggle violently during arrest.

The Marlin Banks surveyed 800 manufacturers with more than \$1 million in annual sales, with a 30 percent response rate.

In search of dome parking: It wasn't an impossible dream

By Sam Newland
Staff Writer

We all know that parking for dome events is impossible. Better arrive downtown two hours early unless you want to hoof it a mile or so.

But the facts, it turned out last night, were otherwise.

Believe it or not, that at precisely 7:30 p.m. — three minutes after the scheduled first pitch at the Twins opener to the Metrodome — your skeptical reporter found a parking spot at the corner of 5th St. and Chicago Av.

Sixth and Chicago, fans, is only a long foul ball away from home plate. This parking spot, situated as it was at the intersection, is as close as you can get to the dome. Not only that, somebody had kindly left 1 1/2 hours on the meter. (The rate is 50 cents an hour at that spot.)

This could be a fake, of course. But this perplexity typifies — a little dramatically perhaps — the parking situation in the dome's downtown environs as game time approached.

For whatever reason, parking spaces were plentiful, even on the streets. Shuttle buses, lining nearby streets like orange caterpillars, probably had something to do with this phenomenon. Maybe, too, the worst got through. Don't drive near the stadium and take a bus if possible.

For those who did drive, there were plenty of spaces available, although

some had to pay as much as \$3.50.

At 6:56 p.m., pretending to be a Twins fan from lower Burnsville, this reporter wheeled off 25W to look for parking. But "Full" signs never materialized.

At 7:57 p.m., he passed several cars coming into the Municipal Ramp at 5th Av. and 6th St. Their drivers, surrendering \$2.50 each. They were three blocks from the dome.

Seven other ramps and lots were inspected. None was full, not even the First Covenant Church lot a half block from the dome (where \$3.50 was the fee).

A full city block between 2nd and 3rd Sts. and 4th and 5th Aves. is a parking lot. It's three blocks from the stadium. It was about half empty seven minutes before game time.

At 8th St. and Park Av., a young bearded attendant looked disappointed when he was told the reporter was just passing through. Empty spaces were there for all to see. "Lucky like you could use some more cars," he was told.

"Sure could," he said.

Maybe there's room for the doubters after all. Maybe if enough fans read that parking downtown is no problem, thousands more will flock downtown. Then there will be a parking problem.

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