

Gamers dream on: Aerosmith Guitar Hero

By Paul Crocetti/Daily News staff
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BOSTON — "That's a long time ago," Aerosmith drummer Joey Kramer said of his band's first concert at Nipmuc High School in Mendon.

Kramer joined band mate Steven Tyler last night at the Hard Rock Cafe for the Boston for Africa VIP Gala that also served as a competition for a new video game, "Guitar Hero: Aerosmith," which has a local connection.

Nipmuc High School is one of the venues featured in the game, which traces the band's roots from its beginning to its induction into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. Players can jam to Aerosmith songs at Nipmuc High School in the game. The high school has been converted to the Miscoe Hill School and replaced by a new Nipmuc High School.

"Steven and I still have the T-shirts," Kramer said of the items they infamously stole backstage at the 1970 concert. A photo in Aerosmith's biography, "Walk this Way," shows Tyler wearing a shirt that reads "Nipmuc" across the front.

Having venues from the band's career makes the game more interesting, Kramer said on the red carpet as competitors played "Sweet Emotion" inside.

"It gives it more sustenance," Kramer said.

The winner of the competition, Eric Miller of Utah, scored almost 400,000 points while playing the "Love in an Elevator" song to walk off with a motorcycle signed by Tyler.

"You've got to play me now," Tyler joked to Miller when he hopped onstage at the Hard Rock. Tyler, however, did not square off against the winner of the game.

Later in the event, comedian Lenny Clarke helped run an auction that raised tens of thousands of dollars. Boston for Africa benefits the charities FORGE, Foundation Rwanda and Opportunity International.

A throwing session with Tom Brady went for \$47,000, while car czar Ernie Boch Jr. bought a ball boy experience with the Boston Celtics for \$10,000.

Activision, a company involved with the video game, gave \$50,000 to Boston for Africa.

To close out the event, Tyler, Kramer and other musicians rocked the hundreds in attendance with a 40-minute set that included "Walk this Way," "Big Ten Inch Record" and "Last Child."

Other celebrities in the house included Patriots players and Bruins players.