

Miss California contestants hit town

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□ Tickets available for all three performances — Page A2

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SANTA CRUZ — They're here. Forty women hoping to be named Miss California 1985 officially checked into Santa Cruz Tuesday at a reception and orientation meeting at the Holiday Inn.

From Miss Alameda County to Miss Tulare County, the contestants for the 62nd annual Miss California Pageant were escorted by white-tuxedoed men into the back of the Sierra Room, where they had the first of

several pictures taken by pageant photographers.

The significance of the pageant has been increased this year not only because of the expected demonstrations protesting the pageant, but also because this could possibly be the last Miss California Pageant to be held in Santa Cruz.

The nearly 60-year association between the city and the pageant is being threatened not only by the mounting protests, but also by the limited space available at the Civic Auditorium, the site of the event.

But Tuesday night, that issue was as distant as the protesters who did

not appear for the start of pageant week.

All that is expected to change by Monday, however.

Pageant director Charles Grebmeier admonished the young women to "be yourself — pace yourself and understand the pressures you're going to be under" in the following week.

The heaviest outside pressure will surely come from demonstrators who will congregate outside the Civic Auditorium on Monday.

The group, which last year was involved in heated exchanges with those attending the event, is protest-

ing as a means of calling attention to what it considers the exploitative nature and sexism of such pageants, said Ann Simonton, one of the prime organizers of the protests.

The seriousness of the situation was not only underscored last year, as the protest grew to its largest ever, but also in recent months as the City Council has authorized the presence of at least 80 policemen in and around the auditorium.

At an estimated cost of \$6,500, the plan calls for police to outnumber contestants by 2 to 1, with most of the police coming from Santa Cruz but the remainder coming in from neighboring municipalities.

Police and representatives from both the pageant and the Myth California counter-pageant have met several times, most recently Tuesday, to outline the ground rules by which the demonstrations and crowd control will be taking place.

Deputy Chief Steve Belcher said police see this event "as no different than any other," except that the streets in front of the auditorium will be closed to vehicular traffic with barricades and police separating the demonstrators from the contestants and the pageant audience.

"We're hoping for a peaceful evening." Please see Page A2

Pageant week under way

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ning," Belcher said.

Simonton said the largest demonstration will be taking place on Monday night, during the final competition, with a rally in front of the auditorium.

She said there will be speakers, music, poets and people dressed in costume to give the gathering a lighter mood than last year. She said negotiations with police have led to the protestors being allowed five people to pass out leaflets in front of the Civic to those who want them.

She said further restrictions call for the demonstrators not to enter an area in front of the auditorium and to remain across the street.

"We are encouraging a peaceful protest and not to cross the barrier unless they want to get arrested, which we are not encouraging," Simonton said.

From now until the preliminary competitions Saturday and Sunday, the young women will be rehearsing at the Civic Auditorium on a strict schedule which prohibits them from dining apart from the group or to go out in public without their "traveling companions," the pageant's name for what it used to call 'chaperones.'

This close supervision will not prevent Simonton from trying to get her message across, she said. During the next four or five days Simonton said she would be traveling around town in a float showing what she calls the down side of pageants.

For its part, the pageant sees the

Miss California

□ THE MISS CALIFORNIA PAGEANT will be at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium Saturday, Sunday and Monday nights. Preliminary competition is slated the first two nights — with an 8 p.m. curtain time both nights, and the final competition Monday. Curtain time that night is 7:30 p.m. Channel 8 will telecast the finals.

□ TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE for the Saturday and Sunday preliminary shows at \$15. They are on sale in the lobby of the Civic Auditorium from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Some scattered tickets are also left for the Monday night finale. Those tickets are \$25, and may be obtained at the Civic Auditorium Box Office.

□ UNTIL LAST YEAR, the Miss California coronation was broadcast on a Saturday night. "But we had felt Monday was a better time for a telecast, and we ended up with a bigger audience," explained Carolee Munger, statewide director in charge of field operations.

protesters as misguided people who do not appreciate the scholarship work and benefits the contestants derive from participating.

Donna Cherry, last year's Miss California, calls them the "protestations of the uninformed" in her letter of welcome in the pageant program. In the same issue, Charlotte Randolph, president of the

pageant, says "the individual development synonymous with being a Miss California Pageant finalist is not appreciated by all."

"The increasing protest movement...costs us dollars and energy," she writes. "Perhaps one day that movement will care to understand our desire to invest in the leaders and the mothers of tomorrow."