

Joni Mitchell Sings Songs of City in Central Park

Joni Mitchell and Tim Hardin, rained out of their scheduled performances at the Schaefer Music Festival in Central Park on Wednesday night, returned to the Wollman Rink last night under a gray but dry sky and found an audience of 5,000 waiting for them at the first of their two presentations.

Miss Mitchell, wearing a floor length, sea green gown, her blond hair cascading over her shoulders and down her back, sang in a sweet, high soprano with a touch of brogue occasionally coloring her phrases. Accompanying herself on guitar or on the piano, she focused a large part of her program on city songs, particularly New York City songs.

But even though she was dealing with city scenes and city imagery, her songs had a

She and Tim Hardin Attract 5,000 in a Delayed Schaefer Presentation

seemed to reflect hills and fields more than city streets. This feeling continued as she sang about her cat and, in "The Gallery," about the dilemma of being the "old lady" of an artist, as she put it.

All of these songs, as well as her hit "Both Sides Now," which she used as the climax of her program, suffered from a sameness of texture and melody when heard one after the other, producing a placid feeling that was underscored by Miss Mitchell's amiable, ethereal presence.

It was only when she got to

her stronger material — "Come On People, Smile on Your Brother" and an unaccompanied, vehement antiwar statement, "And So Once Again"—that she rose out of the comfortable cocoon of sound and rhythm that she had built around herself through most of the evening.

Mr. Hardin, who also accompanied himself on guitar, has a soft, mumbling manner of singing that made his lyrics difficult to follow even at relatively close range to an amplifier. He was soon being interrupted by cries of "louder!" from the bleacher seats but he seemed unable to adjust his delivery or his volume in a satisfactory manner. His style is an intimate, indoor manner and it did not take well to the open air. JOHN S. WILSON