

Singles chart, 6-7; Album chart, 25; Disco Top 75, 14-15; Airplay Guide, 22-23; New Singles, 26; Dealer Services Special, 17.

Music arm safe at EMI after Paramount exit

FOLLOWING LAST week's brief announcement from EMI that its plan to form a joint venture music company with Paramount Pictures had fallen through, it is anticipated that the Not For Sale signs will now be attached to the UK major's records and publishing interests.

The news of the breakdown in negotiations was contained in a terse press statement made last Wednesday by Lord Delfont, chief executive. It disclosed, without giving reasons, that the two companies had not been able to agree terms. "We have," commented Delfont, "been considering a number of alternative plans in anticipation of this possibility and a further announcement will be made in due course."

After being informed of the situation by Bhaskar Menon, music group supremo, EMI Records executives were confident that if an asset now needs to be disposed of to raise money, then it will not be the music side. They anticipate that it will remain 100 percent UK-controlled - unless somebody comes along with an offer that cannot be refused, or unless the company is taken-over in its entirety, always a possibility in the light of the depressing effect the news was expected to have on the company's Stock Market valuation.

However, since July's announcement by EMI of the proposed £70 million deal, the company's then critical cash-flow situation has reportedly eased. Coinciding with this improvement, EMI apparently had second thoughts about its involvement with the American film company, particularly when the expected level of management control turned out to be greater than originally anticipated. Simultaneously, and in part due to Paramount's scrutiny of its partner's assets, EMI took a fresh look at the

music interests and recognised that they have a vital role to play, not just in resolving current financial problems but also in maintaining the company's international presence. Thus, by the time that Paramount endeavoured to reduce the original price of £70 million, EMI was ready to resist even to the point of turning down an eleventh hour improved offer from the Americans.

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THE GRUESOME Medusa's head featured on *The Label Sofar*, the first Han-O-Disc to be released anywhere in the world.

Personal pic discs soon?

THE RELEASE on Friday of a new-style picture disc by tiny independent The Label could be the forerunner of a whole new 'customised album' business for retailers.

The Label - Sofar is the title of The Label's compilation album manufactured under the revolutionary Han-O-Disc patented process invented by Mark Hanau - the man who brought back picture discs in the early '70s for Curved Air.

The album is pressed in two halves of crystal clear vinyl and then, in The Label's case, a gruesome Medusa's head design featuring luminous and light deflecting material on film is inserted into the vinyl envelope before the sides are welded together by a specially developed process. The album will retail at just under £6, against regular picture disc prices of up to £8 or more for imports.

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Forth is 7th RB chart user

RADIO FORTH is to broadcast the *Record Business UK Top 40* each Sunday afternoon when its new schedules are brought in next month, bringing the total commercial radio audience for RB charts to over four million.

The new weekly *Musicians Only* is also to use RB singles' and album charts when it publishes its first issue on September 19.

Forth joins Capital, Luxembourg, Tees, Beacon, Plymouth Sound and 210 as RB chart users. In addition to the Top 40 *Record*

Business will also supply the Edinburgh station with a Scottish Top 30 akin to the regional sales charts already supplied to the London, West Midlands and Plymouth stations.

Forth's music organiser Tom Bell remarked: "The RB is generally accepted among people I know as the most authoritative voice".

Musicians Only is edited by David Blake and will be published each Tuesday aimed at both the playing musician and the general public interested in that scene.

'April-June LP slump' - BPI

BPI FIGURES released last week reveal that the April-June period this year was the industry's worst three months' album sales since the quarterly surveys were started in early 1976.

Compared with the same period last year, volume declined by 16 percent to 14.1 million units although total sales value increased by five percent. These are estimated to be the most discouraging figures since the depression of 1973. The BPI believes the low sales levels are due to a combination of consumer resistance to 25 percent higher prices over the previous year and home taping. Blank tape sales increased by 40 percent in the first three months of 1979.

However the singles and pre-recorded cassette markets are staying comparatively healthy with a 21 percent leap in trade tape deliveries in the second quarter and a 35 percent increase in sales value to £10.8 million. Greatly increased budget tape activity is thought to make up a large part of the expansion.

Singles have been less adversely affected by recent price increases with second quarter trade deliveries hitting the 22.9 million units mark against 19.7 million in the same three months last year - an increase of 16.4 percent.

The total value of the market was £54.8 million for the April-June period making a total for the first half of the year of £112.9 million which was £17 million more than the first half of 1978.

In a footnote to the latest statistics, the BPI points out an underlying and discouraging trend. Relatively high percentage changes in the second quarter are set against low levels of business during the first quarter, while pre-recorded cassettes may have peaked and the figures do not take into account the post budget VAT and record company price increases which had such a drastic effect on Summer business.

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AFTER ALL, the product ballroom at WEA's closed-to-the-press sales conference in Cheltenham came the annual sales awards to the men on the road. Left to right are: John Smith, field sales promotion manager 'Special Award'; Mike Heap, general manager sales and promotion; Bill Whitney - sales man of the year; WEA managing director John Frain; Derek Adnitt, sales promo man of the year; Joe Smith, chairman of Electra-Asylum; and Bob Buchan - merchandiser of the year.

WEA conference hears of wide range of product

APART FROM forthcoming big releases from The Eagles and Fleetwood Mac, WEA's weekend sales conference in Cheltenham heard of a wide-ranging schedule of product set for Autumn release.

Albums include a triple memorial album from jazz giant Charles Mingus entitled *Charles Mingus - Passions Of A Man: An Anthology Of His Atlantic Recordings* covering the years 1956-77 and carries an rrp of £10.00.

November will see release of four prestigious UK original soundtrack recordings culled from big Warner Brothers movies retailing at the mid-price tag of £3.70 and with titles like *Great Warner Brothers Dramas, Action Movies, Love Themes and Spectaculars*.

Sire will be working hard on the Undertones, deleting the band's first LP *Undertones* on October 5 and re-issuing it in a new colour sleeve and with the addition of the group's first two singles plus the single version of 'Here Comes The Summer'. The LP will be available at the rrp of £4.00 during initial sell-in while the band tours for the whole of October. A major consumer press advertising push coincides.

Hansa Curb general manager Roger

Pye plans Donna chart sell-in

PYE RECORDS delegates heard about plans to chart Donna Summer's forthcoming November album on initial sell-in at its Centre Hotel, Heathrow sales conference last week.

The release will be supported by a national radio campaign backed up by heavy press advertising push and strong point of sale effort.

And similar back-up will be put behind release of *Memories Of The Way We Were*, a £4.99 28-track collection of Gladys Knight's biggest songs during her Buddha period which will be pre-faced by the rush-release of a single 'Still Caught Up In You'.

Holt presented 'Love Clone', the new single from Hot Gossip, while on Carere, Holt announced a push on heavy metal band Saxon and that Dollar's album *Shooting Stars* will be backed by a £15,000 radio campaign.

On the classical front WEA marketing projects manager presented six new Nonesuch albums in November which he is offering to the trade on a 10-for-9 sell-in pack.

Atlantic's Phil Carson announced the Atco offshoot has signed Pete Townshend as a solo artist worldwide and an album is scheduled for the new year. More major signings are due to be announced.

C.B. Dawson Payne

IN THE same week that Norrie Paramor died, the industry also lost another of its major figures, C.B. Dawson Payne, who until his retirement from EMI in 1973 was recognised as the world's pre-eminent specialist in recorded music copyright matters. Payne, who was 72 and had been in poor health for some months, spent his whole working life with EMI.

After graduating from Birmingham University with a degree in law in 1929 he found it impossible to finance himself as an articulated solicitor and joined the EMI copyright department in Hayes. He was deeply involved in the industry's case in 1932 to secure payment for the public broadcasting of records, from which Phonographic Performances Ltd. was formed. As a result, EMI and Decca decided that there was a need for an international organisation to protect the industry's rights in broadcasting fees and this led to the formation in 1935 of the IFPI, then operating from one room at Hayes. Payne was a member of the board of the IFPI and was also chairman of the British Record Producers Association which looked after copyright matters before the formation of the BPI.

Norrie Paramor

WITH THE death from cancer at the age of 65 of Norrie Paramor, the British music industry has lost one of the key figures responsible for its emergence from post-war American musical dominance by the development of local talent of international sales appeal.

When Paramor gave up the life of a touring musician and left Harry Gold's Pieces of Eight, of which he was pianist and founder member, to join EMI as an a&r man in the early 1950s, the company and indeed the industry was largely dependant on American product for its best-selling repertoire. However, EMI's loss of both the CBS and RCA licenses spurred the company to promote its roster of British acts and Paramor, as a&r head of the Columbia label, delivered a glittering succession of hits which made him the country's top producer in the early-1960s.

His acts included Eddie Calvert, Michael Holliday, Ruby Murray, the Avons, Frank Ifield, Helen Shapiro and, most significantly, Cliff Richard and the Shadows. Under Paramor's inspired creative direction, Richard became the biggest non-American record-seller worldwide, while the Shadows developed simultaneously as an attraction in their own right to the point that they became the world's top and most imitated vocal group. That both acts are still making hit records today can be attributed to the sound foundations laid when Paramor was their musical mentor. Indeed, much of the credit of EMI's emergence as a talent-scouter internationally can be traced back to the efforts of Paramor and his other contemporaries in the house a&r team, Wally Ridley, George Martin and Norman Newell.

His skills as an arranger will be remembered by many artists with whom he worked and in tandem with his production assignments he developed this side of his activities with a series of elegant orchestral albums and as a film-music writer, contrasted by the fun music of the Big Ben Banjo Band and the Big Ben Hawaiian Band. But not only was he an outstanding guardian of talent, he was also a capable teacher of production skills as former assistants, Tim Rice, John Schroeder and Bob Barratt, will confirm.

In 1968, after a spell as general man-

ager of the in-house a&r team, Paramor left EMI to establish his own production company. But the type of music in which he had specialised was changing and in 1970 he moved to the calmer atmosphere of the BBC Midland Radio Orchestra which he conducted with distinction and where his composing and arranging talents continued to bring great pleasure to listeners to its regular broadcasts.

Paramor leaves a wife, two daughters and a son. His funeral took place at Marylebone Crematorium on Friday.

Among the many tributes paid to Paramor were the following by people who knew him best:-

John Schroeder, m.d. of Alaska Records and Paramor's assistant at EMI from 1959-64: "He was a great musician, composer and producer. He was ahead of his time when he signed Cliff Richard and those early recordings like 'Schoolboy Crush' and 'Move It' were the start of a new era."

Geoffrey Everitt, m.d. of MAM Records: "I became friendly with Norrie when I was a dj for Radio Luxembourg after the war and it was his job to reply to fan mail I sent to Harry Gold. When Teddy Johnson, then a Luxembourg dj, decided he wanted to make a record, I asked Norrie to write the arrangement. I think I was responsible for introducing him to Leonard Smith at EMI. He was a good businessman, but there lived none better and none kinder."

Geoffrey Bridge, former m.d. of EMI Records: "He was a marvellous man with a lovely quiet sense of humour and an all-encompassing talent for music and recording. His partnership with Cliff Richard was an object lesson to young producers today."

Cliff Richard, "He spotted some incredibly latent ability in a not very good demo, and for the next 15 years he produced all those records which are synonymous with my name. I haven't found a way of adequately expressing my thanks for what he did for me and The Shadows. He was a great character, totally unflappable and for us he was a father figure who egged us on and understood what we were doing although he was not part of our generation."

Papa Boom, Now? Wow!

WHEN POPE John Paul arrives on his first visit to Ireland at the end of the month, the chances are that he will be greeted by a hit record.

Release has issued 'Viva Il Papa' (RL 981) by Catriona Walsh - and already it has caught the imagination of the Irish record buying public. Eamonn Lee, Release spokesman, said that an initial pressing of 30,000 copies had already been sold into the shops and demand was keeping four presses at the Carlton factory working flat out in the hope of making a further 50,000 available this week. The song is written by a well

known Irish composer, Pete St. John and the record was produced by Jerry Hughes, who has written the B-side 'Century', dedicated to the Knock shrine, celebrating its 100th anniversary and the principal reason for the Pope's visit. The record comes in a picture bag showing the Pope. Also planned by Release is a recording of the Mass being said by His Holiness at Phoenix Park, Dublin.

In Britain it is available through Spartan and other independent wholesalers and Release reports that initial trade response has been enthusiastic.

MULLINGS

MORE THAN the usual number of trademark problems confronted EMI LRD in its search for a name for the new in-house label. Arena was first favourite, but dropped because the name was owned by Rank and Deutsche Grammophon. Rhino seemed too similar to RSO. Finally Cobra was selected, only for LRD to discover that a matter of weeks before EMI had actually disposed of the name, owned but never used by the Rosetti musical instruments subsidiary, to a firm in Wales, unaware of LRD's plans. However for a modest pecuniary consideration the name was repossessed on behalf of LRD, which for some reason doesn't appear to have thought of calling the label L(o)RD . . . and as a postscript to Cobra, staff at Gloucester station refused to touch an LRD samples pack sent to salesman Brian Nicholls until he collected it personally. Reason - the package had split open and dangling from it was the tail of a lifelike rubber snake . . .

THE SUNDAY tea-time and Monday mid-morning airings on Radio 4 of Roger Cook's *Checkpoint* investigation into, er, relationships between managers and clients, probably meant that few people in the business would have had the opportunity to listen to a remarkable telephone conversation between Cook and Don Arden in Los Angeles, after Cook had spoken to former clients, including Ronnie Laine and Lindsay de Paul. Cook found Arden at his most forthright and the exchanges contained language rarely if ever heard on respectable Radio 4, with the Jet chief making allegations regarding Cook's sex life, the placement of his elbow in an unlikely orifice and warning Cook that if he took him on he would have to go 15 rounds with the world champion. Afterwards, Cook remained unperturbed but suspected that he might conceivably be hearing from Arden again . . .

EXPECT DISTRIBUTION developments in Scotland . . . rumour has it that the industry's second (after S. Wonder's album) longest-running on-off story, the joint signing by K-tel and WEA of Clifford T. Ward may be ascloasethis . . . worth checking out - rock photographer Laurie Lewis' exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery, Gt. Newport St., today (17) to coincide with publication of *The Concerts*, a 120-page book of his fine pictures (£5.50, Paper Tiger) . . . look out for the results of a new songwriting partnership between Don Black and Andrew Lloyd Webber on a project entitled *Tell Me On A Sunday* involving new 'Evita' Marti Webb - Dick James will publish. Company has also scored two entries (from 1743 submitted worldwide) in the Yamaha Songfest in Tokyo - 'You' by David Martin, Neil Lancaster and Russell Stone and an unreleased Elton John-Bernie Taupin song to be performed by Peter Noone . . . parting of the ways after a couple of months between publicist Charlie McCutcheon and Ensign - Tony Brainsby about to trap the Boomtown Rats and Nigel Grainge is looking for an in-house pressperson . . .

NEW BEACON RADIO m.d. likely to be named tomorrow, with a frontrunner believed to be Peter Tomlinson an ATV continuity announcer with business degrees who is also an advertising and marketing advisor to Unipart. Meanwhile former boss Jay Oliver freelancing in radio management from a Florida base . . . former CBS sales manager Bob Lewis now handling Wynd Up's burgeoning accessories business in the south of England . . . standby for a Dusty Springfield oldies collection next month compiled Leon Campadelli, which may be expected to do rather better than her newer material. Incidentally Campadelli reports that the pre-release order for 10cc greatest hits is biggest in company's history . . . 16 A&M staffers didn't arrive for their Killarney conference until after midnight when their Heathrow-bound coach broke down . . .

RADIO HALLAM programme director Keith Skues soon to publish book called *Cornish Heritage* - covering 30 years of investigating his own family tree, which revealed that his predecessors included a bigamist who sired 12 children and a murderer . . . reports from the Venue indicate that one of James Brown's mid-week gigs could have done better business - and on the subject of gigs how silly of Patti Smith to attack the British press at her Wembley show when without them she would have been somewhat smalltime . . . Neil Rushton's reissue on gold vinyl on his Inferno label of Freda Payne's 'Band of Gold' has shipped 17,000 copies in two weeks . . . Polydor blurb lists a track on James Last's new album as 'Chili Cocane' - now we know how he manages to last the whole night long.

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ALBUM REVIEWS

Top 40

Best of the rest

SHAM 69: The Adventures of Herasham Boys (Polydor POLD 5025) Prod.: Jimmy Pursey Peter Wilson
Perhaps it was as well that Sham decided to call it a day. Apart from the two hits on display ('Herasham Boys' and 'Questions And Answers') much of the material is repetitive and often boring. A questionable bonus are free, but tedious and gimmicky, versions of 'Borstal Breakout' and 'If The Kids Are United' on a 12-inch single, and the unlettered hordes that follow Sham will certainly go for the do-or-die Clint Eastwood imagery on the album's sleeve. Pursey did it his way – self-indulgently in the end, the final irony.

SILOUSIE AND THE BANSHIES: Join Hands (Polydor POLD 5024) Prod.: Nils Stevenson Mike Stavrou
Background music for the modern age – there are vast chunks of this album where Siouxsie and co. appear to be taking up where the Velvet Underground left off – near white noise, driven along by relentless leaden drumming. It's hard to say how it will sell because the group seems to have turned its head staunchly against any vestige of lyricism or commercial appeal. Nevertheless, Siouxsie's lyrics are often disturbing in an oddball way and the band still has a great many followers.

Top 60

JOAN ARMATRADING: Steppin' Out (A&M AMLH 64789) Prod.: Glyn Johns
Gone are the days when Joan Armatrading was a shy young thing up there on the boards, and this album – recorded at concerts all over North America last year – proves just how far she has come. It's a fine collection of songs taken from all stages of her career and including the underrated 'Cool Blue Stole My Heart', a dramatic treatment of 'Tall In The Saddle' and the big hit 'Love And Affection' which drew whoops from the American crowd. The arrangements are all good from a top class band, although Ms. Armatrading's voice seems to lack the tonal range and dynamics of her recorded work. Should chart with ease.

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Powerplay (Pye Discovavin' DISCO 208) Prods: Various

An interesting partnership between Pye and disco-orientated Radio Luxembourg which features 18 sequed tracks by some strong artists such as Real Thing ('Can You Feel The Force'), Quantum Jump ('Love Ranger'), Voyage ('From East To West') and Two Man Sound ('Que Tal America'). The sequencing is a little abrupt at times, while some of the tracks are perhaps overfamiliar. Nonetheless a good collection, sporting an eye-catching sleeve.

MICHAEL JACKSON: Off The Wall (Epic EPC 83468) Prod.: Quincy Jones
Michael Jackson has always been possessed of a superb voice and this album sees him in peak form assisted by the incomparable ability of Quincy Jones as producer. A fine array of sidemen has been collected for this set, notably George Duke, Larry Carlton, Paulinho Da Costa and Steve Porcaro. Jackson himself remains the star of the show with superb renditions of Stevie Wonder's 'I Can't Help It', Carole Bayer Sager's 'I'm The Falling In Love' and his own 'Don't Stop Til You Get Enough'. A quality album with strong disco and mainstream appeal – should be a real winner.

SAMMY HAGAR: Street Machine (Capitol EST 11983) Prod.: Sammy Hagar
The next big thing in heavy metal? Hagar could well be since, apart from his innate talent as a rabble-raising singer and guitarist, he's supporting this album with live shows in this country and is getting a good promotional push from Capitol. Californian Hagar has already paid his heavy metal dues, most notably in Montrose, and he puts his practice here what he learnt there. Strongest cuts are the single 'Plain Jane', 'This Planet's On Fire' and 'Never Say Die' – which is not the Black Sabbath number, by the way. Razor sharp guitar work and powerful raucous vocalising make Hagar a likely winner in the UK.

TOM VERLAINE: Tom Verlaire (Elektra K52156) Prod.: Uncredited
Debut solo album from the grey eminence of New York modern rock and founder of Television and sadly it does not expand on the unforgettable work by that band (at least on *Marquee Moon*). Verlaire has trimmed his band down to three and the problem is precisely there. His songs still have something going for them (although only 'Last Night' actually falls into the 'great' category) and his voice is disturbing and sometimes even reminiscent of Mick Jagger. But the guitar textures which Richard Lloyd helped provide are missing and the band now sounds rather like 'Verlaire plus two others'.

POINTER SISTERS: Priority (Planet K52161) Prod.: Richard Perry
When their re-emergence on Perry's Planet label, the Pointer Sisters seem to be more concerned with taking care of business than delivering albums which showcase their versatility as a vocal group. It's a wholly laudable direction, for *Priority*, even more than the previous *Energy*, reveals them to be a potentially rocking threesome who equally laudably appear not to have any delusions of composing grandeur. As a result, the album showcases songs by Bob Seger, Jagger and Richard, Bruce Springsteen, Graham Parker, Robbie Robertson, Rafferty and Regan et al – and you can't ask for a better line-up than that.

PERE UBU: New Picnic Time (Chrysalis CHR 1284) Prod.: Pere Ubu/Ken Hamann
Stark, stern and uncompromisingly avant-garde, Pere Ubu is determined to plough its own furrow into the 80s, and all power to Chrysalis for putting it out at its £3.99 special price tag in an attempt to bring it to more people's attention. It's the sort of music that John Peel gleefully fills his late-night slot with these days and is likely to sell to diehard fans of the obscure and inaccessible and there seem to be more of them around these days.

GUY MITCHELL: 20 Golden Greats (CBS/Warwick PR5066)
Warwick is really getting into an all-or-yesterdays kick, what with Johnnie Ray and now his contemporary from the 50s, Guy Mitchell. However, whereas Ray invested his songs with real vocal personality, Mitchell was a highly efficient production-line talent who performed jolly singalong material with husky enthusiasm, but little else. 'Singing The Blues', 'She Wears Fed Feathers', 'Truly Truly Fair', 'Hesitates By The Number' and all those huge hits of 20-plus years ago really show their age and may not have the enduring appeal that will stimulate the punters' interest.

KINGS SINGERS: Atlantic Bridge (Columbia SCX 6615) Prod.: Hartmut Kiesewetter
A collection of familiar spirituals and other well-loved traditional material performed impeccably by the vocal group, singing both acapella and with unobtrusive orchestral accompaniment. The clarity of the precisely arranged harmonies of the six voices have won a considerable following which will find much to delight them in the treatments of favourites like 'Nobody Knows 'Shenandoah', 'Dry Bones' and 'Danny Boy'.

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Motown Disco Magic (MFP 50448)
MFP's re-issue programme of Motown back-catalogue has naturally tended to concentrate mainly on golden oldies, but this collection features nothing of more than three year vintage. As the title suggests it's a potentially danceable collection with tracks from Motown stalwarts like Diana Ross, Commodores, David Ruffin and Smokey Robinson competing with some of the label's laterday talent like High Energy, Switch and Tata Vega. A quality budget-price release, with a particularly eye-catching sleeve.

SWITCH: Switch! (Motown STML 12112) Prod.: Group/Jermaine Jackson
Switch is Motown's best bet to find a replacement for the Jackson Five, which may be no mere coincidence since the act is managed by Jermaine Jackson, the one who stayed behind. Their's is a typically functional, professional effort – with one exception, the amazing stratospheric high tenor of Bobby DeBarra, who must have a significantly large canine following and delivers electrifying performances on 'You're The One For Me' and 'Next To You'. An excellent example of modern Motown.

THE HOLLIES: Long Cool Woman In A Black Dress (MFP 50450)
A generous mix of chart material and good of good ones from the great years of 1966-71, when the group was turning out winners with consistent regularity. Strangely, since it was one of the act's lesser UK hits, the album takes its title from a single which scored its biggest success in the US. More significant UK smashes were 'He Ain't Heavy', 'I Can't Let Go', 'Carrie Anne' and 'Stop, Stop, Stop', which are all included. EMI's tv promoted Hollies' compilation wasn't a world beater, but the price of this LP allied to the act's enduring vocal skills, should see useful sales action.

LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III: A Live One (Radar RAD 4) Prod.: John Wood/Loudon Wainwright III
After the demise of his CBS contract, Loudon Wainwright was sorely missed as one of the most original troubadours to come out of America, although he still came over here for concerts. Most of this LP was recorded during a vintage 1976 UK outing and includes a selection of his best material in both humorous moods and some of the depths of bathos his writing can achieve. 'Motel Blues' kicks things off and the track list moves through 'Whatever Happened To Us', 'Suicide Song' and his great alcoholic lament 'Down Drinking At The Bar'. Wainwright has many fans here who will want this album.

RORY GALLAGHER: Top Priority (Chrysalis CHR 1235) Prod.: Rory Gallagher/Alan O'Duffy
This must be Gallagher's strongest album in a long time. Everybody knows how good his stage act is, but somehow he has never been able to put it together properly on record. Now that singing blues-based rock guitar style has finally been captured, along with his urgent singing on a selection of strong up-tempo numbers including something of a departure for him in subject matter – a spy epic called 'Philly'. New drummer Ted McKenna from SAHB and new co-producer Alan O'Duffy have crisscrossed up the sound to some extent, and given a bit of exposure there is no reason why the album won't make the lower reaches of the chart.

VARIOUS ARTISTS: Mods Mayday '79 (Bridge House BHP 003) Prod.: Terry Murphy/Ron Fawcuz/John B. McGeady
A 15-track album recorded live at the Bridge House in Canning Town on Mayday this year featuring Secret Affair, Beggar, Small Hours, Squire and the Mods. Secret Affair is the commercial strength of this album, kicking off the collection with the current single 'Time For Action'. But it's also worth cocking an ear to the other bands, particularly Small Hours into hot tracks. If the Mod revival is for real this should do well, particularly with the 'boy on a Vespa' *Quadruphenia* influenced cover.

DISCO

Disco dealer by Barry Lazell

CURRENTLY THE best selling import on the disco scene, Lee Moore's 'Reachin' Out' on the American Source label should be available on British 12-inch before too long, the US company having been picked up by EMI's LRD division. Product is in the hands of Bob Fisher, who has chalked an impressive list of successes from his other catalogues - Fantasy and Salsoul - this year. 'Reachin' Out' will obviously be the priority release, but Fisher also has an eye on the instrumental album 'Solar Funk' by Travis Biggs, which has already dented RB's album chart. A package involving the previous big import sellers on Source, including the American million seller 'Bustin' Loose' from Chuck Brown, and 'Miss Fine Lover' by the Flakes, is also possible. From Salsoul, LRD is awaiting delivery of what promises to be a really hot item in 'Showdown' by Martha High. Martha, a long-time member of the James Brown troupe, is being produced by JB himself for Salsoul, and although the initial release 'Ding Dong Man' (a follow-on to Anita Ward's 'Ring My Bell') was disappointing and only turned over a few copies here on import, a strong buzz is in the air already for 'Showdown'. Dut to remix delays it hasn't even reached the American shops yet, so an early UK release will probably wipe out potential imports from the start. With Martha here in person on the current James Brown tour, quick action would

obviously be beneficial from the promotion point of view.

WHILE 'REACHIN' OUT' is clearly the consistently best-selling import at the moment on a nationwide basis, there are several others which are now chasing it healthily, following the general doldrums of recent weeks. Interestingly, though, they are almost all polarised to specific regions, which is a clear indication of the way clubs and DJs are going heavily on particular records without necessarily following the charts or the lead of the heavyweight London DJ fraternity. For instance, Cameo's 'I Just Want To Be' is selling monstrously around the East Midlands, where it has spread from Nottingham disco plays; ditto the Isley Brothers' 'It's A Disco Night (Rock Don't Stop)'. London and the South-East are going with Dynasty's 'I Don't Want To Be A Freak, plus the album *Your Piece Of The Rock* from which it is taken. Expect RCA to move quickly on this one to chart it high alongside the trio of hot 20th Century label sellers and Bill Summers' potent new 12-inch on Prestige.

THE OTHER London seller of note, although it isn't an import but rather a rave from the grave which refuses to lie down - 'Al Capone' by Prince Buster. Still on the Original Blue Beat label (though now on 12-inch as well), it has obviously benefited from renewed interest generated by the Specials' 'Gangsters'.

12's

Best-selling Disco 12-inch Singles

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| 1 | 1 STREET LIFE Crusaders | MCA |
| 2 | 3 FEEL THE REAL David Bamboo | Sidewalk |
| 3 | YOU CAN DO IT A) Hatison & The Partners | ABC |
| 4 | 5 STRUT YOUR FUNKY STUFF Frankie | Phil int |
| 5 | 7 DANCIN' AND PRANCIN' Candice | Salsoul |
| 6 | 10 WHEN YOU'RE NUMBER ONE Gene Chandler | 20th Century |
| 7 | 4 LOOKING FOR A LOVE TONIGHT De Laury's Band | Fantasy |
| 8 | 6 SEXY CREAM Slick | Fantasy |
| 9 | 5 ANGEL EYES Roy Music | Polydor |
| 10 | 13 THIS TIME BABY Jackie Moore | CBS |
| 11 | 2 SWITCH Benson & Nancy Dee | Scope |
| 12 | 25 POINT OF VIEW Matumbi | Matumbi |
| 13 | 15 DON'T WANT TO BE A FREAK Dyanasty | Solar import |
| 14 | 23 WALKING ON SUNSHINE Gary Clent | Ice |
| 15 | 6 CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOUR LOVE Tamara Jones | Polydor |
| 16 | 8 DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH Michael Jackson | Epic |
| 17 | 14 FOUND A CURE Ashford & Simpson | Warner Bros |
| 18 | 19 REASON 'OUT' Lee Moore | Source import |
| 19 | 25 WHAT'S GOING ON Tom Browne | Arista |
| 20 | 24 WHAT'CHA GONNA DO Signatures | 20th Century |
| 21 | 11 IT'S MAGIC Kleiser | Atlantic |
| 22 | 3 DANCIN' IT REAL Naughton | RSD |
| 23 | 23 CHASE ME Con-Funk-Shun | Mercury |
| 24 | 20 IT'S A DISCO NIGHT (ROCK DON'T STOP) Isley Brothers | 2-neck import |
| 25 | 6 NEW YORK CITY DANCIN' LADY Bill Summers | RCA |
| 26 | 17 REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL, PT 3 Miroslava Vidas | Warner Bros |
| 27 | 19 INTO DURY & THE FLOORWALKERS | Star |
| 28 | 1 YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT Me and You | Slit |
| 29 | 4 GOT TO GIVE IN TO LOVE Bonnie Boyer | CBS |
| 30 | 25 DON'T LET ME GOE Johnny Mathis | CBS |

UK Albums

Best-selling Disco Albums

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------|
| 1 | 1 STREET LIFE Crusaders | MCA |
| 2 | 1 I AM Earth, Wind & Fire | CBS |
| 3 | 3 MORNING DANCE Cyndi Lauper | Infinity |
| 4 | 5 MIDNIGHT MAGIC Commodores | Motown |
| 5 | 4 THE BEST DISCO ALBUM IN THE WORLD | WEA |
| 6 | 6 RAINBOW CONNECTION IV Rose Royce | Whitfield |
| 7 | 7 RISKY Business | Atlantic |
| 8 | 8 OFF THE WALL Michael Jackson | Epic |
| 9 | 8 TEDDY Teddy Pendergrass | Phil Int |
| 10 | 9 CUBA Gibson Brothers | Island |
| 11 | 11 BAD GIRLS Donna Summer | Casablanca |
| 12 | 30 HAPPY PEOPLE Paulinho Da Costa | Pablo |
| 13 | 10 WE ARE FAMILY Sister Sledge | Atlantic |
| 14 | 15 BROWN SUGAR Tom Browne | Arista |
| 15 | 10 RUNNIN' TO YOUR LOVE Eddie Henderson | Capitol |
| 16 | 16 DANCIN' AND PRANCIN' Candice | Salsoul |
| 17 | 12 DELIGHT Ronnie Foster | CBS |
| 18 | 14 THE BOSS Diana Ross | Motown |
| 19 | 11 STAY FREE Ashford And Simpson | Warner Bros |
| 20 | 14 TALK A TON TO ME B. King | MCA |
| 21 | 15 I LOVE TO DANCE Kleiser | Atlantic |
| 22 | 23 HEARTBEAT Curtis Mayfield | RSP/Curtom |
| 23 | 17 THE BEST OF CARTH, WIND & FIRE Earth, Wind & Fire | CBS |
| 24 | 23 C'EST CHIC Chic | Atlantic |
| 25 | 25 SKYY Skyy | Salsoul |
| 26 | 25 NEW YORK CITY DANCIN' LADY Bill Summers | RCA |
| 27 | 19 REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL, PT 3 Miroslava Vidas | Fantasy |
| 28 | 25 WINKER TAKES ALL Isley Brothers | Epic |
| 29 | 28 I'M CURRENT Larry Williams | MCA |
| 30 | 22 I LOVE TO DANCE Kleiser | Warner Bros |
| | 20 THE ORIGINAL DISCO MAN James Brown | Polydor |

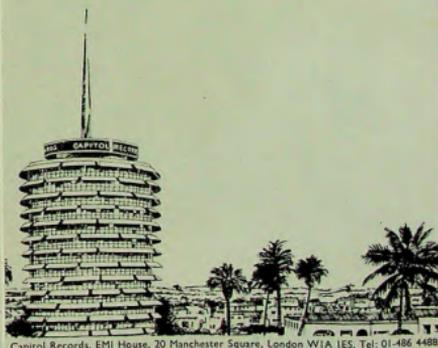
Capitol Records welcome Little River Band with their first album on the label 'First Under the Wire'

EAST 1954



featuring their brand new single 'Lonesome Loser'

CL 9695



Capitol Records, EMI House, 20 Manchester Square, London W.1A, Tel: 01-486 4488

Briefs

RCA IS going all out this month and next with additions to the Erato catalogue which it handles in this country. The French company's albums, generally splendidly recorded and elaborately packaged at a pricey rrp of £5.49, naturally tend to feature French artists. September releases start Pierre Aroyal in the two Faure violin sonatas (STU 71195) and in popular violin concertos by Bruch and Glazunov, with Claudio Scimone conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (STU 71164). Then Jean-François Rampal, the doyen of flautists, couples Nielsen's Flute Concerto with the first recording of Norby's 'Illuminations', composed especially for him (STU 71273). October will see some Erato releases appearing for the first time in the RCA Gold Seal mid-price series.

THE DIGITAL war is hotting up, with RCA about to enter the arena next month with a new recording of Bartok's *Concerto For Orchestra* (SC 13421), a virtuoso work which cries out for stunning sound reproduction. This is an 8th-stay celebration for Eugene Ormandy, who conducts the Philadelphia Orchestra of which he has been the director since 1936. RCA claims that its digital method of recording is ahead of any other.

Classical gets the singles treatment

THERE IS more than meets the eye to EMI's plan to bring out a series of 12-inch 45s. This is not in any way just a gimmick or a desperate effort to find some new way of dealing with the current decline in general sales. It is a well-considered, highly practical and indeed long-overdue development.

A very large public finds certain classical pieces such as Tchaikovsky's '1812 Overture' or Ravel's 'Bolero' to its liking. Such pieces, however, have only been available until now on LPs which also contain several longer works which exert a less immediate popular appeal and may even bore the parts of the non-classical customer. So EMI figures that there was a natural reluctance to buy an album for 15 minutes of preferred music and padded by 40 minutes of dead wood.

The new HMV 45s, retailing at £1.99, will give up to 17 minutes per side, which means that Tchaikovsky's '1812' can be coupled with his equally tuneful 'Capriccio Italien' and Ravel's 'Bolero' with his easy-on-the-ear 'La Valse'. The idea is perfectly logical.

Another advantage is that 45s provide much better sound quality. (Nimbus Records, which specialises in quality of



JESSEY NORMAN, whose new Phonogram releases include *Negro Spirituals* (Philips 9500 580) and the title-role in Haydn's opera *Armida* (Philips 6769 021), enjoyed great success with her Edinburgh Festival concertos. She took time off to sign albums for Edinburgh dealer Rae MacIntosh, where she is pictured with the store's Robin Stephens.

reproduction, has also moved into the 45 field.) So these new albums, which bring performances already acclaimed on standard LPs, will have greater presence and dynamic range than the originals.

John Patrick, EMI's Classical Division general manager, enthused: "This is a major breakthrough in meeting public demand. We are offering a repertoire which a huge non-specialist public has long been denied, recorded with greater sound fidelity than ever before, and at a very reasonable price."

Next month sees the release of eight

TOP 10

- 1 LUCIANO PAVAROTTI: KING OF THE HIGH C'S (DECCA SL 6658)
- 2 OBOE CONCERTOS, HEINZ HOLLIGER, CONCERTO BROW, ORCHESTRA ZIMMERMAN (PHILIPS 9500 564)
- 3 MARTINU: FRESQUES DE PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA, CZECH PHILHARMONIC-ANCERL (SUPRAPHON SUAST 50109)
- 4 RESPIGI: FOUNTAINS OF ROME, PINES OF ROME, SCOTTO (DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 890)
- 5 NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC-GAZZANINI: AN EXHIBITION, PHILIP JONES BRASS ENSEMBLE-HOWARTH (ARIGO ZGR 885)
- 6 NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC-RUSTICANA, LEONCAVALLO: PAGLIACCI, LUCIANO PAVAROTTI, SOLOISTS, LONDON VOICES, NATIONAL PHILHARMONIC-GAZZANINI, PATANE (DECCA D8303)
- 7 MAHLER: SYMPHONY NO 2, SOLOISTS, BAVARIAN RADIO CHORUS & ORCHESTRA/KUBELIK (DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2726 962)
- 8 MAHLER: SYMPHONY NO 5, BAVARIAN RADIO ORCHESTRA/KUBELIK (DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2726 961)
- 9 RODRIGO: CONCIERTO DE ARANJUEZ, JOHN WILLIAMS, ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (NIMBUS CDS 76389)
- 10 MUNROV: HENRY VIII AND HIS SIX WIVES FILM MUSIC, EARLY MUSIC CONCERTO MIXTURE (HMV CSD A9001)

(Courtesy of Meland Adams Records, St Thomas Street, London SE1)

REGIONAL

Ulster enjoys gospel boom

OVER THE past 18 months Pilgrim Records of 48 Upper Queen Street in Belfast have enjoyed tremendous sales for their country gospel sounds. Artists such as Rev. William McCrea plus Mary McKee and The Genesis sold over 50,000 copies of albums each. General Manager of the label Dennis Milligan has issued albums by other artists such as The Harvesters *Keep on Walking*, Corner Quintette *Sweet of Love*, Marie Lacey *Think Again* all local artists. Over the next few months new albums will be released from High Country, Esther Brooks, Len Magee, Strandtown Youth Choir, plus albums from Rev. McCrea, and Mary McKee & The Genesis both recorded in Nashville. Apart from Pilgrim Records they also look after other labels such as Melody and Grapevine. Sales of gospel material have been extremely high in Ulster, with local labels contributing to this boom. Pilgrim has an office in London and is a member of the Pentos Group.

SUNSHINE, SIX time winners of 'Opportunity Knocks', are back on the scene with a new single, *Boogie On Up*. It features vocalists Rosie and Stuart Bingham, and could bring them their long-awaited hit. The Belfast-based band have had a number of changes in their line up late, resulting in a vastly improved sound. Manager Cecil



ON BEHALF of Pilgrim Records, BBC TV's country music host Paddy O'Flaherty presents gospel singer Mary McKee & The Genesis with a gold disc for sales in excess of 50,000 copies of her albums. She was recently in Nashville where she recorded a new album which will be issued in November. Mary McKee & The Genesis are resident artists on the weekly BBC TV Ulster series *Hello Sunshine* which is co-presented by Paddy O'Flaherty.

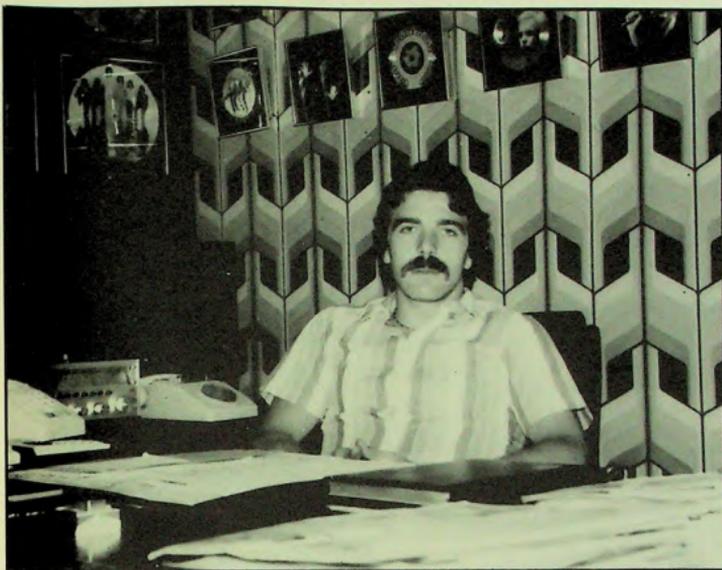
Thompson has a number of local tv dates lined-up to promote the single.

THE FIRST Wild Rose Song Contest will be held in Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim next November, and the committee would like to invite national and international composers to compete for the £1,500 prize fund. There is an open section, and a special section to honour the International Year of the Child. They also hope to issue an album featuring this year's top three songs, plus the winners of previous years. Composers should write to the Wild Rose Song Contest Organiser, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim, for further details.

CLONES-BORN singer Pat McGeeagan of the Big 4, represented Ireland at the Golden Orpheus Song Festival, in Bulgaria. Performing a song entitled 'Even-

A Time featuring Navan born country singer Gloria. The single has spent 52 weeks in the Irish chart, and is still highly placed. Released a little over two years ago, it was a real sleeper and took nine months to make the charts. The single has sold over 150,000 copies, and soon Release managing director Michael Clerkin will be presenting Gloria with a Platinum Disc. Release publicity officer Susan Fanning reports that Release Talent is forming a new band around composer-singer Denis Allen, who has two of his compositions 'Reach Out' by Shaun O'Dowd, and 'Limerick You're A Lady' performed by himself in the charts. The new band will be launched in early October.

WITH MASSIVE cut-backs in the Health Services, Homespun Records and artists have decided to help the Ballymore, Coleraine & District Kidney Research Fund, with their cash appeals. On September 24 Homespun Country Show will visit Limavady, when host Billy McFarland, will introduce the Homespun stars, and launch five new albums. The albums are *I'll Settle For Old Ireland* from the singing farmer John Watt, *Mother Country Music* from Crawford Bell, *Listen to Country* from Joe E. Hamilton, *Singing On Sunday* from Downtown country host John Greer, while the final album *Country Favourites*, features Limavady-favoured Siobhan & Pride. The artists will sing tracks from their new albums, and give their time and service free of charge.



TONY HAMLIN, Relay director: "In the tv product field we are now the largest wholesaler in the country."

Hamlin told *Record Business*: "Things did become a little difficult when opposition started up in the form of other wholesalers and one-stops. We were right into Scotland with the van sales service and we were experiencing problems with flexibility. We couldn't move stock about fast enough—basically there were far too many stocking points."

He continued: "Our turnover was still increasing every year and business was really very steady. But we finally had to decide to scrap the Leeds warehouse."

Using Courier Express, the change to a full telephone sales system was fairly cautious with the company's own van service being gradually phased out.

"We did everything very slowly because we wanted to make sure Courier Express would work out alright," commented Winnert. "To be fair, Courier

"We are able to give next-day delivery anywhere in the UK except for a few parts of Scotland"

Distributing the nation's tv albums — how Relay spotted the gap

ALMOST EVERY successful record industry operation is spawned by swift reaction to market trends. For West London's Relay Records, at present celebrating its fifth anniversary, the catalyst was the sudden explosion in television advertising during 1974.

Relay Records — trading for its first two years as Disc and Tape Supplies — was launched by accountant John Winnert and Tony Hamlin, previously credit manager for tv merchandiser K-Tel. Operating for the first few weeks with a single van, distributing K-Tel product to London retail outlets, Relay is today firmly established as one of the UK's leading independent wholesalers of tv-advertised product with a projected turnover for the current financial year of over £5 million.

John Winnert explained to *Record Business* the reasons behind the company's launch five years ago. "With the sudden glut in tv advertised albums at this time, we felt there was an important niche in the market that we could fill."

He went on: "All the tv merchandisers insisted on minimum dealer orders of 25 units. This was okay when only a few tv albums were running, but when there were 20 or 30 many dealers were unable to stock them all. There was a need for a wholesaler that didn't require minimum orders." After obtaining the initial K-Tel account, Relay rapidly obtained accounts with Warwick,

FIVE YEARS ago, Relay Records was trading along quite nicely as just another independent wholesaler. Today, it has a projected turnover of £5 million for this financial year. Relay was the first to see the opportunities of distributing tv merchandised albums and has now established itself as the number one independent in that field. Feature by TIM SMITH.

Ronco and Arcade. Within six months Winnert and Hamlin had five vans on the road servicing London, Anglia and Sussex.

Hamlin commented: "Our first year turnover was only £600,000, but the business was really mushrooming. We moved into the Bristol areas and then South Wales. Soon we were covering everywhere from the Severn to the Wash southwards."

By the end of 1975, Relay was supplying independent retailers and many large chains throughout England and the company was forced to open a warehouse in Leeds to improve delivery to northern accounts.

Soon distribution was extended to Scotland. Turnover continued to increase as tv merchandising played an

increasingly important role in disc sales. With a sizeable fleet of sales vans, Relay was now employing over 30 staff.

However the last two or three years had seen one-stop operations emerging all over the country hand-in-hand with the growth in independent labels.

Some of these had become serious competitors in tv product for the northern market. Despite the size of its van fleet, Relay was unable to make more than one or perhaps two deliveries a week to many retail outlets. Compared with the 24-hour deliveries offered by

"There was a need for a wholesaler that didn't require minimum orders"

certain one-stops through their telephone sales departments, this lack of flexibility was a serious drawback.

In June, 1977, Hamlin and Winnert reacted to this situation by shutting down their Leeds warehouse and instigating a gradual switch to telephone sales, operating from the West London offices and warehouse.

Express deserves a great deal of praise. We are able to give next day delivery everywhere in the UK except for a few parts of Scotland."

Hamlin added: "It was definitely the best move to make. Our business trebled very quickly. A single telephone sales girl can probably do as much selling in a day as about five van salesmen."

Relay Records did in fact lose about 200 of its established retail accounts to competitors during the mid-70's. However, Hamlin emphasised that in most cases these were small record retailers that were not generating vast amounts of business.

"In the television product field we are now the largest wholesaler in the country," claimed Hamlin. "Although we do carry chart material, the other large one-stops should not really be considered as true competition as in the main we cover different areas of the record business."

Tv advertised product is now more important than ever before — a glance at the album charts is ample evidence. With the tv merchandisers continuing to dominate the field, Relay's future profitability in the industry must be entirely secure.

"In the television field we are now the largest"

**New High Bias and all
other Memorex products
Now available from
Relay Records'**



Relay Records are number one with K-tel.

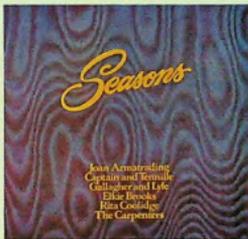
If it's on the K-tel label it's available from Relay Records—K-tel's biggest record distributors. Right now Relay have the stocks to meet the big demand for K-tel's latest releases, Hot Tracks, Seasons, and Don Williams New Horizons.

HOT TRACKS K-tel NE 1049



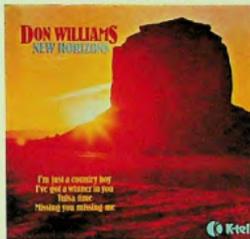
Featuring
THE BOOMTOWN RATS
JANET KAY
VILLAGE PEOPLE
RACEY
DARTS

SEASONS K-tel NE 1060



Featuring
JOAN ARMATRADING
CAPTAIN AND TENNILLE
GALLAGHER AND LYLE
ELKIE BROOKS
RITA COOLIDGE
THE CARPENTERS

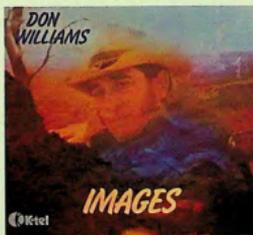
DON WILLIAMS: NEW HORIZONS K-tel NE 1048



Featuring
I'M JUST A COUNTRY BOY
I'VE GOT A WINNER IN YOU
TULSA TIME
MISSING YOU MISSING ME

Relay also have a good stock of K-tel's TV advertised best sellers including Images, Classic Rock Second Movement, and John Williams Bridges. For next day delivery of all TV advertised albums.

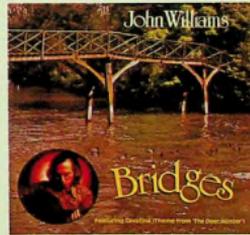
DON WILLIAMS: IMAGES K-tel NE 1033



CLASSIC ROCK: 2nd MOVEMENT K-tel NE 1039



JOHN WILLIAMS: BRIDGES K-tel WH 5015



Relay Records Ltd.
Telephone 01-579 9921

RELAY SPECIAL



Blank tape: an essential part of Relay's life

BLANK TAPE is a headache for the record industry but it's part of the profitable software market at the same time and Relay was quick to see how sales of it could be exploited by utilising lower profit margins and a quicker distribution set-up.

THE VAST majority of Relay Records' turnover is obviously achieved through tv-advertised material. However the company is more than a distributor for the four tv merchandisers - K-Tel, Warwick, Ronco and Arcade.

Over the last few years, Relay has become a leading distributor of blank tapes. With the market currently dominated by TDK, BASF and Memorex, Relay last year turned over more than £750,000 worth of tapes.

Winnert commented: "At the moment blank tapes are a real boom market. Everyone is aware of the serious problem blank tapes pose for the record industry as a whole. But the market

exists and if we don't cater for demand someone else will.

He explained that until a couple of years ago, the blank tape market was not being fully utilised by any of the existing wholesalers.

"In the past the basic problem was that the traditional tape distributors were not geared to the record market," he said. "They were working on high margins and were not used to the fast turnovers of most record retailers."

To break into this market, Relay kicked off by running a series of special blank tape promotions with sale-or-return on certain orders. The company also stuck to low margins for itself in a move to stimulate turnover. It paid off.

"We believe we pioneered the idea that dealers get a good price and subsequently a good mark-up for blank tapes whatever the size of their order," said Hamlin. "We cut out the middlemen and the bulk buyers and we only make about five percent on tapes ourselves. Other wholesalers have now adopted

SOME OF Relay's gold and platinum discs - courtesy of the tv merchandisers.

this policy."

As for tv advertised product, it's hard to beat Relay's dealer terms or service, especially bearing in mind that it is very rare for tv merchandisers to offer special deals on their product.

Next day delivery is available throughout the UK - except for some of Scotland and the Channel Islands - via Courier Express. Retailers receive standard dealer price for tv material, however Relay does run a retrospective discount scheme based on turnover.

In addition to tv product, Relay does handle UK majors' repertoire. However it is viewed as a top up service covering top 75 albums and singles and retailers

"We buy in ourselves almost every day and we're selling so much tv material that we are being presented with gold and platinum discs every year"

have to pay slightly over the standard trade price.

"We provide this additional service because retailers find it useful and asked us to do it," commented Hamlin.

At present Relay employs 25 staff - six of them telephone sales girls. Their West London warehouse is only 2,000 square feet, although expansion plans are nearing fruition.

"It's difficult at times, but we are just managing with the existing warehouse," said Hamlin. "This is only because our turnover is so fast. We buy in ourselves

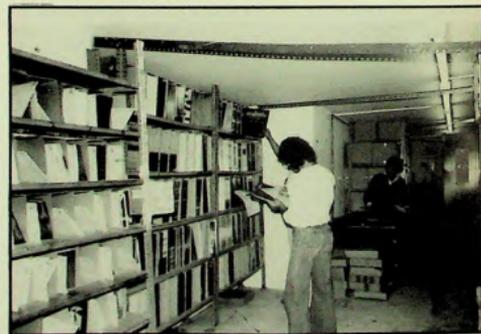
"We believe we pioneered the idea that dealers get a good price and subsequently a good mark-up for blank tapes, whatever the size of their order"

almost every day - and we're selling so much television material that we are being presented with gold and platinum discs every year."

The number of dealer accounts serviced by Relay varies with the level of tv advertising. However it averages out at about 1,000. This includes almost all the major stores and chains - HMV, Virgin, Our Price Records, Harlequin, and Selfridges.

Hamlin concluded: "One-stop is in direct competition with the major record companies - we like to think that we are not. We consider Relay Records as an official distributor for the four tv merchandisers, a supplier of blank tapes and other accessories and a company that gives dealers a chart material back up service."

"The market exists and if we don't cater for demand someone else will"



RELAY RECORDS' West London warehouse - storage space is to be doubled later this year.

RELAY RECORDS

ELTHORNE HOUSE, 9, CHERINGTON RD, LONDON, W.7.

WE SUPPLY

- T.V. ADVERTISED LPs & CASSETTES
 - TOP 75 LPs & CASSETTES
 - TOP 75 SINGLES
 - ALL MAJOR BRANDS OF BLANK CASSETTES
 - REEL TO REEL & VIDEO TAPE
 - ACCESSORIES
-

OUR SERVICE

- WE PHONE YOU EVERY WEEK
 - FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY VIA COURIER EXPRESS
-

OUR TERMS

- ACCOUNTS PAYABLE 30 DAYS
 - RETROSPECTIVE DISCOUNTS LINKED TO TURNOVER
-

SALES

01-579 3197
01-579 9921*

ACCOUNTS

01-579 6125
01-579 4249

*ANSAPHONE AFTER 5.30pm.

RELAY SPECIAL

Coping with the record companies' investment in tv albums

THE LAST year has seen a minor revolution in the television advertising market.

Almost every major record company has increased its activity significantly in this field with the level of tv albums maintaining an unprecedented high.

Polydor, Phonogram, CBS and EMI Records have run compilations that include a high degree of cross-licensed tracks for the first time. K-Tel has responded by launching joint tv promotions with individual record companies — such as Ruby Winters' *Songbird* LP with Grease.

The actions of the record companies could be seen as a serious threat to the long established domination of the tv market by the four tv merchandisers and subsequently a threat to Relay Records

“The tv merchandisers can be far more selective. Record company choices are seriously limited in many cases”

whose profitability is obviously linked to that of the merchandisers.

While being fully aware of this situation, neither Hamlin or Winnert feel that the future of the tv merchandisers or Relay Records is in any doubt.

Hamlin said: “The majors are moving heavily into the tv market and obviously with something like WEA's *Best Disco Albums In The World* we might only shift 5,000 copies whereas if it was K-Tel's product it might be ten or twenty times as much.”

He went on: “I don't however feel that this really poses a problem. The majors are only just beginning to learn about tv advertising and have a long way to go before they acquire the expertise and success of a company like K-Tel in the tv market.”

Hamlin also pointed out that it continued to be far easier for tv merchandisers to licence product than record companies, regardless of recent trends.

“The merchandisers can be far more selective,” he said. “Record company choices are seriously limited in many cases. The tv merchandisers have been in tv advertising for years and they are



RELAY'S TELEPHONE sales department — introduced two years ago.

basically far more professional.”

The two Relay directors did however agree that the high level of tv advertising, running at well over 50 albums last autumn, was saturating the market.

Said Winnert: “I do feel that there are too many albums on television whose contents do not justify the expenditure. However, although it's hard to gauge what will sell — and a lot depends on the advert itself — there's no reason why 50 LP's shouldn't sell so long as there are all good product.”

Much of Relay's success is based on the close relationship with the tv merchandisers. Relay receives campaign details almost as soon as they are finalised. This gives the telephone sales girls time to work out their schedules and enable Relay to ship product out to retailers well before tv promotions begin.

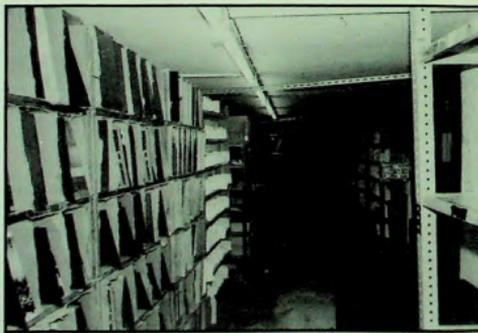
“Making sure we know exactly what is going on in the tv market is our business,” commented Hamlin.

He added that for independent dealers the greatest advantage in tv product is that there was no need to discount as almost all multiples sold at the full retail price.

The record industry may be staggering through an acute recession, but for Relay Records, with 1979-1980 turnover and profits showing a healthy increase, the impact appears to have been well cushioned.



RUBY WINTERS' *Songbird* album, a joint venture, was K-Tel's answer to the increasing involvement of record companies in tv merchandising.



THE RELAY Warehouse.

Video is the next target for Relay

WITH RELAY Records' current operation fully consolidated, the company is now planning major expansion into new areas.

The most important of these is undoubtedly video cassettes, and ultimately videodiscs. To a limited extent, Relay is already distributing blank videocassettes. And as the UK market steadily expands, the company intends to establish itself as a front-runner in this field.

John Winnert told *Record Business*: “Video cassettes are an extremely important area. But videodiscs are far more exciting for the industry as a whole. They are a whole new concept and the most dramatic innovation for years. When they finally arrive on the market, videodiscs are going to be huge business.”

In the short-term, Relay is planning to greatly widen its accessories lines, taking in record and hi-fi care equipment, record PVC covers plus record and cassette cases. A major push for this market is planned after Christmas.

Finally, Relay will be shortly expanding its present limited warehouse space. A new 2,000 square foot warehouse is to be opened nearby to cope with the increased turnover and the new distribution lines.

“When they finally arrive on the market, video discs are going to be huge business”

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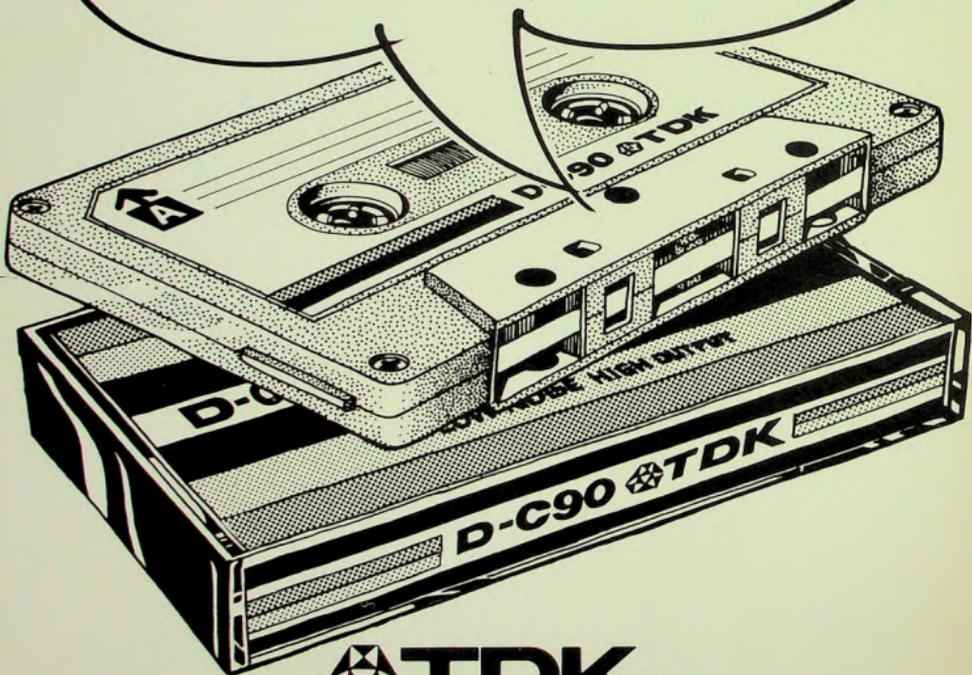


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THE STRUGGLE to stimulate additional sales is becoming more important than ever before for both record retail chains and independent dealers.

There is little individual retailer can do to reverse the current industry recession in the short-term. However, there are numerous ways in which dealers can help themselves increase sales and maintain profitability.

Additional lines with high mark-ups are obviously extremely useful. In-store videos are already providing many retailers with welcome boosts in sales. But just as vital are some areas of retailing frequently neglected by record dealers - shop-fitting, security and display.

WINDOW AND in-store displays constitute the final link in the selling chain and are perhaps the most important factor in boosting a record retailer's turnover.

And despite problems experienced by some dealers in obtaining the required display at the right time, the record retail trade is in the unique position of receiving this service from record companies free of charge. Many do not appear to fully exploit the situation.

At present the UK display market is

Display: the vital link in the communications chain

capable of placing 1,000 displays in a week.

Parry told *Record Business*: "Over the last two years it has become really important for dealers to increase their own promotional activity. To compete they have got to promote product within their own stores."

Although the vast majority of Topic's display work is for record companies, it does also provide a direct service to dealers, providing they are willing to pay themselves.

This additional service is also available from the London-based Realmbeath, and in general it operates along similar lines to Topic although it does have a rapidly expanding video business. Managing director, Bryan Whitman, is however critical of dealer attitudes towards display.

could make more effective use of displays. Retailers have the final say about exactly what goes into their shops. What they often don't think about is what sort of display is best for them. If a dealer

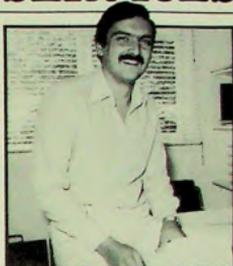
There are a number of other window and in-store display companies operating in Britain with Peter Displays and Ze'ev Displays among them. Peter House, boss of Peter Displays, commented: "Too many people underestimate the value of displays. They are the vital link between consumers and record companies."

Wolf Sauer, managing director of Ze'ev Display, insisted that in-store displays could in many cases be even more important than window displays - especially for multiples.

But he added: "I do feel that the standard of display in this country leaves a lot of room for improvement - it's far more professional on the Continent. Some record companies seem to think that they don't need window displays to sell their product."

Many record retailers argue that they could make greater use of displays if they could be certain of receiving the displays they need at the right stage in a record company campaign.

John Etherington, of Recordsville in Victoria, told *Record Business*: "Sometimes it is a problem. Occasionally it's two or three weeks before we get a display that we want. The only thing to



BRYAN WHITMAN, Realmbeath managing director: "Retailers think of window displays as a bargaining tool with the record companies."

do is keep pestering the record companies."

The advice is the same from Peter House. "Any record dealer having difficulty getting a particular display has just got to go to the record company and put as much pressure as possible on them."

Anyone dubious of the value in sales terms of good, eye-catching window displays may possibly be convinced by the experience of one display company. British Home Stores recently took a record window display in one of its branches for the first time. In the first week sales quadrupled.



TWO EXAMPLES of high-impact window displays designed by Topic (above and right)

dominated by two companies - Realmbeath and Topic Displays. Both work directly for the record companies servicing retail accounts nationwide.

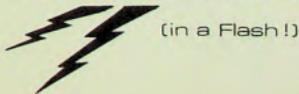
Topic, operating from West London, services many major chains on a regular basis - among them HMV, Harlequin and all Record Merchandisers accounts except Woolworths. Topic's Malcolm Parry claims that the company is now

spends time thinking about it he can plan ahead on his displays taking into account LP releases and tours."

He added: "Dealers also tend to think of displays not as a way of pulling in extra customers but more as a bargaining tool with the record companies. If they have a certain company's display, they can ask for such things as delayed invoices."



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DEALER SERVICES

Battling the eternal security problem

A look at the various security devices now on the market.

SHOP-LIFTING, or "shrinkage" as it is frequently termed, costs the retail trade hundreds of thousands of pounds every year.

Many dealers obviously continue to use the old masterbagging system with the actual discs stored behind the counter—as do various multiples. However according to Woolworth's record buyer, Bob Egerton, even this system creates problems through loss of sleeves.

Nevertheless, for those retailers operating self-service systems, security can be a major headache, continually eroding their profit levels.

Numerous security systems are currently available. At present, the most common are the electronic tag systems, manufactured by such companies as Senelco, simulated or operational tv monitors, standard shop mirrors, security guards and turnstiles coupled with bag checks.

In addition to these basic security systems, there are a mass of security aids on the market that can be applied to record retailing. These include such things as portable alarms, till alarms and

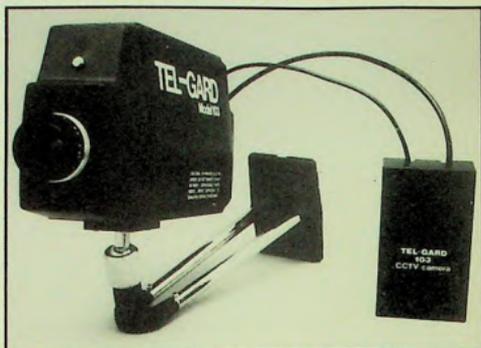
security cables that can be threaded through goods on display—such as electronic equipment.

But which system, or systems, is best suited to the self-service retailer? The experience of the Virgin Records chain over the last few years appears to throw some light on the situation.

Virgin started off by introducing the electronic tag system into its ten self-service outlets, along with a single security guard in each shop. This was eventually dropped in favour of the

"Security is vital for any self-service store. It's incredible how much can be lost without a decent security system"

American system—turnstiles and a security guard, with customers leaving their bags at the door. TV monitors are also now installed in certain Virgin



TEL-GARD tv monitors—£500 for the real thing, £29.50 for a simulated model.

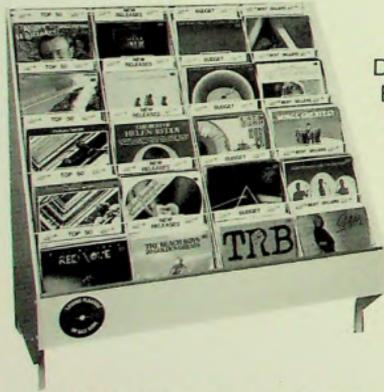
branches.

Virgin's Pete Stone commented: "The tag system seemed the most attractive to us originally. But we found it wasn't fool-proof. People could remove the tags or shield them from the alarms on the way out of the shops."

He went on: "With the new system shrinkage has dropped considerably. As for the tv monitors, they are not watched by staff all the time but only when a suspected shop-lifter is drawn to our attention."

Stone added: "Security is vital for any self-service store—it's incredible how much can be lost without a decent security system."

Cassettes definitely pose the major problem with regard to security. Retailers cannot place them on display and lock-up cassette units tend to reduce sales. However the BPI experiment with cassette cases on display continues in a St Albans shop and an electronic tag that will fit onto cassettes will apparently shortly be available.



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The value of good and original shop fitting

THE LAST few years have witnessed a steadily increasing emphasis being placed on store lay-out, shop design and the different types of browser units available by many dealers and in particular the larger chains.

In short, retailers are beginning to realise that good, original shop-fitting can make an important contribution to a shop's sales and profitability.

The concept that record sleeves sell records has led to the introduction of open dumper bins in various stores,

notably Virgin Records. Harlequin Records has also just replaced many of its old browsers with new units that display 75 per cent of an album sleeve. Many other retailers are moving in this direction.

When EMI Records closed down its shop-fitting operation, it left a sizeable gap in the market. This is now well on the way to being filled by new, and some of the longer established, shop-fitting companies.

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ALBUM REVIEWS

Top 10

CLIFF RICHARD: Rock 'n' Roll Juvenile (EMI EMC3307) Prod: Cliff Richard/Terry Britten

Twenty one years on and Cliff Richard is still rocking with the best of them, a vital contemporary artist always seeking to expand the horizons of the music and his own vocal prowess. The album is not a return to tearaway youthful roots, but the rhythmic punch and essential high energy are subtly evident nevertheless, as befits a seasoned performer who surrounds himself with highly accomplished musicians. The songs by Terry Britten and B.A. Bang Bang Robertson, particularly 'Monday Thru Friday', 'Hot Shot' and 'Language Of Love' are outstanding, as is the smart production by Richard and Britten. The album is a splendid follow-up to his current chart-topping single - included - and is destined for comparably excellent sales.

Top 40

THE SHADOWS: String of Hits (EMI EMC3310) Prod: Shadows

Two recent hit singles, 'Deer Hunter' and 'Argentina' have re-energised the Shadows recording career and this album, released to coincide with a nationwide tour, will reflect the veteran act's enduring popularity. With a couple of exceptions, the album covers familiar material like 'Riders In The Sky', 'Classical Gas', 'Bridge Over Troubled Water' and 'Baker Street', with Hank Marvin's passionate guitar playing showcased against well-arranged backgrounds to which string synthesizer gives added depth.

Top 60

JOHNNIE RAY: 20 Golden Greats (CBS/Warwick PR5065)

Johnnie Ray's over-the-top balladeering of nearly 30 years ago sounds rather conventional by current standards. However, the emotional depths of 'Cry', 'Little White Cloud that Cried' and 'Just Walking In The Rain' plus his ability to swing easily through songs like 'Somebody Stole My Gal' and 'Walking My Baby Back Home', gives his recordings a strongly-defined personality and lasting quality. Chances are that Warwick's tv promotion (once ITV is back on the screen again) will pull enough of his wayback fans into the shops to generate a spell of chart action.

VAN MORRISON: Into The Music (Mercury 9102 852) Prod: Van Morrison

The start of his new recording contract sees Morrison retreating from his soul-jazz dominated direction of recent WEA albums to the more Irish ethnic feel that made his name on classic albums like *Astral Weeks*. There is a heavy emphasis on the rambling voice-music over arrangements featuring fiddle, and mandolin,

and although he revives Tommy Edwards' 'It's All In The Game' it is a lazy, laid back version, where we might have had a searing love song a couple of years ago. On side one he even throws in a couple of really folkie outings 'Troubadours' and 'Rolling Hills' and brings in Robin Williamson to play penny whistle. Something of a departure, but should chart.

Best of the rest

NEIL DIAMOND: Sweet Caroline (MFP 50449)

The title track, 'Cracklin' Rosie' and 'Mr. Bojangles' are duplicated from the 20 *Golden Greats* tv album, but nobody will complain at hearing them again on a top-value, low-price collection. The album includes some other less-exposed winners like the excellent 'Chelsea Morning' and 'And The Grass Won't Pay No Mind', 'Free Life' and 'Thank The Lord For The Night Time.'

IAN DURY, ELVIS COSTELLO, NICK LOWE, WRECKLESS ERIC, LARRY WALLIS: Live Stiffs (MFP 50445)

A real coup for the budget label, that at an exceedingly modest price has an album featuring some of the nation's currently hottest talent. It was recorded during a Stiff tour back in 1977, when the main attractions were still largely unknown, and subsequently released as Live Stiffs Live. Dury's 'Billericay Dickie' is a leering winner, while Nick Lowe tears into 'I Knew The Bride' and 'Let's Eat' with high velocity, and Elvis Costello sings 'I Just Don't Know What To Do With Myself' and 'Miracle Man' with intense conviction.

GARY NUMAN: The Pleasure Principle (Beggars Banquet BEGA 10) Prod: Gary Numan

Having taken the country by storm as Tubeway Army, Gary Numan has dumped the band and follows up with a solo album along much the same lines. He continues his obsession with the inorganic with tracks like 'Airplane', 'Metal', 'Engineers' and 'Films' as well as the new single 'Cars' - all heavily embellished with electronic gadgetry and intoned in his distinctive voice. Former Ultravox man Billy Currie makes some telling contributions on violin but it is machinery that takes a starring role throughout. Somehow Numan's bleak, depersonalised music strikes a chord in 1979. Major sales should be forthcoming.

ALAN PARSONS PROJECT: Eve (Arista SPART 1100) Prod: Alan Parsons

Third and final part of Parsons' trilogy which began with *I Robot* and took in *Pyramid*. Both went gold in America and this one will probably do the same without setting the charts on fire here because Parsons seems to have gone for an AOR rock feel and soft-pedalled the electronics. Beautifully arranged and recorded the album will attract rockshow radio play.

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