

## One in 25 Pop Disks Click; Five Firms Share First 10

### Col. Pulls 12% Hits; Beats Out Capitol & Merc.

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selling success of an item of merchandise can be fairly well gauged before being placed on the market. Several disk companies have researched the practicality of trying to predict hits without any degree of success to date. The speed at which the disk industry operates, together with many unknown factors such as what competition will have available on the market and varying public taste, precludes successful scientific predicting with today's research techniques.

Despite these vagaries, the disk business is a profitable one for many producers. Many disks that fail to achieve best-selling status nevertheless sell enough to get off the "mat."

#### Columbia Hottest Label

The industry-wide hit-producing average for the first six months is 4.2 per cent, there is a great variation among the individual diskeries' marks. Thus far this year Columbia has compiled the highest rating. This firm has issued 179 published sides, of which 22 have hit the chart. This gives the label a hit percentage mark of 12.3 per cent, about the same as the 12 per cent earned during the first four months of this year (The Billboard, April 26).

While Columbia has maintained its early year pace, Capitol has moved up strongly during the last two months. Of its 329 published disk sides released this

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## BMI Canada Buys Rights To "Timber"

VANCOUVER, B. C., July 5.—The song rights to the entire musical score of "Timber," the Canadian musical which opened the Theater Under the Stars season recently, has been purchased by Broadcast Music, Inc. (Canada).

Harold Moon, assistant manager of BMI (Canada), became interested in the new all-Canadian production when he was in Vancouver recently, attending one of the company's radio clinics. After a huddle with the authors, Dolores Claman, David Savage and Doug Nixon, he bought all the music for publication.

## King Shuffles A.&R. Set-Up

HOLLYWOOD, July 5.—Sid Nathan, proxy of King Records, Cincinnati diskery, has reorganized his a.&r. set-up completely, with the new line-up excluding Nathan completely from a.&r. so that he can devote more time to the overall King picture and his music publishing interests. Nathan, who previously had done considerable h.b. and r.&b. a.&r. work, is turning over the rustic cutting to Bernie Perlman, veteran King exec in Cincinnati. Under the new plan, Perlman will add one new h.b. artist per month for the next two years. Newcomer will cut one session, receiving a six-month pact with options. First new artist inked under the plan is Preston Randall, Cincinnati writer.

Ralph Bass, located here, and Henry Glover, who doubles between Cincinnati and New York, will handle r.&b. cuttings. Dewey Bergman continues as pop artists' chief. Both Glover and Bass will make sweeps thru the South on artists' work. Bass has just inked Jimmy Witherspoon, ex-Modern bluesinger, and Big Jay McNeely, honking Coast tenor star.

## SCOREBOARD OF TOP TEN

NEW YORK, July 5.—Of the many disks released during the first six months of this year, the following are the 10 top hits thus far. The ranking of these disks is based on a statistical weighting system determined by the weekly ranking in The Billboard best-seller chart. An explanation of the weighting system is explained in the accompanying story.

1. Wheel of Fortune. Capitol (Kay Starr)
2. Blacksmith Blues. Capitol (Ella Mae Morse)
3. Guy Is a Guy. Columbia (Doris Day)
4. Kiss of Fire. Mercury (Georgia Gibbs)
5. I'll Walk Alone. Coral (Don Cornell)
6. Pittsburgh, Pa. Columbia (Guy Mitchell)
7. Forgive Me. RCA Victor (Eddie Fisher)
8. Delicado. Columbia (Percy Faith Ork)
9. Please, Mr. Sun. Columbia (Johnnie Ray)
10. Blue Tango. RCA Victor (H. Winterhalter Ork)

## Cap's "Wheel," "Blacksmith" 2 Biggest Hits

NEW YORK, July 5.—The Columbia Records has garnered more best-seller chart entries from this year's releases than any other label. Capitol has come up with the year's two biggest disk hits thus far. These are Kay Starr's "The Wheel of Fortune" and "Blacksmith Blues" by Ella Mae Morse. The remainder of the top ten disks is contained in the accompanying box.

Of the pop disks that have been released thus far this year by all companies, 74 sides by 11 labels have hit The Billboard best-selling lists. Based on quantity Columbia leads with 22 entries, followed closely by Capitol with 18. Victor and Mercury have 10 each. Decca has hit with five sides. Coral with three and Derby two. London, MGM, King and BBS have each had one of their 1952 releases appear on the chart. Such disks as Anderson's "Blue Tango" are not included because

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## WANNA LEAD A BAND?

## Kaye Crew Needs Work; Mulling Ork

NEW YORK, July 5.—Key sidekick of the Sammy Kaye band are pulling out of the organization and setting up their own musical aggregation. The newly-formed band, which will be booked by General Artists Corporation, will contain 12 men heretofore with Kaye, including 10 musicians, one arranger, and the manager.

Spokesmen for the men who are leaving Kay said they were severing their connection with the Swing and Sway maestro because of economic reasons. Kaye, they explained has not been seeking work for the band. "In fact," it was pointed out, "Kaye is actually leaving us. In the next 10 weeks we are scheduled for only one week's work. He's ignoring the organization he built."

These troubles of the maestro, incidentally, are in addition to reported difficulties he is experiencing with Local 802, American Federation of Musicians. Kaye's hassle with the local involves alleged violations of traveling band scales. A decision involving a large sum of money, is expected to be rendered by the local's executive board within a short time.

#### Barnett Skeptical

The defection within the Kaye ranks caught the music business unawares. Music Corporation of America vice-president Larry Barnett was skeptical when

## KRENGLE DENIES DISBAND INTENT

NEW YORK, July 5.—Dave Krengle, Kaye's manager, queried in Wichita, Kan. regarding the break-up of the Kaye band, said Kaye had given the men permission to go out and work following the July 19 TV program. Krengle insisted, however, that it was not Kaye's intention to disband. He explained that Kaye has a Steel Pier commitment and would become active in August. Kaye, he claimed, had not had a vacation in years. "I know of no organized movement to form a new band," he said, and added, "We have not sanctioned it."

## CAVANAUGH IN MOVE TO COAST

NEW YORK, July 5.—Thru an error in the headline of a story last week, some readers may have been confused about the new headquarters of Capitol's Dave Cavanaugh. The diskery exec is being transferred to the firm's Hollywood office where he will head up kidkik a.&r. for Capitol.

## Harbach May Remain Head of ASCAP

NEW YORK, July 5.—There's an increasing belief in the music business that Otto Harbach may continue as president of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers for the remainder of this year. The writer and publisher segments of the Society's board of directors remain deadlocked. An election of board members is scheduled for the fall of the year. At that time, it is conjectured, the atmosphere may be more conciliatory. Meanwhile, the movement for a general manager or some high echelon figure to guide the Society has not been shelved. Top publishers this week stated they were in favor of latching on to a "glamorous," high-powered figure.

## Urania Cops La Scala Deal

NEW YORK, July 5.—Urania Records has signed Milan's La Scala Opera Chorus and Orchestra to an exclusive recording contract, noting out other diskeries known to have dickered for a deal with the renowned org. The pact, which will strengthen Urania's bid for a healthy share of the blossoming opera-on-record market, calls for the release of six major operas beginning in the fall, with others to follow later.

Promotion will be heavy, said Norman Chase, Urania managing director, and will include dealer support thru ads and merchandising aids. First La Scala etching to be offered by the diskery will be Verdi's "La Forza del Destino." Others skedded are "Don Pasquale," "Don Carlo," "La Gioconda," "Mephistopheles" and "Sicilian Vespers." All will be offered in complete versions.

## V. Lynn's Wiederseh'n Is Top English Seller

LONDON, July 5.—Vera Lynn's "Auf Wiederseh'n Sweetheart," the No. 1 disk and sheet music seller here, is giving Britain's Tin Pan Alley a shot-in-the-arm, and, as a result, the customary summer slump is not being felt as in the past.

English Decca reports a sale of over 150,000 in the British Isles in the past four weeks since the Lynn record was released. Jimmy Phillips, general manager of Peter Maurice Ltd., claims "Wiederseh'n" sheet music here has sailed over the 100,000 mark during the same period.

At this rate, "Wiederseh'n" may easily eclipse the success of Britain's tremendous hit of last summer, "Too Young," which sold over a half-million in records and a quarter-of-a-million in sheet music.

## Decca to Release Armstrong Album

NEW YORK, July 5.—Decca Records will release next week a new album by Louis Armstrong, the fourth issued by the diskery. Titled "Satchmo at Pasadena," the set was waxed at an actual concert at the Civic Auditorium in Pasadena, January 30, 1951.

## Decca Signs Los Angeles Philharmonic

NEW YORK, July 5.—The Los Angeles Philharmonic was signed this week by Decca Records, marking the first time the diskery has paced a major American orchestra for releases under its Gold Label imprint. With the almost simultaneous signing of the Stadium Symphony Ork, reported last week, Decca has embarked on a program that will place new emphasis on longhair etchings recorded domestically.

First pressings of the Los Angeles ork are due for release in August as part of the diskery's low-cost "4000" series. The initial release will include Enesco's "Roumanian Rhapsody," and Selections "Die Moldau," and Smetana from the latter composer's opera, "The Bartered Bride." All are conducted by Alfred Wallenstein.

## Cap's Holiday Inking, Waxing Sets Record

HOLLYWOOD, July 5.—Capitol Records' execs, Lee Gillette and Alan Livingston, this week completed a whirlwind signing and cutting session of singer Johnny Holiday that was the fastest artist deal ever put over by the local diskery. Bill Burton, who is returning to personal management here (see separate story), contacted the a.&r. duo Friday (27) with an acetate by Chicago singer Danny Parker. Both Cap artist reps were so impressed by Parker's test wax that they decided immediately to have him wax four tunes which the diskery was skedding for early release.

Parker was contacted in Chicago and proffered the services of Dennis Farnon, a Chicago arranger, as his musical director. Farnon is the younger brother of Bob Farnon, the British conductor-arranger, who waxes for London, and Brian Farnon, who bats the house band at the Cheet Parce, Chicago. Both were flown to Hollywood, arriving Sunday night, with Farnon doing the four arrangements by Monday (30) night, when Parker, whose moniker has been changed to Holiday, cut his first session. First two sides, "I'll Forget You" and "The Greatest Sinner of Them All," will be out next week.

## Col. Skeds 3 Regional Meets

NEW YORK, July 5.—Columbia Records will hold three regional sales meetings to spark their fall promotion plans with their distributors during July. First meeting is scheduled for Los Angeles July 19, for the West Coast distributors; next in St. Louis for the Middle West and Southern branches; the last in Atlantic City July 26 for the Eastern distributors. Columbia execs Jim Conkling, Paul Wexler, George Avakian, Mitch Miller, David Openheim, George Hayes, Stan Kawan, Gil McKean, Irving Townsend and Al Earle will attend the meetings.

## "Jezebel" Sparks Big Royalty Suit on Coast

HOLLYWOOD, July 5.—The slices of the royalty melon due to a definite nine assignees and a possible seven additional persons, involved in the 1951 hit, "Jezebel," will get a thro' airing when a suit, filed by Frederick Ohannekian, known professionally as "Freddy" Darian, is introduced sometime in November in Municipal Court here. Darian specifically names Stanley E. Halsted; Hal Blair, BMI and ASCAP music publisher whose Folk Song firm published the Frankie Laine hit

song; Bill Peppers and Howard Barnes. Barnes-Peppers Music, another BMI affiliate; Lee Cohen, local restaurateur; Wayne Shanklin, writer of the tune, and his brother Nat; Dorothy Wilder, sister of the Shanklins; and Maurice Hindin, as participants in the split, and, in addition, five "John Does" and an alleged partner, "Doe & Roe." Some of the specified defendants will be duplicated in this latter list. It's understood.

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