

MONEY'S THE OBJECT

Ballrooms, Parks Want Disk Star
1-Nighters, But Names Balk at Pay.

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up in The Billboard last week via a story about Joni James' drawing 3,500 people and grossing \$5,000 in San Diego, Calif., and grossing \$3,500 in San Luis Obispo, Calif. Assuming that the thrush worked these locations for \$1,500 against 60 per cent, she came out of San Diego with about \$3,000 for the night, while the promoter grossed some \$2,000 out of which he paid rental, promotion, ork, etc. Both the promoter and Miss James should have been quite happy, say bookers.

Ops' Arguments

The operators, of course, are trying to convince the performers that prices of \$1,500 against 60

per cent are too high. They point out that at such a deal, the act goes into percentage when the spot grosses only \$2,500. And this is before the operator has made a nickel and still has the costs of the band, etc., to cover.

It is also being pointed out that appearances of name artists at ballrooms will help hype the dance band business which, in turn, will help disk artists by creating more demand for pop music.

Indie Pop Labels
Push Special DealsSubstantial Concessions to Distribs,
One-Stops in Growing Competition

NEW YORK, June 20. — The growth of over a dozen indie pop labels to a position of strength and comparative stability (The Billboard, June 13), and the resulting intensification of competition in the field has caused many of the indie pop lines to offer substantial concessions to their distributors and to one-stops. Chief reason, naturally, is to get the jump on the competition. Each label strives to have its distributor push that label's new platters ahead of every other label. This is not merely a summer concession, but one that appears to be a year-round proposition. This is standard procedure in the r.&b. field, but it is comparatively recent among the indie pop firms.

More than one indie firm today is offering its platters to distributors at prices 2 to 7 cents below the normal distributor cost. Some firms sell their platters at 36 cents and others at 38 cents in quantity, in spite of the fact that 42 cents is the accepted distributors cost on 78 and 45 r.p.m. waxings.

Another method in use offers the distributor a deal on certain records, one that works about as follows: 500 records free on the first order if the distributor buys an equal amount. And many indies also offer 100 per cent return privilege, or what is commonly called guaranteed sale.

It is true that these concessions are not made on every record released by any of the competition-happy firms, but usually only on those platters that they feel have a real chance to make some noise. The reasoning here is that this will help get the possible big record started and that it helps the distributor, who has a real incentive to go all out on pushing the platter.

At the same time, those firms

who do not make any concession to distributors, or will do it only because they feel the competition makes them do so, claim that these practices hurt, rather than help business. In the first place, they claim, once a diskery gives a distributor an extra break, he will demand the same break on all forthcoming releases. It also gives the distributor a club to use over other diskeries who do not sell for less than 42 cents per platter.

"What is worst of all," stated one key indie exec, "is the gall some of the distributors have after you try to give them a break. It really hurts when a distributor returns the 500 records he bought and asks for credit, and then returns the 500 we gave him for free and asks to be credited on them as well."

It is not only with distributors that indies are making price concessions but, in order to get their wax in preferred slots with one-stops, often by-pass distributors and sell direct to one-stops. Since some one-stops can move as many disks as many distributors, the diskeries figure they are ahead of the game sales-wise. And since they can sell to one-stops at distributor price the one-stops are more than happy to deal directly with the indie. Substantial con-

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PAL CHIEF IS
DISK PLUGGER

NEW YORK, June 20. — Latest entrant into the field of disk promotion is this city's Deputy Police Commissioner James B. Nolan. Nolan heads the Police Athletic League, a police-sponsored activity to keep youngsters busy, entertained and off the streets. He's currently visiting local deejays to get spins for the Henry Jerome ork's M-G-M disk, "Pie Wock A-Jilly Wock." The disk features Jerome's young son and 100 kids who belong to the PAL, as a vocal group. Part of the royalties go to the PAL Fund. Tonight (20), Jerome will have 100 kids as his guests at the Hotel Edison's Green Room where the Jerome ork is working.

SYD NATHAN

Form Letter
Has Pubbers
Reflecting

NEW YORK, June 20. — From Syd Nathan, prexy of King Records, has come a form letter concerning publisher relations with his diskery that has caused some raised eyebrows among publisher recipients. Lecturing the pubbers with his pen, Nathan says:

"Anywhere from 5 to 10 weeks after a record has hit the market, we will receive a letter and a copy of the tune, and the letter will very kindly advise us that the tune has been recorded by so-and-so on such-and-such a label, and that your company thinks it a good idea if we would cover the tune. My suggestion is that whoever in any company sends out this type letter should be immediately promoted — to janitor."

Asserting his knowledge "that some a.&r. men have pet publishers," Nathan advises all "that this will not be tolerated by me. All we ask is to be given the truth and not presented with a tune, told it had not been shown

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Mills to Set Up
New Affiliates
In France, Italy

NEW YORK, June 20. — Jack Mills, chief of the growing Mills Music empire, sails for Europe next week to establish new affiliates in France and Italy. During his two-month stay in England and the Continent, he will also check activities of other company operations, laying special stress on the firm's expanding interests in standard and educational music.

Negotiations leading to the expected early establishment of Mills' French firm have been in progress for about a year. The exec's on-the-spot attention is expected to wind up all pending details. The Italian deal is of more recent origin, but also is expected to be set for active operation soon.

The pubbery this month activated a new firm in Johannesburg, South Africa, called Mills Africa, Ltd. Also set this year were affiliates in Belgium and Canada. The Mills London branch has been in operation since 1950 and is already said to be on a paying basis.

Mills said his foreign firms, in addition to exploiting material abroad, are constantly on the lookout for local material suitable for use in the United States. They are also making it easier for Mills to attract new contract writers here. By virtue of the Mills international network, these writers have more assurance of wider exploitation of their material, according to the pubbery chief. His foreign firms, on occasion, will also handle copyrights for other American publishers, Mills said.

Defense Files
Infringe Denial
On 'Cocktail'

NEW YORK, June 20. — Defendants in the Famous Music suit which claims that the ballad "Pretend" is an infringement of Famous' "Cocktails for Two," yesterday filed a denial of the plaintiff's allegations.

Defendants in the Famous Music suit are Brandom Music, Chicago-based publishing firm; clefters Douglas, Parman and LeVere; Keys Music, and six diskeries, namely, Columbia, Capitol, Victor, Decca, Coral and Mercury.

Lawrence J. Greene, attorney in association with Harold Orenstein, filed the denial on behalf of Keys, Brandom's selling agent and the six diskeries. Greene also seeks to have the Famous action against Brandom dismissed on the ground that the publishing firm is Chicago based and not within the jurisdiction of this suit.

The case is in the jurisdiction of the United States Southern District court.

Plot Revision of
ASCAP Log System

NEW YORK, June 20. — The logging system now in use by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, which has been under growing fire from the publishers and writers, is now undergoing study and evaluation with an eye toward expansion and change. The decision to modify the present logging method was made at a meeting of the Society's board about two weeks ago. It is understood that one of the factors spurring the serious research re the present logging system was due to the continuing logging study made by Hans Lengsfelder, of the Lengsfelder Committee.

At the present time, ASCAP's logging system covers the major networks for national performances and about 170 stations for local performances. Local performances are divided into two classifications, those taken from a fixed list of stations and those taken from a rotating list. Fixed stations and rotating stations are divided as follows: 70 fixed and 100 rotating.

The fixed stations, which are presumably scattered geographically about the country, average about 16 hours of programming per day, or over 100,000 hours of local programming in three months. For the rotating stations ASCAP divides the country into 10 areas, and the 100 rotating stations are divided equally among the 10 zones, 10 stations to each. One station in each area is logged per day, for two and one-half hours per day. This equals 2,250 hours of programming for a 90-day period.

One credit performance is given for each tune logged on fixed stations, and seven and one-half credits for each song logged on the rotating stations. For TV, ASCAP logs all four networks and three local TV stations per day. Each TV plug is worth three credits.

It is understood that ASCAP

ma, add up to 50 stations to its present logging system after the current evaluation has been completed. Serious criticism about the present system has come to ASCAP from those who believe that rotating stations are not covered for a long enough period, that seven and one-half credits are not sufficient and the ratio should be much higher, and that not enough coverage is being given to stations in areas that go for c.&w. or r.&b. tunes.

SAVOY PREXY HAS OWN
DEFINITION OF INERTIA

NEW YORK, June 20. — Herman Lubinsky, president of Savoy Records, this week mailed to his distributors another of his now famous letters in which he gives vent to his thoughts about the record business. Here are excerpts:

"Webster says that inertia is passiveness, inactivity, sluggishness. We, at Savoy, say it is a distributor who's sitting on his ash can, talking about the heat, the weather in general, and the fact that business is dead. We just got a call from one of our distributors who had replaced one of his old salesmen with a new one. The results were astounding. Remember the adage, about the new broom sweeping clean? Maybe that's what some of our distributors ought to do — buy a new broom."

"If you are supporting some of these order-taker, robot salesmen on your payroll, you are losing money. Once in a while the boss gets off his fat fanny and gets out and sells. Possibly the boss doesn't know how to sell; then

he hires someone who does. But if the boss is out playing golf or fishing, how in the h—— do you expect to help sell records? Try fishing on week-ends. It might help.

Bulletin Boards

"We know this letter will be on every distributor's bulletin board. We know too that we will be cussed up and down by the salesmen, but salesmen are like trolley cars. You miss one and another will come along. So don't let that worry you.

"There is no such thing as a 'summer slump.' We have proof of that time and time again. The slump has been started psychologically in the minds of salesmen, sales clerks, stores and distributors. A distributor who rolls up his sleeves and is determined to build up his billing is the man who reaps the golden harvest 12 months a year. He doesn't sell demand merchandise spasmodically; he creates demand so that there is a consistent, continual flow of traffic in and out of his establishment."

Victor Gets
TV Kid Seg

NEW YORK, June 20. — RCA Victor Records has acquired the disk rights to the NBC-TV network kiddie show, "Ding Dong School." One of the highest rated kiddie shows on the air and a strong audience puller during the morning hours, the show is aimed at pre-school children.

Victor will issue a "Ding Dong School" album featuring Miss Frances Horwich, who conducts the TV sessions, on July 17. The album, which will be available as an EP and on 78 r.p.m., will contain several of the stories and every-day experiences described on the show by Miss Horwich.

NAMM CONVENTION NUMBER

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Issue Dated July 18
Distributed July 13
Ad Deadline July 9