

Jukebox programming

COUNTRY, SOUL BID

'71 Strip Sales Show New Xmas 'Standards'

By EARL PAIGE

PITTSBURGH—The belief that jukebox programmers do not buy many new Christmas recordings and instead just dig into existing libraries each season does not correspond to sales figures of title strips here at Star Title Strip Co., according to William Miller and Norman Morgan. Relatively new titles are becoming standards.

An analysis of Star's print orders also bears out the finding of the other major strip printer, Sterling

Title Strip Co., that country and soul Christmas titles are challenging the old evergreens. Sterling president Dick Steinberg noted that Charley Pride's "Christmas in My Home Town" hit No. 5 and the Drifter's "White Christmas" hit No. 10 in his top ten sellers in 1971 (Billboard, Nov. 18).

Curiously enough, neither are among the '71 top sellers mentioned by Star here. The 29 top Star numbers, not ranked by sales volume:

New Challengers
Carpenters, Merry Christmas Darling, A&M 1236
John & Yoko, Happy Xmas (War is Over), Apple 1842
Buck Owens, Christmas Shopping, Capitol 2328
Lynn Anderson, Ding-A-Ling the Christmas Bell, Columbia 45527
Singing Dogs, Jingle Bells, RCA 1020
Stevie Wonder, What Christmas Means to Me, Tamla 54114

Standards
Nat Cole, Christmas Song, Capitol 3561
Frank Sinatra, Mistletoe & Holly, Capitol 3900
Gene Autry, Rudolph, Columbia 33185
Crosby/Andrews, Jingle Bells, Decca 23281
Andrews/Lombardo, Christmas Island, Decca 23722
Bing Crosby, Silent Night, Decca 23777
Bing Crosby, White Christmas, Decca 23778

Earl Grant, Silver Bells, Decca 25703
Crosby/Richards, Silver Bells, Decca 27229
Guy Lombardo, Jingle Bells, Decca 28408
Guy Lombardo, Frosty the Snow Man, Decca 28410
Guy Lombardo, Auld Lang Syne, Decca 28905
Brenda Lee, Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree, Decca 39776
Bobby Helms, Jingle Bell Rock, Decca 30513
Ernest Tubbs, Blue Christmas, Decca 46186
Bobby Helms, Jingle Bell Rock, Kapp 85
Harry Simeone Chorale, Little Drummer Boy, Kapp 86
Royal Guardsmen, Snoopy's Christmas, Laurie 3418
David Seville, The Chipmunk Song, Liberty 55250
Elvis Presley, Merry Christmas Baby, RCA 0572
Elvis Presley, Blue Christmas, RCA 0647
Perry Como, Silent Night, RCA 0810
Harry Simeone Chorale, Little Drummer Boy, 20th Fox 121

See State Assn Jukebox Voice to Public

By SARA LANE

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla.—The Florida Amusement & Merchandising Association (FAMA) was encouraged during talks here by Music Operators of America's (MOA) two top officers to remain strong and organized. They indicated how FAMA and similar groups can disseminate information about the jukebox business to lawmakers and the public.

Fred Granger, executive vice

president, said FAMA is known as a successful organization throughout the United States.

"I gather there is a tremendous interest in keeping FAMA strong," he said. "I know individual members do everything they can to get new people into the organization and I know you have problems with foot-draggers and with people who don't want to join."

He went on to say that the

group is vitally important to MOA and, like other state organizations, plays an integral part in the overall operations of MOA.

"The very existence of a state or national association is good public relations in itself. I think it would be foolhardy not to have a strong group," he stressed. "You know we hate to admit this, but individuals really are not important when you get right down to it. But people are and people make organizations. If you go into a government agency or to present a problem to a state legislator as an individual, you'll get a polite hearing, but usually you don't get the same response as you do when represented by an association."

He explained his remarks were based on experiences he had had when working on the copyright problem in Washington, D.C. Granger mentioned that many senators expressed a profound interest in the MOA.

"In fact," he explained, "one senator took me aside and questioned me at length about the MOA; how long it had been in existence, how many members we had. He wanted to know who owned the jukeboxes and what the routemen did and if they owned the boxes. He was genuinely interested in our operations. He wanted to know if his state had an association and I was happy to report it had. And coincidentally, he knew one of the officers, but he hadn't been aware of MOA functions. There hadn't been enough

'73 Royalty Struggle

By EDWARD MORRIS

NORFOLK Va.—It is a case of good news and bad news about the Federal copyright revision bill, Nicholas E. Allen, counsel to Music Operators of America (MOA), told the Music Operators of Virginia here. He said that the bill had been beaten back for another year but could be headed for passage next year unless operators keep up a vigorous battle against it.

Much of the Senate Judiciary Committee's action on the bill in the recent session was directed toward formulating guidelines for CATV regulation. With this work out of the way, Allen said he believed the committee will be able to turn its attention to the less complex issues, jukebox rules being one.

He judged that the committee was about evenly divided between those for and those against extension of copyright. He urged

their representatives, senators particularly.

Allen reported that the MOA still supports the \$8 compromise jukebox royalty, but opposed the present provisions of the bill which call for a \$1 recording arts royalty, a 50-cent annual jukebox registration fee and periodic review, in addition to the \$8 base.

Industries, Allen noted, are somewhat divided on the new Copyright Tribunal proposed in the revision bill, which will review all statutory rates set in the copyright law every five years, and will referee disputes. CATV interests want rates left out of the bill, but Sen. John L. McClellan (D., Ark.), Senate Copyrights Subcommittee chairman, insists initial rates for CATV copyright fees be set by Congress.

Allen said an "especially omi-

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NSM Into USSR—Few Programmers

By VADIM D. YURCHENKOV

MOSCOW—The lack of jukebox programmers and route personnel is holding back the growth of the industry in this country, according to Bo Billing, Swedish machine wholesaler who now for the first time is selling NSM German-made jukeboxes in Russia.

Billing, of Bo Billing & Co. AB, Sweden, a Bally distributor in Scandinavia and large supplier of amusement coin machines to East European nations and Russia is now also a representative of NSM for the same areas. Concerning possibilities of West European made jukeboxes sales to Russia (practically the only jukeboxes in operation in Russia now are Polish made Melomane and Phonica 100-selection monaural boxes) Billing told Billboard:

"Unfortunately, I think that it will take some more time, before you can count on selling bigger quantities of jukeboxes in the Soviet Union. You have to think about the service problems. It is necessary to have service people going around repairing the boxes and changing records. It is quite a different service to compare with amusement machines in an arcade, where you have about 15-20 machines concentrated in the same place. There you may have a service man permanently. I do not think it is the time yet for such a service organization in the Soviet Union, but I suspect that the market will be growing in the near future. I really hope so."

Seek Lengthy 45 Alternatives

By ANNE DUSTON

CHICAGO—Among various alternatives to the too-long record problem is Mrs. Pat Schwartz's use in Madison, Wis. of five lengthy titles on a rotation basis. She is among those who feel operators cannot outright boycott long records.

Putting the time of play on title strips was seen as a disadvantage, because "customers would play the long ones, just to feel they were getting their money's worth." They also disagreed that longer records should cost more. "You'll get more play out of a popular 4½-minute record than you would a 1-minute record that wasn't popular," Vincent DeMattia, Sagittarius Vending, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts, said.

Some programmers, while deploring the long record, feel that to turn it down is "cutting off your nose to spite your face." Jake Hayes, Gem Music & Vending, Dayton, said, "In a top college location that is pulling in a couple hundred a week, it might make a difference, but so far, I don't feel it has bothered me, but I wouldn't want to see too many."

No programmer experienced problems with location owners, except "if the record is also very repetitive, then they get irate and want it off," said Mike Leonard, Leonard Amusement Co., Adrian, Michigan.

One programmer who disagreed that longer records lose money was DeMattia. "Consider overlap. A customer won't hesitate to play a long record, and if several punch the same song, it only plays once. You bring in more money that way."

DeMattia, who said he would never ask an artist to detract from his musical comment, placed seven of the 21 long records appearing on the charts.

DeMattia would like to see short versions put out specifically for the jukebox industry. "The record industry did it for Top-40 radio

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WEEKLY CHECKING

Iowa Juke Programmer Shops 3 One-Stops to Keep Ahead of Hits

By IRENE CLEPPER

Hit records reflecting national popularity and breaking first in large cities often build more slowly in medium and small markets. Jukebox programmers in these areas, therefore, must often either take a chance or risk one-stops not having a record in stock when it does happen for them. This is the first of a series of articles focusing on the medium and small market programmer and the problems encountered.

SIoux CITY, Iowa—Jukebox operations in all size markets are going to more every-week checking and therefore using more records than ever. This trend, and the problems of staying ahead of the hits while buying in advance in most cases, are nothing new for Bernard Herzoff, veteran owner of Herzoff Sales & Service here.

When a record is removed from a machine, it's catalogued. The Herzoff company keeps from five to 10 copies of every record. "I think our oldest record dates back to 1954," he said. "We buy a lot of gold series to replenish our stock—for the excellent reason that, while we have a lot of, say, original Glenn Miller records, the new copies sound better." Excess records are sold all the way from five for \$1 to \$1 each.

Most of the locations are now up to two-for-a-quarter play—at least in the bars. It's been a bit more difficult in the young people spots, except the posher places such as pizza spots.

Meeting the resistance to two-for-a-quarter has been helped by such strategy as: offering the customer a choice of any of the following combinations—two singles or two albums or one album and one single. The price is still a quarter, but the economy-minded jukebox player can, at his option, get six pieces of music for his two-bits.

Herzoff and one of his competitor-colleagues—the Johnson Company—were the first to go to two-for-a-quarter, just as they were the first in Iowa to go to 10-cent play. In the surrounding areas, three-for-a-quarter is still prevalent, but offering better records and the option of playing two albums for that quarter is breaking in the customers to the new price schedule.

Herzoff does, however, limit the number of albums in any machine to 10.

Tabulation has shown that on a 160-record machine, 10 to 12 records will get the most play; but cutting down the number of records is false economy: "A 100-record machine won't get nearly the play that the 160-record machine will—people have to have that choice."

Picking the right records is a difficult procedure at best, but in Sioux City—as in many communities throughout the

country—a trend often crests here, just as it is ebbing in the bigger cities. "Which means that just when we need the record, it's hard to get—so we have to buy ahead on the strength of Billboard. If the charts and reviews are not pinpoint accurate, we stand to lose a lot of money."

Herzoff services most of his locations once a week, the others twice a month and averages two new records per machine per week. Local radio stations are not particularly helpful in deciding what these records will be. One reason is because each radio station is devoted to just one kind of music—be it country, or high school age or easy listening.

Although Herzoff relies on the business paper listings he has an instinctive feeling for a solid hit. "When I first heard 'Harper Valley PTA,' instead of ordering the 25 records I normally would, I ordered 50," he recalled. He also liked "The Stripper," which started out to be a dud and now has had many re-releases. "And 'Wheels' by Johnny Cash—you can close your eyes and smell the smoke of locomotives going by."

Any western that makes it to the top of the Pop Chart has got to be good, he affirms. Eddy Arnold records get plenty of priority with him, and have for a long time.

Herzoff marks new releases with an X on the strips, but isn't sure that it's a good idea. "Many customers will simply skip past the un-X'd records and miss some good listening."

3 One-Stops

He buys mostly from Davidson One-Stop in Omaha, but also from Acme and Brown Brothers in Minneapolis. But he finds connections so poor that he buys more in Omaha. "I can call Omaha today at 2:30 and have the order waiting for me at 8:30 the following morning," he explained. The price of the phone calls is a factor, too.

(Next, Herzoff's views on defective records, vandalism, background music and the industry's future.)



BERNARD HERZOFF