

Chris Welch



POP SINGLES

FLEETWOOD MAC: "The Man Of The World" (Immediate). "Albatross" was the biggest surprise hit of the year. A blues band at the top of the chart seemed unlikely until one remembered the trad boom days. The blues boom seems to have gone the same way.

It must be rewarding for the group to obtain a wider audience and recognition in this way, and their follow up proves as restrained and attractive as their initial breakthrough, but with a vocal added.

STRAWBERRY JAM: "Per-so-nal-ly" (Pye). This arrived in a sandwich style container and proves to be some sweet soul music.

Strings and brass romp happily and the singer sounds like a cross between Paul Jones and Trini Lopez.

The tune will give everybody the pip.
JOHN WALKER: "Yesterday's Sunshine" (Philips). John goes blue beat and it suits him. Marimba and shuffling drums, plus a soulful vocal chorus could easily get him that elusive hit. Methinks he has hit on the winning streak at last.

BLOOD, SWEAT & TEARS: "You've Made Me So Very Happy" (CBS). Rather naively I tend to think of this as a very good band, somewhat prone to mixing jazz and pop.

So forgive me as in my youthful enthusiasm I proclaim this to the world as a beautiful track from their latest album.

WILLIAM BELL: "Everyday Will Be Like A Holiday" (Atlantic). There seems to be a bit of a war between soul fans and progressives going on in Mailbag of late.

All around cries of "Aretha Franklin has ruined the Weight" go up. Yet soul correspondent Arthur T. Boot reports: "Aretha hasn't lost much weight worrying."

The soul bag still has some goodies for us and this is one of them. (By the way Arthur, I hope you weren't implying Miss Franklin is in anyway plump? "Cor strewh no Guv'nor and that's a fact.")

EDDIE FLOYD: "I've Got To Have Your Love" (Stax). Somewhat throaty vocalising from Floyd as he flips, flops and lies with some hot jive. Rather nasty lyrics, but Steve Cropper sounds good in the background.

Eddie says: "I've got to have your loving right now," as an oik would clamour for a pint of beer. Surely he could exercise a little restraint and say: "Look here old girl, if you could see your way to a little loving, say around 11 pm I would consider that dashed sporting of you." To which she would reply, "yes" or "no" as the mood takes her and depending on the attractiveness of his after-shave, thus avoiding any unpleasantness.

LAPPING

MARY HOPKIN: "Good-bye" (Apple). A Lennon and McCartney song produced by Paul and it sounds devilishly good from the first bars. The second bars aren't bad either.

It has a jolly two-beat and even now I am bouncing up and down in my reviewing deck chair, in danger of spilling a cocktail. Now the sand has got into my sandwiches as Mary sings "doo doo doo" in unison with the lilt guitar, and I can feel the tide lapping at my feet.

Yes, it's a sunshine super record, that brings to mind visions of lanolin shampoo, teeth, sports cars and Z-I-I-N-G the wonderful drink!

KATE: "Shout It" (CBS). "It is a happy, catchy, clever little song which latches on to you like a limpet" says the great PR in the sky.

Well, I'll go along with that. Production is cleverly done, with lots of interesting side effects in the powerful backing to Jerusalem-born vocalist Hatch Garabedian.

KATHY KIRBY: "I'll Catch The Sun" (Columbia). Busy trying to insert three ten newpences for nineteen cigarettes in a pub machine recently, I was suddenly struck by the thought: "What's happened to our Kath? What we want is a nice emotional ballad filled with romance and tender strings."

And like magic... here 'tis! Ten newpence — I ask you. It's as daft as Charing Cross station booking office, in the rush hour.

SYLVIA McNEILL: "The Recipe" (RCA Victor). Singularly groovy drum and guitar intro to Sylvia's powerful voice, that reminds me strangely of Stevie Winwood, make up a bed sock it to me hit.

The beat is slow and heavy, the brass shouting and Sylvia is obviously a girl with success written on her soul. Hang-up ending is not as inspired as the intro.

SURGE

VANILLA FUDGE: "Shotgun" (Atlantic). If you own a block of flats that need demolishing, or a small island you want in-

vaded, call up the Fudge. The word "heavy" was created for them. Drums and organ surge behind a screaming guitar and the singers sound as if they are grappling with the Beast from 20,000 Fathoms at the bottom of New York harbour. Bullets are useless against them!

HANK B. MARVIN: "Good-night Dick" (Columbia). Hank B. Marvin is no relation to Jiving K. Boots, but the latter could well be the Dick referred to in the title.

The beat is as Army boots marching across a corrugated iron roof, and the guitar is fast and furious. Old Hank can still show these new guitar heroes a

thing or two. Very exciting and a hit one hopes.

DUBLINERS: "Navy Boots" (Major Minor). Ronnie Drew singing "live" at the Albert Hall, the song is about a navy who kept his boots on too long is suitably saucy, without much chance of being a hit.

Over to folk expert: Lurching Jed Zeppelin: "Well, mdear, he sounds like he's got the microphone up his nose."

PRETTY

FLOWER POT MEN: "In A Moment Of Madness" (Deram). In a moment of

madness I placed this record on the turntable, and in a moment of madness I listened to every bar, instead of concentrating on improving my manners, polishing my shoes, paying bills outstanding to the book of the month club and having three back teeth filled.

Quite a pretty noise, without being actively offensive and one to reign in the chart for... let me see... yes, 214 days exactly, excluding Easter Monday.

RICHIE HAVENS: "Oxford Town" (Big T). Richie with jews harp accompaniment and a bouncing off beat on "Electric Havens." As a man once said of Johnny Cash, Havens' voice "sounds lived in."

The acoustic guitar, clipping clavies and booming bass complement the voice with a mixture of menace and humour.

WRITHES

RICHARD HARRIS: "One Of The Nicest Things" (Stateside Dunhill). James Webb writes and Richard Harris writhes, once more with feeling. More



FLEETWOOD MAC: reached a wider audience with "Albatross"

NO SURPRISES FROM THE MAC THIS TIME

and more singles are becoming trailers for albums.

It is obviously better to listen to the Webb-Harris combination fully in suitable surroundings with a sympathetic audience of gramophone music lovers.

Romance sounds awful at 11.30 in the morning, especially if you have been indulging in Antiquary, Champagne and Martini, the evening previous.

But twixt midnight and five o'clock, in the company of a romantic host, even the most hardened cynic must admit to being charmed by their work. So forgive me as I down an aspirin in the sunlight and glower: "Dress and fol-de-rol."

SMASH

SAND PEBBLES: "Love Power" (Track).

Anxious voices occasionally bleat plaintively in my telephone earpiece: "I say will you review my record this week? If not I shall go over to IT and OZ." To which I respond, "How would you like a glass of cheap, unpalatable sherry thrown full in your face?"

But the gentleman from Track records, was full of charm when he courteously called up for a review for this ancient reissue of a great old soul record, which could easily be a smash hit.

JOHN WESLEY RYLES: "Kay" (CBS). Shucks, this is the sad story of a man (probably six foot three, with stubble on his chin), who takes his sweetheart (probably six foot three with stubble on her chin), to Nashville (the big city) and loses her to the glitter of show business.

He is left driving a cab through the streets, envying happy folks all around.

John is expected here for the Country And Western Festival at Wembley Stadium on April 5. By which time he should have had a hit, and we can all cheer "yihah" together.

EIRE APPARENT: "Rock 'N Roll Band" (Buddah). Produced by Jimi Hendrix and arranged by Vic

Briggs, this rocks mightily, and sounds like the Troggs in Hamburg in 1965.

The vocals are horribly nasal and may be intended as a joke but simply ask for people to swear loudly and snatch the arm off the turntable. A nasty sound.

FRENCH REVOLUTION: "Nine Till Five" (Decca). If anything could have stopped the horrors of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror, this sleep inducing interlude of stark boredom could easily have seized-up the guillotine workers by lulling them unconscious.

JUDY COLLINS: "Someday Soon" (Elektra). This is Judy Collins month, so the fans are clamouring.

Stevie Nicks plays electric bass, James Burton and Buddy Emmons are on guitars, on this beautiful track, from her album "Who Knows Where The Time Goes," which should purge the chart of pub singers once and for all... if it got played.

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