MCA puts hold on Nirvana releases

MCA has scrapped its Nirvana release schedule following the death of frontman Kurt Cobain.

MCA commercial director John Pearson says the label has been devastated by news of the 27-year-old's death in Seattle last Friday. The release of the Nirvana single Penny Royal Tea on May 8, 1994, has been scrapped and all further releases postponed indefinitely.

Sales rocketed on the Saturday immediately after Cobain's death, but MCA has made no attempt to cash in on the tragedy, Pearson insists.

All 8,000 Nirvana units held at the company's distributor BMG ran out by Monday.

"We stock was available all last week and we will increase manufacture, but only to meet the demand that already exists," adds Pearson.

"We do not plan any special campaigns or promotions, such an idea would be distracting and distasteful," an MCA spokesman says the label is distancing itself from a sales sheet issued to retailers by Pinnacle Imports, which highlighted 12 Cobain-linked titles - including import CDs of Lithium and Smells Like Teen Spirit for £4.99, a limited pink vinyl LP of Bleach for £8.85, and a Come As You Are picture disc for £19.99 - beneath a picture of Cobain, his wife Courtney Love, their daughter, and the legend "Kurt Cobain - RIP".

Pinnacle Imports managing director David Peck denies his company is attempting to cash in on the tragedy, insisting: "We were promoting Nirvana before the tragedy, and we will continue to promote Nirvana.

"We are going to downplay the tragedy, and we are going to concentrate on the music."

MCA has replaced a planned Elton John Unplugged with a Nirvana session last weekend and turned over the first hour of its Alternative Nation show last Tuesday night to back-to-back Nirvana videos. MME and Melody Maker includes last week's issue at the 11th hour with covers commemorating the late singer, while Select, Q and Viva are all planning tributes for their next issues.

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In tribute to Kurt Cobain, Radio One is to broadcast the three sessions Nirvana recorded for the station in 1989, 1990 and 1991 on its Evening Session from Monday to Thursday this week. John Peel will repeat another exclusive session recorded by the Seattle band in November 1991.

MTV has scrapped plans to broadcast the first hour of its Alternative Nation show last Tuesday night to back-to-back Nirvana videos. MME and Melody Maker reproduce last week's issue at the 11th hour with covers commemorating the late singer, while Select, Q and Viva are all planning tributes for their next issues.

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Hendrix Jr sues over rights

Jimi Hendrix Jr., the son of the legendary guitarist, is suing his grandfather Al Hendrix over rights to the Hendrix estate. The first lawsuit seeks confirmation from a California district court of a successful Swedish paternity suit, which would give Jimi Jr the rights to the assets of Hendrix's estate. The second lawsuit alleges Al Hendrix and his representatives concealed information to deprive Jimi Jr of his rightful legal status. Al Hendrix confirms that he will fight the lawsuit. The actions follow a year after Al Hendrix lodged lawsuits against Interit BV, Elber BV and Bella Gudive over rights to the assets of the Hendrix estate. The cases are due to reach the courts next year.

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Shocked case goes to High Court

Michelle Shocked's five-year legal battle against her former manager Martin Goldschmidt will continue with a High Court hearing in April next year. The London-based singer-songwriter launched an action against Cooking Vinyl boss Goldschmidt in 1993, claiming breach of management agreement, but this was struck out in 1993. Goldschmidt won a counter-claim in 1992, and was awarded damages, with Shocked ordered to pay £75,000. But Shocked successfully applied for the judgment to be set aside and has paid £163,000 into the court to resurrect her case.

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Deceptive boss to manage DJs

Deceptive Records' general manager Tony Smith has launched Misappropriate Management, with Radio One DJ Steve Lamacq and Kiss FM's Dave Pearce as its first two clients. Smith will run the company in tandem with Deceptive, the label part-owned by Lamacq. Smith, who left RCAs' marketing department in January, says the management company will represent its clients for voice-over, radio and TV work.

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Fire aims sampler at Japan and US

Fire is issuing a 22-track sampler to highlight its acts and catalogue in the US and Japan. The album, which includes tracks by artists such as Thump, Gigolo Aunts, Blue Aeroplanes and Pulp, is also being released on mail order, priced £5. Copies are available from 21A Maury Road, London N16 7BP or on 081-806 9322.

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Taylor moves to BMG

Taylors has moved its label distribution to BMG and changed its name to Target Sales and Marketing. The company, which retains its office in Beckenham, Kent, will continue to offer marketing and sales.