6/6/85

Record Review

Bob Woodhead

This Saturday "30 Years Of Rock" (Radio 1, V.H.F. stereo, 1 p.m.) looks at the year that was probably the best and most exciting in pop's brief history, 1963. One of the top groups of that year were Gerry and the Pacemakers, and their leader Gerry Marsden has gathered together a team of celebrities to re-record his third No. 1 hit "You'll Never Walk Alone" under the name "The Crowd."

As you have probably seen on TV, all profits from the disc are going to the Bradford Disaster Appeal.

For those of you who were depressed about Britain's failure in last month's Eurovision, it is worth noting that in the 30 contests we have had four winners, ten runners-up, and two third-placings. If you use these statistics on a points-system, Britain leads with 34 points, France is second with 26 points, and Luxembourg third with 16. So we are clearly the most consistent country.

It would seem that Wham are now just as popular in America as they are here; their "Everything She Wants" has given them a third U.S. No. 1.

Daryl Hall and John Oates have followed-up "Method Of Modern Love" with a new 45 entitled "Out Of Touch." The 12-inch version features their original 1980 version of Paul Young's recent hit, "Every Time You Go Away."

Sister Sledge, who have recorded some fine disco songs in the past, have really blown it with "Frankie" . . . a ghastly, naive single. In contrast, Propaganda, who are new to the scene, are racing up the charts with the excellent "Duel" (on ZTT), and this group could be in line for a great future if they continue to pump out great sounds like this.

Other new singles to look out for are Kool and the Gang's classy, "Joanna"-type ballad called "Cherish," and Bruce Springsteen's double-A-side, "I'm On Fire"/"Born In The U.S.A."

On the album front, David Cassidy has released his first for more than ten years. He works with Alan Tarney (famous for his collaboration with Cliff Richard in the early-80's) on this set of commercial pop-songs called "Romance."

The Style Council have released "Our Favourite Shop," featuring 14 cuts that only took ten weeks to record. The LP includes the recent hit "Walls Come Tumbling Down." Eight of the tracks are by Paul Weller. Ex-Led Zeppelin singer, Robert Plant, has also released a highly-acclaimed third solo-LP called "Shaken'N'Stirred."

Next week I shall be putting Bryan Ferry's "Boys And Girls" album under the microscope.

LP CHART

1, Brothers In Arms (Dire Straits).
2, Out Now (Various).
3, Now Dance (Various).
4, Songs From The Big Chair (Tears For Fears).
5, Best Of The 20th Century Boy (Marc Bolan and T. Rex).
6, No Jacket Required (Phil Collins).
7, Hits 2 (Various).
8, Be Yourself Tonight (Eurythmics).
9, Low Life (New Order).
10, Best Of The Eagles.

13/6/85

Record Review

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Phil Fearon and Galaxy, who released one of the best British soul/dance albums of 1984, are back with a completely new 45 this week, called "You Don't Need A Reason." It is certainly the best single of the week, and I cannot wait for the next LP.

One of the most popular disco records of the spring was Curtis Hairston's "I Want Your Lovin'," and he follows it up with the similarly titled "I Want You (All Tonight)."

Other new 45s include a comeback for Squeeze on "Last Time Forever," and another collaboration from Messrs. Oakey and Moroder in "Goodbye Bad Times," taken from a forthcoming album by the two gents. Phil Oakey is also busy working at home in Sheffield, preparing the next Human League LP.

It is pleasing to note that in the American top Ten at the end of last month, there were eight British acts . . . a trend reminiscent of the mid-1960's.

Local resident Bryan Ferry releases his first album for three years. Entitled "Boys And Girls" (on EG Records), it took two years using 30 musicians to put together, at a cost of half a million pounds!

The best feature of the disc is undoubtedly the guitar-playing, which is hardly surprising when you look at the list of guest-musicians. Three of the best guitarists appear . . . namely Nile Rodgers (ex-Chic), Dave Gilmour (ex Pink-Floyd), and Mark Knopfler (Dire Straits). Clearly the LP marks a continuation of Bryan's Roxy Music work, as can be heard on "Sensation," a good dance number, and "Don't Stop The Dance," an uptempo, commercial song,that could well be issued as a single.

But there is variety in the form of "Valentine," which has a laid-back, reggae rhythm, and "Windswept," played in a haunting, Seventies-rock style. It features a good middle-passage on the guitar, but this cut is not one of his most appealing. Overall, though, "Boys And Girls" should get the nod from record-buyers.

Soon to be released on the Glass label is a budget-priced mini-album by Northampton group the Jazz Butcher, called "Sex And Travel." Best of the eight tracks is "Holiday," with its percussion sounding like a typewriter. "Red Pets" reminds us of late-Seventies' punk taken at a frantic pace, but it is followed by "Only A Rumour" which immediatley calms you down. On Side 2 "Walk With The Devil" stands out thanks to some fine guitar-playing. The record company's press-release describes the record as "British pop beat music at its most charming," and I tend to agree!

Island Records are currently issuing a series of "Reggae Greats" LPs, and from those I have listened to so far I would recommend the one by Black Uhuru, featuring their best cuts recorded between 1980 and 1983.

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