

Record review

Bob Woodhead

The male half of Abba, Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus are the third most successful songwriters of all-time. "I Know Him So Well" by Barbara Dickson and Elaine Paige has been their tenth composition to reach No. 1, and only John Lennon (26 chart-toppers) and Paul McCartney (25) stand ahead of them.

It is also the second No. 1 hit for Tim Rice as a composer, eight years after "Don't Cry For Me Argentina."

At the half-way stage of the 1980's I can reveal that Shakin' Stevens is the decade's most prolific hitmaker so far. The only other acts to hit the charts with 15 or more singles in this period are Paul Weller (Jam and Style Council) and Madness.

Shaky is no stranger to this area, having performed at Chichester's Bishop Otter College as long ago as 1975, a full five years before his first hit "Hot Dog."

It seems almost certain however, that Cliff Richard's tally of 45 hits in

the 1960's will never be beaten.

Moving up to date with Paul Young, who has released a new single this week, entitled "Every Time You Go Away," a song which tends to drift aimlessly without much melody. As always though, Paul gives a powerful vocal performance, which should ensure that his successful run continues.

Nik Kershaw should also continue his hitmaking streak with "Wideboy," which is released on Monday, while UB40 have issued a new double-A-sided single "The Pillow"/"I'm Not Fooled".

Billy Connolly fans will be pleased to know that he has released "Super Gran" (the theme to the ITV series) on a single. Other new 45's include Hazell Dean's "No Fool (For Love)" taken from her debut LP "Heart First," Tina Turner's "I Can't Stand The Rain," and David Cassidy's "The Last Kiss." The latter is aiming for a comeback after "retiring" from the scene in his early twenties in 1976!

Tears for Fears release a new LP this Friday, called "Songs From The Big Chair." Among the nine tracks recorded at their Bath studio are the hit singles "Mother's Talk" and "Shout."

They have followed the Thompson Twins' example by releasing a prolonged cassette-version, but the bonus tracks will only be available in limited-edition.

More good news this week for the Ethiopian Famine Appeal, with the recording of "Starvation" featuring many of the top Midlands reggae and ska acts like UB40, masterminded by Jerry Dammers (of the Specials.)

Listeners to BBC Radio Sussex were recently asked to vote for their favourite records of all-time, and the station compiled a Top 100.

These were the ten most popular discs: 1. Bridge Over Troubled Water (Simon & Garfunkel), 2. I Love You Because (Jim Reeves), 3. Memory (Elaine Paige), 4. Sailing (Rod Stewart), 5. A Whiter Shade Of Pale (Procol Harum), 6. Memory (Barbra Streisand), 7. My Way (Frank Sinatra), 8. Annie's Song (John Denver), 9. One Day At A Time (Lena Martell), and 10. When I Fall In Love (Nat King Cole). Next week — No's 11 to 20.

LP CHART

1. Meat is Murder (The Smiths.)
2. Born in the USA (Bruce Springsteen.)
3. Alf (Alison Moyet.)
4. Diamond Life (Sade.)
5. Agent Provocateur (Foreigner.)
6. The Age of Consent (Bronski Beat.)

NIGHTCLUB CHART

1. Solid (Ashford and Simpson.)
2. Yah mo b there (James Ingram and Michael McDonald.)
3. 1999 (Prince.)
4. Say Yeah (The Limit.)
5. Love and Pride (King.)
6. Personality (Eugene Wilde.)

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The music world has been mourning the sad loss of Matt Monro, who recently died at the age of 54.

The former London bus driver shot to fame in 1960 with his hit record 'Portrait of my Love,' and he went on to enjoy a further 12 chart hits between 1961 and 1973. The most successful of these was 'Walk Away,' which reached number four in October, 1964 and spent five months on the chart. But he will be remembered most for the film-themes "From Russia with Love" and "Born Free."

For those wishing to catch up on his work I would recommend "Heartbreakers" (on EMI), a 1980 compilation which sold more than 100,000 copies at the time.

John Fogerty, singer/songwriter with Creedence Clearwater Revival, has made a comeback after 15 years away from the scene, with a worthy new single "The Old Man Down the Road," while Jimmy Page (formerly of Led Zeppelin) and Paul Rodgers (formerly of Free) have formed a new group called The Firm, whose debut release is "Radioactive."

Meanwhile, Prince follows up "1999" with the double-A-side "Let's Go

Crazy"/ "Take Me With You." The 12-inch version will feature an extra track called "Exotic City," which is not available on any other record.

Other chartbound singles include Grandmaster Flash's "Sign of the Times" (on Elektra), and "Who Comes to Boogie" by Little Benny and the Masters (on Bluebird), which is currently a great favourite in the clubs.

Phil Collins has released his third solo album "No Jacket Required," and among the ten tracks is the hit single "Sussudio" and the B.B.C. 2 theme to "Inside Out."

Album of the week definitely has to be the Smiths' "Meat is Murder" (on Rough Trade, Rough 81). This Manchester group have already made their mark with two LP releases in 1984, and hit singles, the biggest of which was "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now."

Their melancholy style has prompted criticism, but as they said on radio and television last week, "So many pop artists fail to use their powerful position to sing about their views and beliefs." They went on to say that while this LP may not convert listeners into vegetarians, at least it will

make them think hard when they are eating meat.

Highlights include "The Joke Isn't Funny Any More," "Headmaster Ritual," and the uptempo "Nowhere Fast" which goes some way towards dispelling all "the gloom and doom" criticism.

The best-selling LP during the calendar year of 1984 was Lionel Ritchie's "Can't Slow Down," followed by the compilation "Hits Album," with Bob Marley's "Legend" in third place. 1983's top seller "Thriller" by Michael Jackson was still selling well enough in 1984 to come in sixth place.

LP CHART

1. Born in the USA (Bruce Springsteen.)
2. Alf (Alison Moyet.)
3. Agent Provocateur (Foreigner.)
4. Hits out of Hell (Meat Loaf.)
5. The Barbara Dickson Songbook (Barbara Dickson.)
6. Steps in Time (King.)

NIGHTCLUB CHART

1. Solid (Ashford and Simpson.)
2. Say Yeah (The Limit.)
3. Love and Pride (King.)
4. Yah Mo B There (James Ingram and Michael McDonald.)
5. 1999 (Prince.)
6. Loverboy (Billy Ocean.)