

Record Review Bob Woodhead

Prince began the year on the crest of a wave but interest rapidly declined as the months went by, while Cyndi Lauper disappeared altogether.

Michael Jackson's absence from the scene can be explained however: he is busy working on his next album. Similarly Frankie Goes To Hollywood are scheduled to release a new 45 and LP early in 1986. They failed to have a fourth successive No. 1 hit when they issued "Welcome To The Pleasure Dome" in March. Amazingly their chart career followed the same pattern as that of Gerry And The Pacemakers who had three No. 1 hits and reached No. 2 with their fourth single "I'm The One."

Gerry Marsden made history himself in 1985 becoming the only performer to record his No. 1 song and take it to the top a second time. The record in question was "You'll Never Walk Alone" which he origi-

nally recorded with the Pacemakers in 1963 and again with the Crowd last year.

Duran Duran had a big hit with the James Bond theme "A View To A Kill" and they also split into two separate formations to enjoy success as the Power Station and Arcadia. It was a good year for established groups like UB40, Foreigner and Simple Minds, and for newcomers like Go West, King, Jaki Graham and Paul Hardcastle whose "19" was one of the more unusual chart-toppers. Mike Oldfield's name was eventually added to the songwriting credits as it sounded so similar to a passage from his "Tubular Bells." The song also became the best comedy disc of the year when it was recorded by the Commentators under the title "19 Not Out!"

The lass from Liss, Vikki Watson, took the U.K. to fourth place in the Eurovision Song Contest with her song "Love Is." Norway won the competition for the first time and

that country enjoyed its best-ever year on the international pop scene, mainly thanks to a A-Ha who topped the U.S. charts and were No. 2 here with "Take On Me." British artists continued their domination of the American charts scoring with several No. 1 hits, particularly during the summer.

The year just passed has been interesting, with plenty of excitement and some enjoyable sounds. Here is my choice of the best albums of 1985:

1. Now - The Christmas Album (Various).
2. Promise (Sade).
3. This Kind Of Love (Phil Fearon And Galaxy).
4. Mr. Bad Guy (Freddie Mercury).
5. Chinese Wall (Philip Bailey).
6. Sky Blue (James Last Orchestra).
7. Like A Virgin (Madonna).
8. Low Life (New Order).
9. Meat Is Murder (Smiths).
10. Youthquake (Dead Or Alive).

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By reaching number one with "Merry Christmas Everyone", Shakin' Stevens equalled the Jam's record of four chart-toppers in the Eighties. Band Aid's charity disc climbed to number three on re-release and it has now sold 3.5 million copies in this country.

Aled Jones and Peter Auty have both been in the charts with rival versions of "Walking In The Air" making it the first time that two school choirboys have found success with the same song.

Slade's "Merry Xmas Everybody" has been a hit on a record six separate occasions, including each of the last five festive seasons. Keith Harris and Orville's abysmal version of "White Christmas" has become a seventh interpretation of the Irving Berlin song to enter the charts and this is a record for any composition.

To complete the statistics of a record-breaking Christmas, "Now - The Christmas Album" became

the first LP of festive songs to reach number one in the album chart. With sales going above the 750,000 mark it became the best-selling LP of seasonal tunes ever released.

Hot Chocolate's next record will be "Heartache Number Nine" and it will be in the shops in February. They did not issue any 45s last year so their run of 15 consecutive years of chart hits came to an end. This was a record run for a group although Elvis Presley charted at least one disc every year since 1957 as a solo performer.

Finally some postscripts to my 1985 Review. Madonna sold nearly three million singles in this country last year (which was more than twice as many as anyone else), and her "Into The Groove" was America's top 12in. single of the year.

The top Soul disc in the States was "Rock Me Tonight" by Freddie Jackson and the top Pop record was

"We Are The World" by USA for Africa which sold more than four million copies in that country.

The runner-up was "Careless Whisper" by George Michael and the top LP was Bruce Springsteen's "Born In The USA" which appeared in the Top Ten for all 52 weeks of the year.

In Britain the year's top Disco record was "Twilight" by Maze featuring Frankie Beverly. Here is a list of the ten best selling singles of last year:

- 1 The Power of Love (Jennifer Rush).
- 2 I Know Him So Well (Paige and Dickson).
- 3 Into The Groove (Madonna).
- 4 19 (Paul Hardcastle).
- 5 Frankie (Sister Sledge).
- 6 Dancing In The Street (Bowie and Jagger).
- 7 Move Close (Phyllis Nelson).
- 8 Take On Me (A-Ha).
- 9 A Good Heart (Feargal Sharkey).
- 10 Love and Pride (King).