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Record Review

Bob Woodhead

● **A-Ha — their second album is out now.**

One of the most successful groups this year has been the Norwegian trio A-Ha, and they have just released their second album called "Scoundrel Days."

The ten tracks make pleasant listening but none of them are truly captivating. The group certainly know how to write and produce good pop-songs but the formula never seems to change so it can only be a matter of time before record-buyers will call time on them.

On Side One "I've Been Losing You" (the recent Top-Tenner) is probably the winning song, although "October" is an interesting ballad. The second side gets off to a fine start with the commercial, toe-tapping "Cry Wolf," a powerful number that has all the ingredients of a future hit single. "We're Looking For The Whales" and "Maybe Maybe" also have plenty of melody and are well worth a listen.

In the last few years, Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark have released a string of impressive albums and "The Pacific Age" adds to the list. The best songs on this latest piece of work are the melodic "Shame" at the end of Side One and the mournful "Flame Of Hope" on Side Two. This first-rate vocal number should have been made into a much longer track. Also worth listening to is "Southern" which has excerpts from some of Dr. Martin Luther King's famous speeches playing behind an effective beat.

Offering some light relief from the flood of pop and soul albums being released this Autumn is "Spit In Your Ear" by Spitting Image (on Virgin). This LP includes recordings of some of the best sketches, songs and impressions from the three years of Central Television's marvellous puppet-series.

Needless to say there is a version of the chart-topping "Chicken Song," and other rib-ticklers include Two Party System, Naming The Royal Baby, Juan Carlos Meets The Queen, Coleman Peaks, Da Do Run Ron and The Price Is Right . . . which just leaves me to say you have been warned!!!

Since November 1984 every Madonna single has reached the British Top Five. Her latest "True Blue" is her third chart-topper and her 12th consecutive Top Five hit as well as being the highest-ever new entry by a female artist (having entered at No.3).

LP CHART

1. Graceland (Paul Simon).
2. Scoundrel Days (A-Ha).
3. Silk And Steel (5 Star).
4. True Blue (Madonna).
5. South Pacific (Various).
6. Revenge (Eurythmics).
7. Word Up (Cameo).
8. Somewhere In Time (Iron Maiden).
9. Now That's What I Call Music 7 (Various).
10. Cummunards.