

The best sellers ^{87/90}



In 1985 Dire Straits had the best seller of the year.

Record review

1985 will undoubtedly go down in pop-history as the Year Of Charity. The Christmas 1984 Band Aid record – the brainchild of Bob Geldof, started the bandwagon rolling, and he went on to mastermind the greatest single event of the Rock-Era – “Live Aid” which took place on Saturday July 13. The concerts at Wembley and Philadelphia were beamed by satellite to the largest global TV audience in history – raising a fortune to help the starving. Most of the major stars participated with 20-minute slots allocated for their performance.

The majority of the critics (including myself) felt that the Wembley performances and organisation had the edge, and I agreed with the general verdict that Freddie Mercury (at the age of 38) and his band Queen stole the show with a stunning stage presence and antics that had the huge “live” audience in the palm of his hand! U.S.A. For Africa’s “We Are The World” sold four million singles in America to become the best-selling 45 of the decade State-side even though it was only No. 1 for four weeks. America’s longest-running No. 1 of the decade was Olivia Newton John’s “Physical” which was top for 10 weeks in 1981, but it only sold half as many singles as U.S.A. For Africa.

In this country Madonna had eight top ten hit singles within the calendar year of 1985 – a unique achievement for any artist, and she went on to become the first female to be the top selling artist in 33 years of pop charts, repeating this feat the following year. Her most memorable work of 1985 was her role in the movie “Desperately Seeking Susan” featuring the third best-selling single of the year “Into The Groove”. In second place was the top selling female duet of all-time “I Know Him So Well” by Elaine Paige (from Bognor Regis) and Barbara Dickson, and in first place was “The Power Of Love” by Jennifer Rush which took a record 16 weeks to reach No. 1, and was the last record of the decade to achieve one million sales.

Women enjoyed their best year to date in the charts, and this trend continued for the re-

maining years of the 1980s with 1988 proving to be their best year. The leading ladies in 1985 included Phyllis Nelson (whose “Move Closer” just missed the Top 80 of the 80s), Sade, Tina Turner (who made a great comeback the previous year), Kate Bush and Annie Lennox of the Eurythmics. Some of the big groups of the year included Norway’s most successful exports A-Ha, Twickenham’s Go West, Glasgow’s Simple Minds, and Foreigner featuring Mick Jones of Portsmouth.

1985 was the year when albums started to become more important than singles. On May 13 Dire Straits led by the brilliant guitarist and songwriter Mark Knopfler, released the awesome “Brothers In Arms” which became the best seller of the year. It nearly repeated the feat in 1986, but Madonna’s “True Blue” surpassed it in the final week of the year. It was No. 1 for 14 weeks, a longer period than any other album in the Eighties, and it went on to sell 3.2 million to become the No. 1 seller of all-time. Featuring an exquisite blend of spine-tingling ballads and rock classics, the album is an essential part of any collection. Other massive selling L.P.s of 1985 included “No Jacket Required” by Phil Collins, “Born In The U.S.A.” by Bruce Springsteen and one of my favourites – “Songs From The Big Chair” by Tears For Fears.

These were positions 41 to 50 in the Top 80 of the 80s (all reached No. 1 unless stated):

- 41 Land Of Make Believe (Bucks Fizz) 1981/2
- 42 Nothing’s Gonna Stop Us Now (Starship) 1987
- 43 Vienna (Ultravox) No. 2 in 1981
- 44 Seven Tears (Goombay Dance Band) 1982
- 45 Freedom (Wham!) 1984
- 46 One Day In Your Life (Michael Jackson) 1981
- 47 Making Your Mind Up (Bucks Fizz) 1981
- 48 Super Trouper (Abba) 1980
- 49 Birdie Song (The Tweets) No. 2 in 1981
- 50 19 (Paul Hardcastle) 1985

Bob Woodhead.