A sluggish chart this week, largely on account of the arctic conditions which caused singles sales to dip by 23 per cent. But even the fact that Scotland was, for once, less badly affected than England wasn’t enough to save Scots act The KLF, who surrendered leadership of the singles survey to the Simpsons’ ‘Do The Bartman’. Considered by many (myself included) to be one of the year’s best singles, Kylie Minogue’s ‘What Do I Have To Do?’ inches up to number six, and New Kids On The Block’s ‘Games’ is similarly slow-moving, advancing from number 17 to number 14. Each of Kylie’s singles to date has reached at least number four, while NKOTB have yet to fall short of the top 11.

Olita Adams’ ‘Get Here’ surges to number seven from number 15 during its seventh week in the listings and still stands an outside chance of reaching the summit. In case you’re wondering why her excellent album ‘Circle Of One’ hasn’t returned to the chart yet, it is currently deleted (as it was once before) and is not due to be re-launched until next Monday. Doubtless it will immediately improve on its original rather poor showing, having previously peaked at number 49 last May.

A bad week for Jesus Jones’ album ‘Doubt’, which takes a massive dive from number one to number nine. I haven’t been able to establish beyond doubt (no pun intended) that this represents the biggest fall ever from the chart summit (excluding the celebrated occasions when the ‘That’ll Be The Day’ soundtrack and ‘Now That’s What I Call Music!’ were dismissed from the chart in 1973 and 1989 respectively due to changes in chart regulations). Next week, Jesus Jones should reap the rewards of being featured on the telecast of the BRITS Awards show, so the album should stabilise, and will probably climb.

For the first time since new rules were introduced about tie-breakers at the beginning of the year, there are 76 singles in the Top 75. An honor position being held jointly by ‘Will To Power’ of UB 40 ‘I’m Not In Love’ and ‘Must Bee The Music’ by King Bee Featuring Michele. Under the old regulations, UB 40 would occupy 75th place as their sales have declined less, and Will To Power would have vanished from the listings completely.

For the second time in a little over a year a song written and originally recorded by Carole King for her classic 1971 album ‘Tapestry’ is a hit. In November 1989, Markita reached number seven with her update of ‘I Feel The Earth Move’. This week, Quartz Featuring Dina Carroll, climb to number 44 with their spirited rendition of ‘It’s Too Late’, already a top 10 club hit.

It’s too early to write-off Gloria Estefan’s chances of registering her third number one album with ‘Into The Light’, even though it was well beaten into second place by Queen’s ‘Innuendo’ this week, but the chances of Tanita Tikaram getting her third top three album in a row with ‘Everybody’s Angel’ are slim. The album debuts at number 19 this week, even though its first single, ‘Only The Ones We Love’, garnered a lot of airplay.

A renewed TV campaign brings Barry White’s ‘The Collection’ back into the chart at number 33 this week for the first time in over two years. It originally peaked at number five in 1988.

Breezing ahead of Madonna’s ‘The Immaculate Collection’ to become the highest charting compilation, at number three this week, is Chris Isaak’s ‘Wicked Game’. Comprising tracks culled from three albums dating back as far as 1985, it also includes the current hit ‘Blue Hotel’, which was recorded in 1987.

Sting’s only Brit in the top 10 this week, but it’s the best week in ages for UK talent in America, with Robert Palmer, Rick Astley, Harriet, Gary Moore and the Pet Shop Boys all entering the Hot 100, while only two Americans — the Bingo Boys and Shawn Christopher/Mike ‘Hitman’ Wilson — make the grade.

Yorkshirewoman Harriet is the third British act in the chart to have a hit in America with a record that was a complete or comparative failure in the UK. Her single ‘Temple Of Love’ failed to register here when released last year, as did Cathy Dennis’ ‘Just Another Dream’, now on its way down from a number nine peak Stateside. And Soho’s ‘Hippychick’, which originally peaked here at number 67 last year, was only a top 10 smash when reissued after climbing to number 16 in the States.

In the US album chart, Vanilla Ice’s ‘To The Extreme’ is number one for a 15th week — equaling the all-time record for a debut album established by Men At Work’s ‘Business As Usual’ in 1982-83. The boys from Down Under would have spent even longer on top, but were dethroned by the best-selling album of all-time: Michael Jackson’s ‘Thriller’.

BRITS winners

Lisa Stansfield walked away with the trophy for best British Female Artist at the star-studded BRITS awards over the weekend. Record Mirror poll winner, George Michael, collected the award for Most British Album to display on his mantelpiece. MC Hammer was voted Best International Newcomer, The Cure won Best British Group and Inxs won Best International Group. Grumpy Sinéad O’Connor, who said she wouldn’t attend to pick up a trophy even if she was awarded one, won Best International Female Performer. Depeche Mode’s ‘Enjoy The Silence’ was Single Of The Year, while The Beautiful South scooped the Best Video award. Full report next week.

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