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James' new album among the releases

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Wet Wet Wet ride high in countdown

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The Information Source for the Music Industry

15 FEBRUARY 1992

CHART FOCUS

Wet Wet Wet continue at the top of the singles and album charts with reduced majorities, and could lose both crowns next week, with Simply Red's Stars pushing or a fourth term at the top of the album chart, while Shakespears Sister intensify their bid for their first number one single with Stay. Wet Wet Wet's singles title will also be under threat from Michael Jackson, who debuts at number six, and the Temptations, who showed rapidly increasing strength through the week with My Girl, to debut at number 13 nearly 27 years after the record peaked at number 43. When the Temps' record hits the Top 10 next week, it will be the first version of My Girl to climb that high, though Otis Redding's cover spent a noteworthy 25 weeks in the Top 50 in the Sixties for a peak position of number 11.

My Girl is but the biggest of a sizeable contingent of re-issues charting this week, this group also including



Sounds Of Blackness' Optimistic, It Must Be Love by Madness, Crucified by Army Of Lovers and Simon & Garfunkel's pugilistic paeon The Boxer. And Orbital's Mutations EP, which debuts at number 24, includes new mixes of their hit Chime.

Of the acts new to the chart this week, by far the most impressive debut comes from Pearl Jam, the latest Seattle sensation, whose initial hit Alive enters at number 17. Initial buzz surrounding the group has been channelled through the two remaining rock weeklies, NME and Melody Maker, who played a

major role in breaking fellow Seattle act Nirvana.

Absence certainly seems to have made the heart grow fonder for Ride and the Jesus And Mary Chain, who both make the highest debuts of their chart careers with their first singles in more than 12 months.

Ride, whose previous chart history runs to three EPs with a highest position of number 32, debut at number nine with Leave Them All Behind, a notch ahead of the Jesus And Mary Chain's Reverence. J&MC have had a Top 10 hit before, with April Skies in 1987, but that had a less impressive debut, at number 19, before climbing to number eight.

Finally, Diana Ross follows up her number two hit When You Tell Me That You Love Me with the title track from her current album The Force Behind The Power, which debuts at number 27. It's the first time Diana has had back-to-back Top 40 solo hits in 11 years.

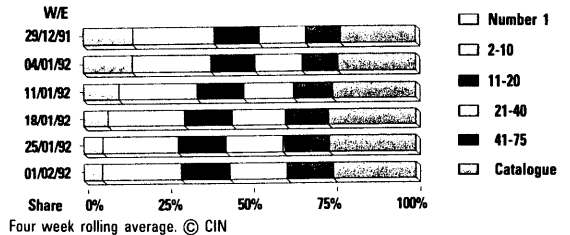
Alan Jones

UPDATE

SALES

Index of unit sales. 100=weekly average in 1991	Last week	This week	% diff	This week last year	% diff
Albums	78	75	-3	+6	
Singles	95	96	+1	+24	
Music Video	68	65	-4	+2	

SINGLES MARKET SHARE BY CHART POSITION



TOP 10 ALBUM ARTISTS

Pos	Artist	Previous chart*	Pos	Artist	Previous chart*
1	SIMPLY RED	(2)	6	TINA TURNER	(3)
2	QUEEN	(1)	7	PRINCE	(-)
3	WET WET WET	(-)	8	U2	(-)
4	GENESIS	(10)	9	NIRVANA	(-)
5	LISA STANSFIELD	(7)	10	ENYA	(8)

Compiled by ERA from Gallup data. Based on Top 200 album charts January 6 to February 1 1992. Last month's position in brackets.

ANALYSIS

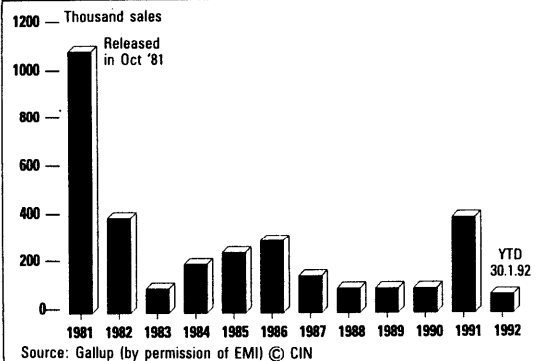
Despite its great staying power over 10-years, Queen's Greatest Hits will forever be the album which sneaked up to snatch the first 11-times platinum award from under the noses of its rivals.

Dire Straits' Brothers In Arms and Michael Jackson's Bad may have had a head start — winning their tenth platinum discs in November 1987 and February 1991 respectively — but it was Queen who last week surged into the record books.

It was all the more surprising since the hits package only won its eighth award last July. But boosted by the premature death of Freddie Mercury, the album last year enjoyed its best run since 1982.

There were three previous sales peaks: in its first two months of release it sold a total of 1.1m copies; 1985's Live Aid performance helped add another 250,000 units; and the It's A Kind Of Magic tour added 300,000 in 1986.

ANATOMY OF AN 11-TIMES PLATINUM ALBUM



Capitol/Parlophone general manager Tony Wadsworth says: "The album has been in the top three catalogue sellers ever since it was released, alongside Sgt Pepper and Dark Side Of The Moon."

Spurred into action by Queen's award, Phonogram says it is to apply for Brothers' In Arms full complement of discs — claiming sales of 3.6m, equal to 12 platinum stars —

while Bad is claimed to have sold more than 4m copies.

The discrepancy is caused by the system behind the awards; record companies have to apply to the BPI for the discs before they can be certified.

However, whatever Phonogram or Epic may claim for their relative acts, the history books will remain unequivocal — Queen was there first. Martin Talbot

R. KELLY AND PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

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