

Mick knocks Shaggy off top spot

SALES

A widely anticipated, **Simply Red** register the first number one single of their career this week, as **Fairground** debuts in pole position after selling more than 200,000 copies last week. It's the eighth single to enter the chart at number one so far this year, two more than the previous record, which was established in 1991. Thus far in the Nineties, 23 records have debuted at number one, compared to just 22 in the 38 previous years of chart history.

Simply Red aren't the only act to spur singles sales to a 19% week-on-week gain this week. With 29 singles debuting inside the Top 75 (the second highest tally ever), total singles sales last week exceeded 1.8m for the first time this year. CD singles registered an even bigger surge, and took more than three fifths (60.2% to be exact) of the singles market for the first time.

The battle of the Alices is firmly resolved in favour of **Smokie & Roy Chubby Brown**, whose Alice springs from eight to five, with an increase of more than 50% while **Gompie's** Alice starts to go into reverse, drifting from 17 to 27. The Smokie/Roy Chubby Brown hit has now equalled the peak of Smokie's original, straight version of the song from 19 years ago. It's the only climber in the chart this week. Two other records increase their sales but fail to climb in the current rarified atmosphere - **Shaggy's** Boombastic adds 17,000 sales but slips to number two in the face of Simply Red's surge, while **Mariah Carey's** Fantasy stays at four on slightly increased sales.

Mariah has more than adequate compensation for her failure to climb here with the sensational news from America that Fantasy debuts at number one there on the *Billboard* Hot 100. It does so only a month after the feat was performed for the first time ever by **Michael Jackson's** You Are Not Alone.

The aforementioned Jackson single is vividly heading towards a million sales in America, and should pass the half million mark here this week. It is Jackson's biggest-selling single in the UK in the Nineties from a dozen singles, replacing *Heal The World*.

We rarely mention videos in this column, but they rarely reach the dizzy heights scaled by **The Lion King** this week. Suggestions from Disney that it expected the video to sell somewhere in the order of 4.4m copies to become the number one sell-through of all time seemed a little optimistic, but it sold more than 1.25m copies last week alone, outgunning the number two title *Pulp Fiction* by a mind-boggling 23 to one.

Alan Jones

SINGLES UPDATE

+19%

+24.3%

+11.8%

ALBUMS UPDATE

SALES AWARDS

- **Platinum:** Various: *Now That's What I Call Music!* 31 (x2).
- **Gold:** Lenny Kravitz: *Circus*; Various: *The Best...Album In The World...Ever!*
- **Silver:** N-Trance: *Stayin' Alive* (single); The Chemical Brothers: *Exit Planet Dust*; Prince: *The Gold Experience*.

PLAYLIST ADDS

THIS WEEK'S HITS

THE OFFICIAL CINCHARTS

MONITOR MEDIA

AIRPLAY

With a record tally of 1,611 plays last week and a similarly unprecedented 75m exposures, **Simply Red's** *Fairground* has a massive lead at the top of the Airplay Chart. Number one for four weeks, it seems likely to become the number one airplay hit of the year, a title currently held by Annie Lennox's *No More I Love You's*.

While **Supergrass's** *Alright* has departed from CIN's sales chart, it is still attracting a lot of airplay. It was played 300 times last week, with *Atlantic 252* leading the way with 40 spins. Meanwhile, the *Cast's* upcoming hit of the same title was limited to just 99 plays, but importantly, 28 of them were at Radio One, where it is the new number one single. In audience terms, *Radio One* delivered 95% of the *Cast's* exposure last week, and must be almost single-handedly credited with prompting the single's number 13 debut on the sales chart.

It was also the main supporter of **Menswear's** *Stardust*, accounting for 19 of its meagre tally of 28 plays, and some 99% of its audience. It debuted at number 16 on the sales chart. Both bands rely for support on a combination of *Radio One* and the inkiies, their appeal seemingly lost on commercial radio until they have proved themselves. Without *Radio One*, of course, they would have had so little exposure that they wouldn't have charted in the first place. If the national network disappears, or changes considerably, there will be precious few opportunities for bands like this, and groups like *Blur*, *Oasis* and *Pulp* would never have made it past first base.

Talking of **Pulp**, for a band coming off a number two hit (*Common People*) their new double A-sided single, though extremely accessible and doubtless a smash hit at retail, is attracting precious little airplay. Despite newspaper controversy, the drug reference side, *Sorted for E's & Whizz*, is still fractionally ahead, moving to number 49 on the Airplay Chart, while the alternative, *Mis-Shapes*, is at number 52. If combined, they would add up to a number 24 airplay posting.

The **Connells' '74-'75** remains a solid airplay hit after nearly three months on the airwaves. It never became a massive sales hit (peaking at number 14) but it has a long burn, which is being most vigorously exploited by *Atlantic 252*, where it soars to the top of the playlist with 62 plays. It peaked nationally on airplay four weeks ago at number eight, and has declined gracefully, moving 10-12-13.

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