



# THE OFFICIAL UK CHARTS

# CHART FOCUS



It takes a special single to increase its sales after debuting at number one. Michael Jackson's *Earth Song* managed it last December, though that was partly due to the steep rise in sales of all records at that time. This week the **Fugees** enjoy a second week at the top, and experience a 24% increase in week-on-week sales of *Killing Me Softly*, which sold 157,000 copies in its first week and further 195,000 last week.

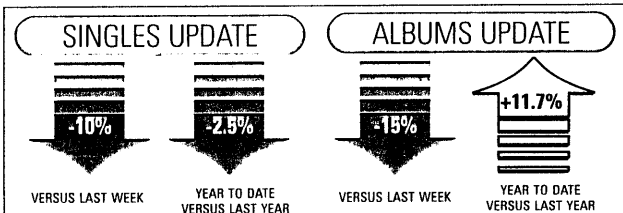
Their album *The Score* surprisingly dips a notch from its peak position of three but simultaneously records a 31% increase in its week-on-week sales, the 15th week in a row it has gained. Prior to *Killing Me Softly*, seven singles have entered the chart at number one so far in 1996, and all suffered a steep decline in sales immediately afterwards. The extent of this decline has varied from a low of 19% to a high of 54%, this later collapse being experienced by both *Oasis* and *Take That*.

Ireland's Eurovision winner, *The Voice* by **Eimear Quinn**, debuts at number 40 after selling around 5,500 copies last week – which means that of the people who saw it win the Grand Prix, fewer than one in 2,000 felt moved to buy it. That's not as bad as it sounds, however. The 1995 Eurovision winner, *Nocturne* by *Secret Garden*, was belatedly released last October and peaked at number 90, while the 1994 champion *Rock 'N' Roll Kids* by *Paul Harrington* and *Charlie McGettigan* fared only slightly better, peaking at number 78 despite a prompt release.

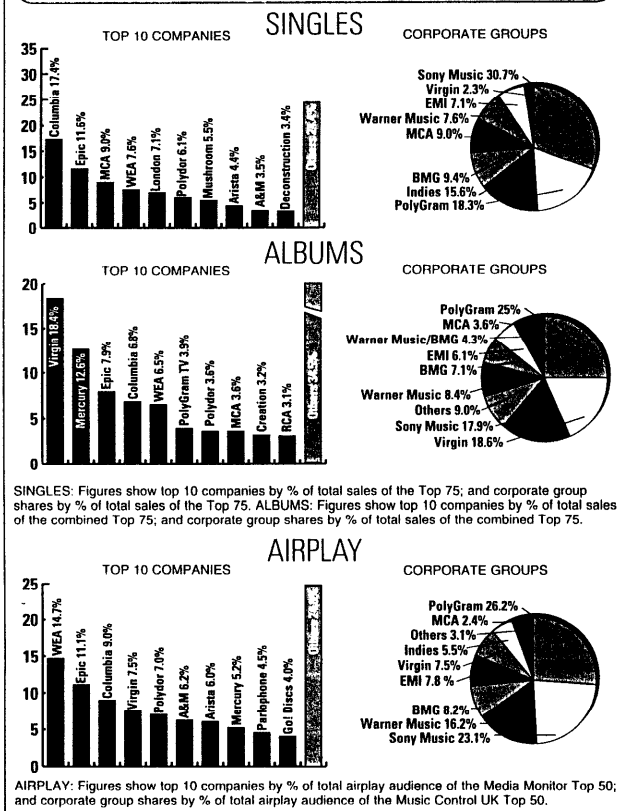
*The Voice* is only the second Eurovision winner to reach the Top 40 in the last nine years, its anchor position being bettered only by *Niamh Kavanagh's* *In Your Eyes*, which reached the dizzy heights of number 24 in 1993.

Anglo-Aussie rockers **AC/DC** have a sufficiently large hardcore of followers to ensure that their singles always reach the Top 75, even if none of them have ever reached the Top 10. Since making their chart debut in 1978 they have accumulated 25 hits. Even last year's *Hard As A Rock* managed to reach number 33. But this week their run of hits seems to have come to an end – their new single *Cover You In Oil* debuts at number 85 this week and is unlikely to improve on this in subsequent weeks.

Another rock act used to performing better is **The Almighty**. Having announced that they will split at the end of their current tour they might be expected a surge of support for their single *Do You Understand*. And the fact that it was issued on three different CDs should have ensured multiple purchases by their faithful fans. In reality, the single crashed out



## AT-A-GLANCE WEEKLY MARKET SHARE



SINGLES: Figures show top 10 companies by % of total sales of the Top 75; and corporate group shares by % of total sales of the Top 75. ALBUMS: Figures show top 10 companies by % of total sales of the combined Top 75; and corporate group shares by % of total sales of the combined Top 75. AIRPLAY: Figures show top 10 companies by % of total airplay audience of the Media Monitor Top 50; and corporate group shares by % of total airplay audience of the Music Control UK Top 50.

of the chart a week after debuting at number 38, making it their least long-lived hit. Incredibly each of their previous 10 charted singles spent precisely two weeks in the Top 75. Do *You Understand* is their eighth Top 40 hit – in which elevated circles they each managed a single week. No other band can claim to have spent just eight weeks on the Top 40, each with a different hit.

Hot on the heels of their number five single *Until It Sleeps*, **Metallica's** *Load* album debuts at Number One after selling 70,000 copies. It's *Metallica's* second Number One album, following their self-titled 1991 album. *Metallica's*

accession to the throne limits **George Michael's** run at the top with *Older* to three weeks – but he should be satisfied with that even if the album fails to regain its title, as both of his previous solo albums, *Faith* and *Listen Without Prejudice* *Volume 1*, spent a mere week at the top.

Finally congratulations to MCA which has the week's two highest debuting singles from **Ocean Colour Scene** (number four) and **Livin' Joy** (number five), and also manages to chart at number 42 **Bush's** *Sixteen Stone* album, on its newly acquired Interscope imprint.

Alan Jones



With an audience of 11m less, and 304 fewer plays than last week **George**

*Michael's* *FastLove* nevertheless retains a useful lead at the top of the airplay chart for the fifth week in a row. The challenge to *George's* supremacy mounted by **Tony Rich** and **The Lighthouse Family** has however evaporated, with both records making only small gains this week.

The record most likely to take away *George's* throne now looks most likely to be the **Fugees'** *Killing Me Softly*. Becalmed at number 13 last week despite a 63% increase in plays and an 11% increase in audience, it sprints to number three this week, a move fuelled by a further 70% increase in audience and a huge 115% hike in plays, from 590 to 1271.

Missing from the Top 50 this week is... *Missing. The Everything But The Girl* hit was bulletted last week, climbing 41-32, but finally departs from the Top 50 this week after 35 consecutive weeks in residency – an airplay chart record. The cause of its decline appears to be the similarity between it and the *EBTG* single *Wrong*, which sprints 55-29 this week.

*Missing's* airplay is holding up even better in America, where it is among the 10 most played tracks some 36 weeks after entering *Billboard's* airplay chart. Oddly enough it was practically ignored by radio in America initially, making the *Hot 100* – the definitive *Billboard* chart that mixes sales and airplay – on the strength of sales alone.

Back in Britain, the biggest in-chart leap comes from **The Longpigs**, whose *She Said* soars 40-19. But don't expect to hear it too much on your local commercial station. *Radio One* made it its most-played disc last week, providing 28 of its monitored tally of 40 plays. *Radio One* also provided a mighty 99.7% of its audience – the highest percentage ever recorded by one station for a Top 20 airplay hit.

*The Longpigs* record for *U2's* *Mother Records* label, and ironically have leapfrogged over *U2* members **Adam Clayton & Larry Mullen's** *Mission: Impossible*, which drifts 23-24 on the airplay chart, even though it received seven times more plays than *She Said* last week.

Capital has got firmly behind **Alison Limerick's** remixed hit where *Love Lives*, spinning it 20 times last week, and placing it 18th in the station's chart. Nationally, *Where Love Lives* is still dependent on club play, and has yet to enter the Top 100 airplay chart, although Capital's lead is likely to be followed by many when the song explodes at retail, as it surely will.

Alan Jones.

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