

THE OFFICIAL UK CHARTS

CHART FOCUS



White Town's >Abort, Retry, Fail? EP sold nearly 120,000 copies last week to debut at number one. It's the 67th single in chart history to debut at number one but only the fourth by a previously uncharted act - if we exclude charity records. The previous instances were Whigfield (Saturday Night) in 1994, Robson & Jerome (Unchained Melody/White Cliffs Of Dover) in 1995 and Babylon Zoo (Spaceman) in 1996.

Babylon Zoo debuted at number one exactly a year ago, and are centred on Jas Mann, a Birmingham-based Indian. White Town is likewise Midland-based (Derby) and comprise in their entirety of Indian-born Jyoti Mishra. >Abort, Retry, Fail? was first released late last year on the Parasol label (via Cargo) before being picked up by Brilliant! and licensed to Chrysalis. It becomes Chrysalis's first number one single since March 1991 when Chesney Hawkes hold sway for five weeks with The One And Only.

White Town's debut is bad news for **Tori Amos**, whose Professional Widow (It's Got To Be Big) consequently slips to number two, even though its sales expanded by 67 last week. And, while Tori's current album Boys For Pele remains conspicuously absent from the album chart, her debut East West album Little Earthquakes celebrates its fifth birthday by returning at number 69. It's one of more than a hundred Warner Music titles re-released last week at mid-price. One other made the chart - Seal, the first of two identically-titled albums by the artist of the same name to reach number one. This set dates back to 1991, the other to 1994.

East 17's precipitous plunge from three to 15 with Hey Child will be viewed by many as the record buyers' verdict of Brian Harvey's pro-drug interview. In truth, the record had no legs from the start, and was in the same mid-teen crisis in the mid-week chart, the die being cast before the storm broke. It's probably more fruitful to look at the status of East 17's current hit album, Around The World - The Journey So Far, for evidence of how the controversy has affected their fanbase - and that remains static at number 17.

Eight years ago this week, Ten City scored the first and biggest of their British hits, reaching number eight with That's The Way Love Is. This week, the group's former lead singer **Byron Stingily** makes his solo bow, debuting at number 14 with the former number one club smash Get Up (Everybody).

It was one of six new entries on schedule for a Top 10 place in mid-week

SINGLES UPDATE



VERSUS LAST WEEK



YEAR TO DATE VERSUS LAST YEAR

ALBUMS UPDATE

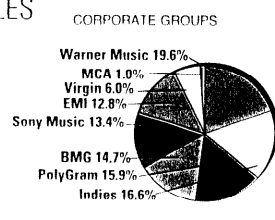
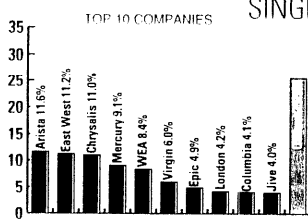


VERSUS LAST WEEK



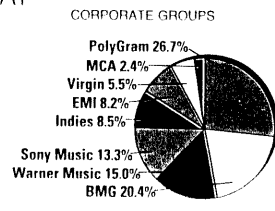
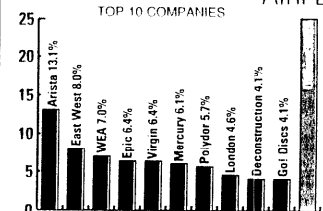
YEAR TO DATE VERSUS LAST YEAR

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



AIRPLAY: Figures show top 10 companies by % of total airplay audience of the Music Control Top 50; and corporate group shares by % of total airplay audience of the Music Control Top 50.

which would have created a new record - though there were only three at the end of the day.

Despite the continuing high turnover at the top, there is some evidence that the number of new entries invading the chart every week is actually beginning to decline. This week, though there are 13 new entries to the Top 40, there are only three more in the rest of the Top 75. Even more encouraging is the fact that of the 200 best-selling singles in the UK last week only 17 were new entries (that's the 200 best sellers, as opposed to the Top 200, a wholly different proposition as many records are "starred out" of the chart). So far in

1997, there have been 47 new entries to the singles chart, down from 62 in the same period in 1996.

It's amazing to think that for all their hits - 34 of them, including six number ones, **Slade** have a miserable chart record with hits albums. Surprisingly, their new Feel The Noise - Greatest Hits compilation, which debuts this week at number 19, is their highest charting "best of" yet. They reached number 21 with Slade Smashes in 1980, number 89 with Slade's Greats in 1984 and number 34 with Wall Of Hits in 1991. All of the above, including the new album, were released on Polydor. **Alan Jones**



A massive 47% expansion in its audience powers Say What You Want by **Texas** to the top of the

Airplay chart this week, even though its 1,532 plays are inferior to those of the outgoing number one 2 Become 1 by the **Spice Girls** (1,736 plays), the number five hit Step By Step by **Whitney Houston** (1,573 plays) and **Tony Braxton's** Un-Break My Heart, which falls 2-6 but still got spun 1,670 times last week.

Of all the stations monitored by Music Control, Radio One remains the most in-tune with record buyers. Its top three this week - **Tori Amos**, **Texas** and **White Town** - are the same as in the sales chart, albeit in a different order. It remains the only enthusiastic supporter of **Orbital's** Satan - fourth on its playlist with 25 plays. The other stations monitored played Satan on average less than one apiece last week, and most of that was on chart shows.

Another Radio One favourite is **Babybird**, whose latest single Candy Girl is struggling elsewhere despite the overwhelming success of You're Gorgeous. Radio One played Candy Girl 25 times last week, and delivered 87% of its audience.

Babybird's mainman **Stephen Jones** also co-wrote the **Lightning Seeds** latest smash Sugar Coated Iceberg, which did nearly as well at Radio One with 24 plays but was more widely appreciated, with 65% of its audience coming from elsewhere.

Hey Child by **East 17** moves 26-17 on the Airplay chart. The fact it was increasing airplay anyway makes it hard to determine how much effect Brian Harvey's pro-drugs proclamation had on the record, though it was temporarily, at least, dropped by seven stations. Whether they persist or not is a moot point, not least because the record is in any case not nearly as popular as If You Ever.

I Can't Make You Love Me continues to overshadow **Older** as radio's preferred cut from **George Michael's** Older EP. **I Can't Make...** registered 293 plays last week, compared to **Older's** 373 but gained the higher Airplay chart placing - 43 against 59 - as it's mainly the smaller stations who continue to expose **Older**. Added together, the two tracks' audiences gave the EP the 25th biggest audience in radio last week.

The Backstreet Boys have placed four singles in the Top 15 of the sales chart in the past year with little support from radio. Their latest single Quit Playing Games (With My Heart) is their best received yet at retail and on the airwaves. While it slips 2-4 on sales, it jumps 36-16 on Airplay this week. **Alan Jones**

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