



CHART COMMENTARY

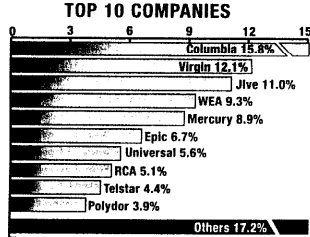
by ALAN JONES



A year ago, **Steps** were enjoying their very first chart hit with 5-6-7-8. This week, they unexpectedly celebrate their first number one, as their double A-sided hit pairing **Heartbeat** and **Tragedy** completes a bizarre journey to the chart summit, having moved 2-5-5-8-8-6-4-1.

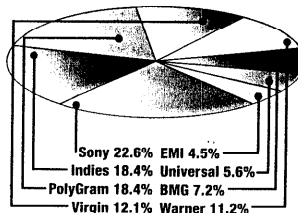
A fortnight ago, it was selling only a quarter as many copies as the **Spice Girls** and **Chef** singles, but the fast sales slump experienced by these two hits – ironically, the massive demand for them at the start of their chart careers and the subsequent Christmas break have resulted in them being so out in many shops and speeded their climb – while its own sales held fairly steady, have helped **Heartbeat/Tragedy** reach pole position. It sold 98,000 copies last week, a shade down on its tally for the two previous weeks. Thus far, it has sold more than 626,000 copies, easily beating the group's previous biggest hit, **One For Sorrow**, which sold 390,000 copies.

MARKET REPORT



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

TOP CORPORATE GROUPS



SALES UPDATE

VERSUS LAST WEEK: **+5.4%**

YEAR TO DATE VERSUS LAST YEAR: **+5.1%**

While **Heartbeat** is a new song, **Tragedy** is, of course, a cover of the old Bee Gees hit, and is the 10th Gibb brothers song to

PERCENTAGE OF UK ACTS IN THE CHART

UK: 56.0% US: 32.0% Other: 12.0%

reach number one. The ninth was **Boyzone's** cover of **Words** in October 1996, since when **N-Trance**, **Pras Michel** and **911** have all

SINGLE FACTFILE

1998 was nearly over before the first and only hit named after the year was a number 24 hit for **Binary Finary** in late October. But 1999 has barely arrived before it is honoured by **Prince's** hit of the same name which – having reached number 25 in 1983 and number two in 1985 – is the highest new entry to this week's chart, debuting at 10. It was widely anticipated to be a much bigger hit, and may yet turn out so to be, but not for

the moment. The version now charting is the original hit mix, but the artist has been working on a new recording of the song, which he is apparently about to unleash in no fewer than seven mixes in the next few weeks. There is also the prospect of many other artists performing it – the midnight chimes had barely ushered in the year before **Sarah Brightman** was pictured making a right hash of it on BBC's hogmanay programme.

reached number two with their songs.

Despite its impressive sales tally, **Heartbeat/Tragedy** is only the 12th biggest hit of 1998, with **Cher's** **Believe** emerging as the worthy champ, with sales of more than 1,518,000 allowing it to comprehensively sink **Celine Dion's** Titanic tune **My Heart Will Go On**. As well as swiping the Christmas number one, the **Spice Girls' Goodbye** is the only record by a British act in the 1998 Top 10, taking eighth place with 680,000 sales. They also have the third biggest hit by a British act (and the 13th biggest hit overall) with **Viva Forever**, which sold more than 622,000. We should also mention **Chef** aka **Isaac Hayes**, who took pole position in last week's unpublished chart, with **Chocolate Salty Balls (PS I Love You)**, which moved 2-1, and thus became the first record to climb to the top since **The Tempters' Feel It**. The record sold so well in the last three weeks of 1998 that it reaches seventh place in the year's rankings with 682,000 sales.

THE YEAR SO FAR... TOP 20 SINGLES

Rank	Title	Artist	Label
1	BELIEVE	CHER	WEA
2	MY HEART WILL GO ON	CELINE DION	EPIC
3	IT'S LIKE THAT	RUN-D.M.C. VS JASON NEVINS	SM:J COMMUNICATIONS
4	NO MATTER WHAT	BOYZONE	POLYDOR
5	C'EST LA VIE	B*WITCHED	GLOW WORM/EPIC
6	HOW DO I LIVE	LEANN RIMES	CURB/THE HIT LABEL
7	CHOCOLATE SALTY BALLS (P.S. I LOVE YOU)	CHEF	COLUMBIA
8	GOODBYE	SPICE GIRLS	VIRGIN
9	GHETTO SUPASTAR (THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE)	PRAS MICHEL feat. ODB & MYA	INTERSCOPE
10	TRULY MADLY DEEPLY	SAVAGE GARDEN	COLUMBIA
11	MUSIC SOUNDS BETTER WITH YOU	STARDUST	VIRGIN
12	HEARTBEAT/TRAGEDY	STEPS	JIVE
13	VIVA FOREVER	SPICE GIRLS	VIRGIN
14	3 LIONS '98	BADDIEU/SKINNER/LIGHTNING SEED	EPIC
15	DOCTOR JONES	AQUA	UNIVERSAL
16	NEVER EVER	ALL SAINTS	LONDON
17	I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING	AEROSMITH	COLUMBIA
18	THE BOY IS MINE	BRANDY & MONICA	ATLANTIC
19	FEEL IT	TAMPERER feat. MAYA	PEPPER
20	BRIMFUL OF ASHA	CORNERSHOP	WIIJA

PEPSI Chart

Rank	Title	Artist	Label	Rank	Title	Artist	Label
1	HEARTBEAT/TRAGEDY	Steps	Epic/Jive	21	DUMB	The Beautiful South	Go! Discs
2	GOODBYE	Spice Girls	Virgin	22	THE POWER OF GOOD-BYE/LITTLE STAR	Mafona	Maverick
3	CHOCOLATE SALTY BALLS	Chef	Columbia	23	UP AND DOWN	Vengaboys	Positiva
4	BELIEVE	Cher	WEA	24	THE EVERLASTING	Manic Street Preachers	Epic
5	TO YOU I BELONG	B*Witched	Glow Worm/EPIC	25	HARD KNOCK LIFE (GHETTO ANTHEM)	Jay-Z	Northwestside
6	WHEN YOU'RE GONE	Bryan Adams feat. Melanie C	A&M	26	MUSIC SOUNDS BETTER WITH YOU	Stardust	Virgin
7	ESPECIALLY FOR YOU	Denise & Johnny	HCA	27	SHE WANTS YOU	Bilie	Virgin
8	MIAMI	Will Smith	Columbia	28	PERFECT 10	The Beautiful South	Go! Discs
9	END OF THE LINE	Honeyz	Mercury	29	THANK U	Alanis Morissette	Maverick
10	1999	Prince	Warner Bros	30	TAKE ME THERE	Blackstreet & Mya	Interscope
11	I LOVE THE WAY YOU LOVE ME	Boyzone	Polydor	31	GIRLS NIGHT OUT	Aida	Wildstar
12	SO YOUNG	The Corrs	Atlantic	32	RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW	Fierce	Wildstar
13	NO REGRETS/ANTMUSIC	Robbie Williams	Chrysalis	33	POSTCARD FROM HEAVEN	Lighthouse Family	Wild Card
14	OUTSIDE	George Michael	Epic	34	WHEN YOU BELIEVE	Mariah Carey/Whitney Houston	Columbia
15	BIG BIG WORLD	Emilia	Universal	35	MILLENNIUM	Robbie Williams	Chrysalis
16	ALWAYS HAVE, ALWAYS WILL	Ace Of Base	London	36	CRUSH	Jennifer Paige	Edel
17	SWEETEST THING	U2	Island	37	WHAT CAN I DO	The Corrs	Atlantic
18	I DON'T WANT TO MISS A THING	Aerosmith	Columbia	38	I'M YOUR ANGEL	Celine Dion & R Kelly	Epic
19	MY FAVOURITE GAME	The Cardigans	Stockholm	39	LITTLE BIT OF LOVIN'	Kele Le Roc	Polydor
20	I WANT YOU	Savage Garden	Columbia	40	WILD WOOD	Paul Weller	Go! Discs

To hear the chart hot-off-the-press on Monday morning, call 0891 505290. Calls cost 50p/min

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CHART COMMENTARY

by ALAN JONES



Ladies & Gentlemen - The Best Of **George Michael** has topped the album chart for eight weeks in a row, selling more than 1,520,000 copies. But despite its late and great charge it wasn't quite strong enough to unseat **The Corrs'** Talk On Corners, which emerged as the biggest seller of 1998 by a margin of 130,000 copies.

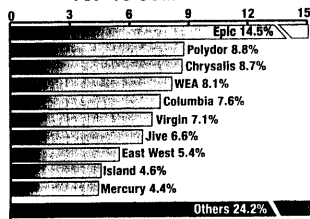
In the first chart of the year, Talk On Corners is still going strong, holding fourth place on its 64th chart appearance. It's the first of four consecutive albums in the chart by Irish acts - being followed by **Boyzone's** Where We Belong, **B*Witched's** self-titled debut and **The Best Of U2 1980-1990** -

giving a new record for Irish acts who, therefore, hold four of the chart's top seven positions this week.

Though there is nothing new in the chart this week, the order in which the records line up is much changed from a week ago, as the combined effect of Christmas TV exposure, the arrival of the sale season, and the

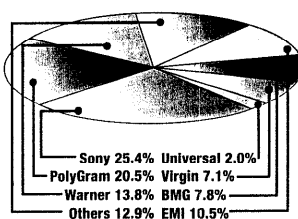
MARKET REPORT

TOP 10 COMPANIES



Figures show top 10 companies by % of total sales, and corporate group shares by % of total sales, of the Top 75 artist albums

TOP CORPORATE GROUPS



SALES UPDATE

VERSUS LAST WEEK: **-48.8%**

YEAR TO DATE VERSUS LAST YEAR: **+14.5%**

PERCENTAGE OF UK ACTS IN THE CHART

UK: 57.3% US: 34.7% Other: 8.0%

results of several "best ever" polls encompassing singles, albums and videos take effect. One of the biggest winners is

Robbie Williams, whose Christmas night exposure in For One Night Only might have been a little late (11.45pm) but clearly

itself the week before) but also the highest weekly sale by a hits compilation, beating the 340,000 total registered by Madonna's Immaculate Collection at its 1990 peak. The last album to spend its first eight weeks in the chart at number one was Phil Collins' ...But Seriously in 1989, and the last to linger longer was Bob Marley & The Wailers' Legend, which enjoyed 12 weeks in a row at number one in 1984.

affected both of his albums. I've Been Expecting You stays at number two, though with only 8,000 fewer sales than Ladies & Gentlemen last week, compared to a deficit of 100,000 the week before, while the earlier Life Thru A Lens soars 25-11. Despite his success, Robbie barely held off a challenge to his own chart position being mounted by Steps, who, for one giddy day early in the week had both the best-selling single and album in the country. By week's end they still had the number one single with Heartbeat/Tragedy, but had slipped to third place on the album chart with their debut album, Step One. After 16 weeks the album, which previously rose as high as number two, has sold 770,000 copies, and seems certain to pass a million in due course.

Meanwhile, Nirvana's Nevermind - home to Smells Like Teen Spirit which was elected best single ever by readers of Q magazine and finished in second place in Radio One's "National Anthems" poll - explodes 108-39.

COMPILATIONS

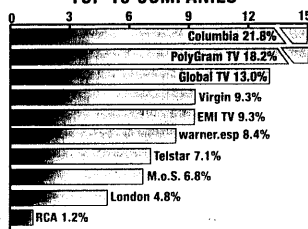
Now That's What I Call Music! 41 emulated the achievements of each of the last three Now albums released at Christmas (Now 38, Now 35 and Now 32) by easing past the million sales mark before year's end - and reached 1,013,000 by the end of the week. Now 41 has been the number one compilation for the past six weeks but is beginning to look vulnerable to challenges, with the more recent Hits 99 - a mere four weeks old - doggedly holding second place behind it and closing the gap fast. Another record making up ground quickly is **Chef Aid - The South Park Album** which, aided by the singles chart success of Chef's Chocolate Salty Balls (PS I Love You), has sold more than 300,000 copies in the past six weeks.

ough it may have seemed a little

premature at the time to include a reference to this year in the titles of hits compilations issued in the past few weeks, it clearly helps them to stand out as new collections and has a psychological effect on record buyers. Even though many of them were previously drifting, the arrival of the year they claim to represent has had an invigorating effect on **Massive Dance 99** (up 11-5), **Smash Hits 99** (13-10) and **The Box Hits 99** (31-26). At the same time, however, 1998 collections had an even better week, as consumers shopped for definitive hits retrospectives and picked up discounted bargains - and the gun-jumping **Fantazia - British Anthems 2000** climbs 40-33. Whether boasting the hits of '98, '99 or 2000, not one of the Top 40 compilations is more than three months old.

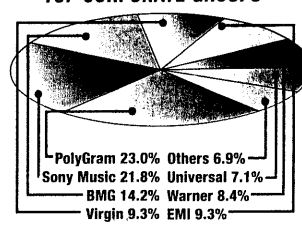
MARKET REPORT

TOP 10 COMPANIES



Figures show top 10 companies by % of total sales of the Top 20; and corporate group shares by % of total sales of the Top 20

TOP CORPORATE GROUPS



SALES UPDATE

VERSUS LAST WEEK: **-49.5%**

YEAR TO DATE VERSUS LAST YEAR: **+2.6%**

COMPILATIONS' SHARE OF TOTAL SALES

Artist albums: 75.2%
Compilations: 24.6%

THE YEAR SO FAR... TOP 20 ALBUMS

1 TALK ON CORNERS	THE CORRS	ATLANTIC
2 LADIES & GENTLEMEN - THE BEST OF	GEORGE MICHAEL	EPIC
3 WHERE WE BELONG	BOYZONE	POLYDOR
4 LIFE THRU A LENS	ROBBIE WILLIAMS	CHRYSA LIS
5 I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU	ROBBIE WILLIAMS	CHRYSA LIS
6 URBAN HYMNS	THE VERVE	HUT
7 RAY OF LIGHT	MADONNA	MAVERICK
8 LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE	CELINE DION	EPIC
9 ALL SAINTS	ALL SAINTS	LONDON
10 TITANIC - OST	JAMES HORNER	SONY CLASSICAL
11 POSTCARDS FROM HEAVEN	LIGHTHOUSE FAMILY	WILD CARD
12 THE BEST OF	M PEOPLE	M PEOPLE
13 STEP ONE	STEPS	EBUL/JIVE
14 QUENCH	BEAUTIFUL SOUTH	GOI DISCS/MERCURY
15 HITS	PHIL COLLINS	VIRGIN
16 SAVAGE GARDEN	SAVAGE GARDEN	COLUMBIA
17 ONE NIGHT ONLY	BEE GEES	POLYDOR
18 THE STAR AND WISEMAN - THE BEST OF	LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO	POLYGRAM TV
19 LEFT OF THE MIDDLE	NATALIE IMBRUGLIA	RCA
20 INTERNATIONAL VELVET	CATATONIA	BLANCO Y NEGRO

THE YEAR SO FAR... TOP 20 COMPILATIONS

1 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 41	VARIOUS ARTISTS	EMI/VIRGIN/POLYGRAM
2 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 39	VARIOUS ARTISTS	EMI/VIRGIN/POLYGRAM
3 NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MUSIC! 40	VARIOUS ARTISTS	EMI/VIRGIN/POLYGRAM
4 FRESH HITS 98	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WARNER/GLOBAL/SONYTV
5 THE FULL MONTY	ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	RCA VICTOR
6 HITS 99	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WARNER/GLOBAL/SONYTV
7 THE ANNUAL IV - JUDGE JULES & BOY GEORGE	VARIOUS ARTISTS	MINISTRY OF SOUND
8 CHEF AID - THE SOUTH PARK ALBUM	VARIOUS ARTISTS	COLUMBIA
9 HUGG HITS 1998	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WARNER/GLOBAL/SONYTV
10 NEW HITS 98	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WARNER/GLOBAL/SONYTV
11 THE VERY BEST OF THE LOVE ALBUM	VARIOUS ARTISTS	VIRGIN/EMI
12 BIG HITS 98	VARIOUS ARTISTS	WARNER/GLOBAL/SONYTV
13 BEST CHRISTMAS ALBUM IN THE WORLD...EVER!	VARIOUS ARTISTS	VIRGIN/EMI
14 WOMAN	VARIOUS ARTISTS	SONY TV/POLYGRAM TV
15 GREASE	ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	POLYDOR
16 THE IBIZA ANNUAL	VARIOUS ARTISTS	MINISTRY OF SOUND
17 THE ALL TIME GREATEST LOVE SONGS - III	VARIOUS ARTISTS	COLUMBIA
18 MUSIC OF THE NIGHT	VARIOUS ARTISTS	POLYGRAM TV
19 THE GREATEST HITS OF 1998	VARIOUS ARTISTS	TELSTAR TV
20 HEARTBEAT - THE 60'S GOLD COLLECTION	VARIOUS ARTISTS	RCA/GLOBAL TV