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CHART COMMENTARY from JAMES MASTERTON

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After a summer of constancy, September comes upon us in a maelstrom of change with a string of big new releases all set to take a turn at the top of the singles chart. No sooner has 'Deja Vu' by **Beyonce and Jay-Z** arrived at the top then it takes a tumble, drifting to Number 3 this week and being outsold by the still ubiquitous 'Hips Don't Lie'.

There is no surprise in the record that takes its place. After entering strongly at Number 13 last week, 'Sexyback' by Justin Timberlake receives the usual boost from a shop release and files to the very top of the chart. Until today Justin Timberlake's only connection with a Number One single was a barely credited cameo role on 'Where Is The Love' by the Black Eyed Peas in 2003. In his former life as a member of US boyband 'NSync he had a slow start to his UK chart career, the group only hitting their stride in 1999, a full two years after they became stars back home. Perhaps because of that the group only ever managed two Top 3 hits - 'Bye Bye' a Number 3 in 2000 and a Number 2 hit with their swansong 'Girifriend' in April 2002. Since going solo he has managed no less than four Number 2 hits - 'Like I Love You', 'Cry Me A River' 'Rock Your Body' and most recently in his guest role on **Snoop Dogg**'s 'Signs' in May last year. Consider that duck well and truly broken.

'Sexyback' is of course also the second single in as many weeks to climb to Number One from outside the Top 10, its 13-1 rise only slightly less astounding than the 21-1 leap made by 'Deja Vu' last week. Last week I stated that only one other single had performed the feat since the new chart rules came into effect last spring, when in actual fact there have been two - Ne-Yo's 'So Sick' and Lily Allen's 'Smile' which also rose 13-1 earlier this summer. As a fun diversion for this week, here is a puzzler for all those with a good memory for stats. Which Number One single has the distinction of beginning its Top 75 career lower down than any other in chart history? Answer next week.

average. It has taken an act of a very different kind to become the first single since 'Crazy' to hit the Top 5 on downloaded sales alone. Step forward with a camp flourish the returning Scissor Sisters and their barnstorming slice of camp disco, coming across like the Bee Gees of the accolade. Picking up where they left off two years ago, the track is a slump to reach Number 5 in January 2005. Hence their new single is arguably their first ever chart smash hit and fortunately it is well deserving fifth single 'Filthy/Gorgeous' which took advantage of the new year sales made Number 10 their only other Top 10 single from their first album was average for all the adulation directed at them. Once 'Comfortably Numb' instant classics. Oddly enough though their chart positions were distinctly original hits such as 'Laura' and 'Take Your Mama' turned themselves into 'Comfortably Numb'? It certainly was, 2004 being the year that other invaded the chart with their jaw-dropping cover of Pink Floyd's Can it really be two and a half years since the flamboyant group first brand new single 'I Don't Feel Like Dancin' which charges in at Number 4. Number One hit, its initial chart entry on downloaded sales was still only For all the fuss about 'Sexyback' and its now fulfilled potential as a track topping the chart next week are surely pretty short, although storming chart debut on the strength of downloads alone the odds on this performing 'Let Your Love Flow' with tongues firmly in cheek. With such a competition may well come from one other new track 26 places below

More of that later, for the moment let us celebrate the forward progression of three of last weeks Top 40 entries. Showing the most legs are the **Fratellis** with 'Chelsea Dagger' which flies 35-5 to give the Scottish rock band their biggest hit to date. Hailed as one of the best new bands of the moment, they first hit the chart back in June with the insanely catchy Number 19 hit 'Henrietta'. Their second single is perhaps less cheeklily idiosyncratic but retains the crucial element of the singalong pub chorus to ensure that like its predecessor this is a song that takes up residence in your brain in the best possible way. I preferred 'Henrietta', I don't mind admitting but any record that gives the Glaswegians their first Top 5 hit is a welcome one.

Just outside the Top 10 is **F**. \(\) whose ode to onanism 'U & Ur Hand' landed at Number 28 last week on downloads. This week the CD single helps it to Number 11, disappointing following the Top 5 success of her last two singles. Still, at the very least the single is a worthy addition to her chart cannon, further keeping the rock chick vibe that her served her so well of late. Her previous hit 'Who Knew' also shows a second wind this week, rising 43-36 having fallen out of the Top 40 for the first time last week.

Now I think it is entirely appropriate given the craze this summer for choose ones favourite "guilty pleasure" pop records that one of the most celebrated new acts of the moment is a group whose entire output can be classed as a guilty pleasure. They are of course the unashamedly mainstream **The Feeling** whose entire album is one of those records that expresses the sheer joy of being alive. After two Top 10 hits with 'Sewn' and 'Fill My Little World' they this week rise 24-12 with the towering genius of 'Never Be Lonely', a pop masterpiece that would proudly grace the back catalogue of the likes of **10cc** and **FLO** whom the band proudly model themselves on. We've been altogether far too positive this week, so for the sake of having something to be angry about let's just say that the failure of what is one of the most outstanding pop records of the year to reach the Top 10 is something that leaves me too depressed to speak. A state of affairs that only another listen to 'Never Be Lonely' can possibly cure. Try it for yourself.

The second biggest new hit of the week is also a download, 'Promiscuous' by **Nelly Furtado and Timbaland**. The followup to her Number One hit 'Maneater', this new single was actually the first release in places like the USA - in line with the clever targeted release schedule of singles which ensured that each bit of the global market was promoted the single that would best appeal to them. Britain is of course a pop nation which is why we got 'Maneater' first, although 'Promiscuous' isn't exactly hardcore R&B and would easily become a hit single here under any circumstances. After all the producer (and co-star) of this single - Timbaland - just happens to be the brains behind this weeks Number One single. Nelly Furtado's mission next week will be to make the Top 10 with this single. If she succeeds it will be the first time since 2001 that she has managed back to back Top 10 hits.

Another act following up a Number One hit is **Sandi Thom** although for the moment she is looking disappointingly like a one hit wonder. 'What If I'm Right' is the followup to the memorable 'I Wish I Was A Punk Rocker' but after making a lowly Number 73 last week on download sales, the physical release of the track can only haul the record up to Number 22 from where it looks unlikely to progress further. This sin't a huge disaster as she has at least sold her fair share of albums but it still makes her first single look like the product of the hype behind her famous webcasts rather than the work of a genuinely popular artist.

As for the other download new entry that could well be challenging for Number One next week, well that rests at a slightly surprisingly lowly Number 30. 'Rudebox' is the brand new single from **Robbie Williams** which has been given an online release prior to its availability in the shops. The single attracted widespread comment from the get-go thanks to the fact that it sounds like no other Robbie single before it, a bizarre mostly spoken electronic track which borrows what little melody it does possess from **Siy and Robbie'**s 1987 hit single 'Boops (Here To Go)'. The fact that he's chosen to innovate rather than tread a formulaic path should be applauded wildly and given that his past offerings have included such unconventional singles as 'Rock DJ', 'Radio' and last years' 'Tripping' shows that the weirder the better has worked for him in the past. Nonetheless this is a polarising record. You will either think it is the worst thing he has ever done or the greatest single of the year. Next week should make some fascinating viewing.