

HEJIRA — Joni Mitchell — Asylum 7E-1087 — Producer: Henry Lewy — List: 6.98

Joni Mitchell's latest work is more of the same. There's no real surprises here — the same ethereal melodies, sensitive lyrics. The production is effectively spare, and she has at times a real bite to her vocals; she's playing around with phrasing a little more. All of the cuts will doubtless be played heavy on FM progressives. "Black Crow," an uptempo tune with a lot of life to it, could get some AM pop spins.

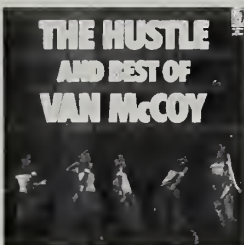


A STAR IS BORN — Barbra Streisand, Kris Kristofferson — Columbia JS 34403 — Producers: Barbra Streisand, Phil Ramone — List: 7.98

The soundtrack from the upcoming film of the same name, this is sure to be a big album for some time to come. The marriage of the two voices is not without a special magic: Kristofferson's gruff vocals mix well with Streisand's sweet ones on tunes like "Lost Inside Of You." If the movie is half as good as the record, this should be a real blockbuster, appealing to virtually all markets.

THE BEACH BOYS '69 — The Beach Boys — Capitol ST-11584 — Producers: The Beach Boys — List: 6.98

Although virtually all of these tunes are available in previous incarnations, this is a live set, and none of the tunes is without a new twist. "Bluebirds Over The Mountain," for example, is given a powerful reading, and those harmonies are just what you'd expect them to be. Listen for this live version of "Good Vibrations" to stir upcoming FM waves, and there are a lot of singles possibilities here, maybe a re-release of "God Only Knows" or "Aren't You Glad."



THE HUSTLE AND THE BEST OF VAN McCOY — Van McCoy — H&L HL-69016 — Producer: Van McCoy — List: 6.98

This package is just what the title indicates — some of the best disco around; indeed, a couple of the tunes gave the new genre a real boost at its inception. Along with "The Hustle" McCoy gives us "Disco Baby" and "Disco Kid." A great package for the winter selling season, this is also an indispensable aid for any disco programmer. There's also a terrific version of "Theme From Star Trek" where Van really lets loose.

THE BEST OF THE CRUSADERS — The Crusaders — Blue Thumb/ABC BTSY-6027/2 — Producers: Stewart Levine with The Crusaders — List: 7.98

The Crusaders are really remarkable musicians — each can work as many sessions as he likes; however, when they play together, there's a unique group magic. These two disks have been assembled from the five previous LPs, and there's a lot for any jazz, R&B or progressive programmer to choose from. With this package available, the catalog should move along with it, and The Crusaders will assume a rightful share of record sales.



HEARD YA MISSED ME, WELL I'M BACK — Sly & The Family Stone — Epic PE 34348 — Producer: Sly Stone & Sylvester Stewart — List: 6.98

Splitting the production credit with himself, Sly Stone has made a successful return to the recording arena. The songs here are extensions of where he left off — smartly arranged funk and R&B, with a smattering of jazz and pop influence that's sure to cross this over onto a couple of charts. The title cut is filled with melody; the tune is fresh. "Nothing Less Than Happiness" seems like a great singles choice, along with the poignant "Family Again."

WAYLON LIVE — Waylon Jennings — RCA APL 1-1108 — Producers: Waylon Jennings & Ray Pennington — List: 6.98

What with the tremendous recent acceptance of "outlaw" country music in the pop scene, this live Waylon Jennings album should get across-the-board play and sales. Other writers represented are Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson and Jimmie Rodgers' "T For Texas." The band is in fine form, with steel ace Ralph Mooney supplying perfect counterpoint to Waylon's choppy, hook-filled lead work. Display in retail outlets is a must.



LET 'EM IN — Billy Paul — Philly Int'l./CBS PZ 34389 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

Taking the title from the cut penned and recently sung by Paul McCartney, Billy Paul shines in this attractive package which was overseen by Gamble and Huff. The style of the LP is inherent in "Let 'Em In"; Paul's high, sweet vocal accentuates certain phrases to highlight nuances that you never thought existed before. "I Trust You" by Gamble and Huff is a killer, with obvious, attractive hooks that could cross this one pop.

WHERE WILL YOU GO WHEN THE PARTY'S OVER — Archie Bell & The Drells — Philly Int'l./CBS PZ 34323 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

Archie Bell & The Drells have come up with another album of solid funk cuts, recorded (where else?) at Sigma Sound. The single "Nothing Comes Easy" is included, and there are other cuts, most notably the title track, that could easily have singles success. R&B programmers could safely choose anything here. Disco jocks will pick up on "I Bet I Can Do That Dance You're Doin'."



JOHN HAMMOND: SOLO — John Hammond — Vanguard VSD 79280 — Producer: Maynard Solomon — List: 6.98

John Hammond is one of the best blues singers and players in America today, and on this album (recorded live) is hard evidence. He takes tunes by Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Elmore James, and the like, and infuses them with soulful, frenetic slide work and aching, right-on-target vocals. In-store play is mandatory for this artist; although Hammond's been around for quite some time this is his finest album in years.

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE! — The Not Ready For Prime Time Players — Arista 4107 — Producer: Michael O'Donoghue — List: 6.98

A comedy album, this contains many of the highlights of the first couple of seasons of NBC's popular late night show. Danny Ackroyd does an imitation of our next president and the three women in the cast provide a fifty-ish homage to Chevy Chase — besides being hilarious, the music is really good. Progressive programmers should put this one in the front of their comedy bins and use it often. Retailers should display — this is a perfect item for the season.



SWEET BIRD — Lani Hall — A&M SP 4617 — Producer: Herb Alpert — List: 6.98

This album is worth the purchase price alone for its definitive version of "Send In The Clowns." Stanley Clarke, one of the world's great bass players, is ultimately sensitive to both the needs of the tune and Hall's vocals. In an album well produced by Herb Alpert, Hall does eight other tunes with equal flair, including Joni Mitchell's "Sweet Bird" and Michael Franks' "Mr. Blue." This is a case of carefully chosen material; all of these would be right for FM play; "Send In The Clowns" could get some top 40 spins.

THE JAMES MONTGOMERY BAND — James Montgomery Band — Island ILPS 9419 — Producers: Allan Toussaint, Marshall Sehorn — List: 6.98

A renovated James Montgomery leads his new, capable band through an album of funk and blues produced brilliantly by Allan Toussaint and Marshall Sehorn. This stuff is a lot better than the records a lot of more famous groups are churning out: it has style, wit and substance. "City Music" is a powerhouse cut that should get a lot of FM exposure — Montgomery's harp play and singing is first rate throughout.

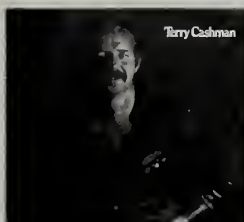
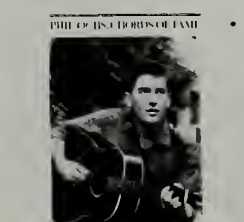


MELODY MAKER — Hugh Masekela — Casablanca NBLP-7036 — Producers: Hugh Masekela & Stewart Levine — List: 6.98

Masekela delivers some smooth disco-jazz numbers, highlighted, of course, by his fine horn work and well-arranged backing instruments and vocals. There's an imaginative, hook-filled version of "The Best Of My Love," along with some mellow pieces suitable for jazz and progressive radio. There's a real latin flavor here that cuts through even the most standard disco arrangements. A pleasing album, this should show up fast on pop and R&B sales charts.

CHORDS OF FAME — Phil Ochs — A&M SP-4599 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

This is a bargain two-pocket set that's made up of the best stuff that Phil Ochs ever recorded. "I Ain't Marchin' Anymore" is given a fine electric reading, and the tunes progress logically to his last single for A&M — "Here's To The State Of Richard Nixon." With thoughtful liner notes by Ed Sanders and the vast body of work included, this should be a heavy seller for Christmas and for future catalog sales.



TERRY CASHMAN — Terry Cashman — Lifesong LS6006 — Producers: Terry Cashman & Tommy West — List: 6.98

A slick pop album, this solo effort by Cashman should find a quick home in many markets. The tunes are, without fail, pleasant to listen to, with good lyrics and production. There are a couple of AM singles shots, as well as MOR and FM possibilities. Look for "Baby, Baby I Love You" to get play on both bands, and "We'll Be Together," a beautiful ballad, to get concentrated FM spins. Henry Gross lends a hand on electric guitars and gives the record extra spark.