

## Motown Sales & Promotion Staffs Reorganized at 4th Quarter Meet

■ HOLLYWOOD, CAL.—Motown Records' "4th Quarter" sales and promotion meetings, held recently in Los Angeles, evolved into the biggest and most extensive national conclave the label has put together in several years.

Organized by executive vice president Barney Ales, vice president of promotion Paul L. Johnson and vice president of sales Mike Lushka, the week-long meetings resulted in the reorganization of Motown's sales and promotional staffs into regional teams, effectively linking them with the label's national distributors. Structured into four competitive programs geared toward a total marketing penetration of all Motown album and single product.

After a keynote address by Ales, who stressed Motown's increasing penetration of the cross-over pop/r&b market, label vice president and artist Smokey Robinson gave the audience (many of whom were recently added to the field force) a retrospective look at the philosophy behind Motown Records.

Overall meetings were chaired

by Ales, Lushka, Johnson, Bunky Sheppard, national director of promotion-r&b; Ron Saul, national director of promotion-pop; Miller London, national director of single sales; and Pete Senoff, national director of advertising and merchandising.

Motown's newly-initiated pop field force, under the leadership of Ron Saul, gathered together for the first time during these meetings and plotted strategy on current and upcoming pop-oriented product. Regionally structured, the team consists of: Stan Lewerke (west coast); William Beamish (east coast); Timothy Kehr (midwest) and Dave Mueller and Wayne Fogle (south).

### Additional Meetings

Later meetings included a preview of upcoming album product conducted by vice president of creative services Suzanne de Passe and vice president of creative operations Herb Belkin; a discussion on the state of racks today chaired by Ira Heilicher; several trade magazine chart orientation seminars; and a collective screening of the new Motown film, "Mahogany."

## Elton and Friends



Photo: Terry O'Neill

Elton naturally sold out his two shows at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles on October 25 and 26, playing before over 100,000 people in two concerts that also featured Joe Walsh and Emmy Lou Harris. Shown above is Elton, in his sequined Dodger uniform, and friends.

## Kris And Rita Gold

■ LOS ANGELES—The first album released by Rita Coolidge and Kris Kristofferson together entitled, "Full Moon" has been certified gold by the RIAA. The A&M album is the first gold album for Rita Collidge.

## Elton's 'Westies' Certified Gold

■ LOS ANGELES—Elton John's newest MCA album, "Rock Of The Westies" has been certified gold. The lp, which was released on October 20, was certified gold by the RIAA the day of its release.

Produced by Gus Dudgeon, "Rock Of The Westies" is the first album featuring Elton John's new band. It is also Elton's tenth platinum lp, according to MCA.

## Epic To Distribute Virgin in U.S.

■ NEW YORK—Ron Alexenburg, vice president and general manager, Epic and CBS Custom Labels, and Richard Branson, president and founder of Virgin Records, have announced the signing of a distribution arrangement whereby Epic will distribute all Virgin product in the United States.

### Oldfield Signed

The first artist signed to the Epic roster under the Virgin banner is Mike Oldfield, whose "Tubular Bells" album achieved gold status last year. Oldfield's new album, entitled "Ommadawn," will be the first album with the Virgin logo to be distributed in the U.S. by Epic.

### Alexenburg Statement

In making the announcement, Alexenburg stated that, "Virgin Records has, in a very short span of time, established itself as one of the foremost progressive music labels in Great Britain. Richard Branson has built up Virgin from a small retail opera-

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Pictured at the Motown meetings are, top row, from left: Motown executive vice president Barney Ales and artist Smokey Robinson; the Motown sales and marketing staffs with Suzanne de Passe, Herb Belkin and Robinson. Bottom row, from left: RW director of marketing Lenny Beer, RW r&b editor Dede Dabney, RW VP and west coast manager Spence Berland and Motown promotion VP Paul Johnson after the Record World chart presentation; and Motown's Mike Lushka, Johnson, de Passe and Belkin.

## Mitchell and Browne Re-Sign with Asylum

■ LOS ANGELES—Joni Mitchell and Jackson Browne have resigned with the Asylum label, according to David Geffen, chairman of Elektra/Asylum/Nonesuch Records. Both contracts have been extended for an additional five years.

## Forlenza Resigns

■ LOS ANGELES—Tom Cat Records has announced the resignation of its vice president of marketing, Sal Forlenza.

Mr. Forlenza intends to pursue various other personal interests and develop a west coast base for his advertising checking service, D.A.F. Control Services.

He can be reached at 454-1365.

## Carpenters Cancel European Tour

■ LOS ANGELES—The Carpenters have announced that their European concert tour has been cancelled due to Karen Carpenter's ill health. In addition, the Carpenters will not be able to perform on the Royal Variety Performance television show.