

A New Combination for James Taylor

by JUDITH SIMS

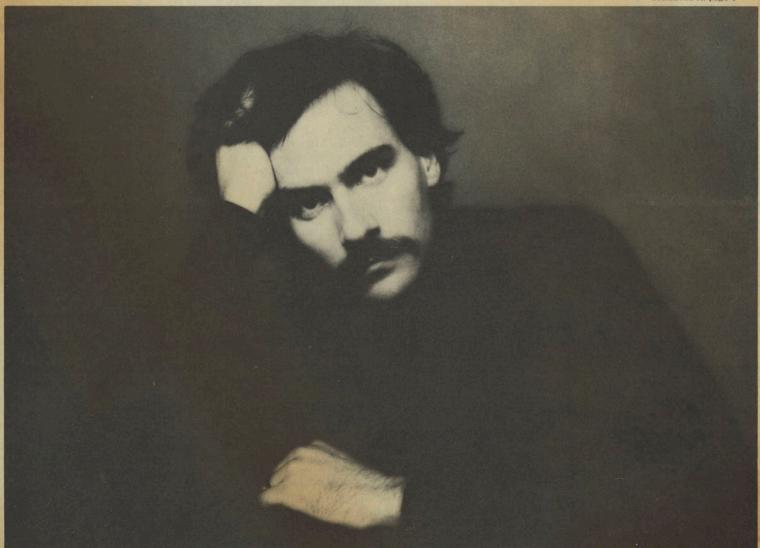
"I think I'll buy a Holiday Inn franchise when I retire." James Taylor was on the road again, and although the tour was doing well (except for a canceled show in Chicago because of the 24-hour flu), the hotels hadn't changed much. "I'm getting more attuned to touring, though," he said almost reluctantly. He spoke long distance from Cincinnati

and later Westchester, Long Island, not exactly citadels of urbane sophistication.

It was Taylor's annual tour, usually timed to coincide with the release of a new album.

but bad luck this time—the album, which was finished several weeks ago, didn't make the light of record stores until the tour ended.

Gorilla, produced by WB's
Continued on page 4



Hemosexual Song Gets FeMag Approval



Alice Cooper Doesn't Live Here Anymore. That's because his most recent LP-withgiant-hit-single was released on Atlantic Records and the large corporate nose of Warner Bros. is out of joint by about 45° although his contract remains intact. Ms. Magazine. however, thinks Alice is absolutely tops and threw a wingding lunch in his honor, according to a recent issue of English trade paper Sounds. Ms.-ers reportedly said they were celebrating "the women's lib message in Cooper's recording 'Only Women Bleed," which contains lyrics like "She cries alone at night too often/He smokes and drinks and don't come home at all."* Sounds said Alice was "quite flattered," but characterized himself "still very much of a male chauvinist." I'll sav. I wonder if Ms. Magazine

*©1975 Ezra Music BMI and Early Frost BMI knows that the album cut is titled "Only Women Bleed," but the 45's printed "Only Women," to eliminate the possibility of radio stations declining to play a period piece.

Sweet Dick. If you live in Los Angeles and own a radio, you might know Dick Whittington. He's a wonderful disc jockey who was on LA's KGIL for some seven years. Almost a year went by while Dick was off the air. Recently (May 12) he returned to local radio station KFI. Oldtime WB chums decided to make the most of it and you can see the results nearby. Los Angeles Regional Marketing Manager Alan Mink made a few strategic arrangements with help from WEA West Coast Marketing Manager Rick Cohen and WB Los Angeles Promotion Man Chris Crist. They called Fred Anderson of TV Channel 7 Evewitness News, hid a homemade "cream" pie (10 per cent pie shell, 90 per cent Reddi Whip) in a large album box, designed a fake plaque to give the appearance of officialgoings-on and then pie-faced Mr. Whittington in front of TV and everyone. The vignette appeared on the 6 and

Inspirational Berse

Our real old man he got killed in the war And she knows she and seven kids couldn't have gotten very far. —The Winstons

"Color Him Father"



Details Nearby, Identification Here. From left to right is Fred Anderson (Channel 7 News), Rick Cohen (WEA West Coast Marketing Coordinator), Sweet Dick (all gooey), Alan Mink (LA Regional Marketing Manager) and Chris Crist (Los Angeles Promotion Man). Photo by David Hiller.

11 o'clock news and everyone was happy. With friends like that . . .

There'll Always Be Trade Papers. On the cover of a recent issue of *Billboard* appeared the following headline: "Vietnam: a Major Market Fades."

Week's Best in Words and Noises. Under headline "Gossip" in a current Pizza Platters, semi-monthly newsletter from Licorice Pizza (a popular southern California record store chain), came the following cadre of colorful contract clauses maintained by Big Rock Stars. Factual or not, this beauty deserves Ruby's-Print-Award-of-the-Week: "Cat Stevens must have an Indian chef to prepare full-course meals for himself and his guests, plus a supply of Orange Julius beverages, nuts and raisins-about \$1,800 worth: Renaissance must have 10,000 tulip petals dropped from above the stage during the group's encore (no color specified): Bob Dylan insists on a dressing room

with a ping pong table; the Grateful Dead get steak and lobster dinners for the band and entire road crew each night [this only applies on tour, I'm sure]: The Allman Brothers Band wants 40 cases of Budweiser and, finally, The Rolling Stones' list of potables and comestibles fills two entire contract pages." As for Ruby's Radio Rocket Award, it's launched to KBBC. Phoenix, Arizona, for fulltime rotation addition of "I'll Play for You," neoteric 45 by Seals & Crofts, and meteoric elevation of The Doobies' Bro. still-warm single, "Take Me in Your Arms (Rock Me)."

Oversight Department.

Circular's recent spread on Curtis Mayfield and his Curtom Records (vol. 7 number 18) failed to tell you who's currently who in the Impressions. We'll take care of that now: the "original" members, Fred Cash and Sam Gooden, were joined by newcomers Reggie Torian and Ralph Johnson. Also, in the story on the Beau Brummels (vol. 7 number 19), written

before we found out there is now a fifth Brummel—Dan Levitt. Pre-Brummel Dan added his guitar and banjo talents to *The Beau Brummels* LP, which, incidentally, was co-produced by Ted Templeman and Lenny Waronker.

Ruby's Run-Ons

Another Album-We-Can't-Wait-to-Hear ships out of Capitol Records this month. Titled Lullaby From the Womb, it is "an unprecedented recording of a pregnant mother's bodybeat," according to Cash Box. Dr. Hajime Murooka of Nippon Medical University in Tokyo placed a mike inside an 8-month pregnant lady to get the special effects. Reports the Box. "Since the album's release in Japan, it has rapidly become that country's most efficient baby pacifier." Dr. Murooka is an obstetrician whose studies, according to a cited Newsweek article, suggest "crying babies may sometimes just be homesick for the familiar prenatal environment of their mothers' wombs." If you're wishing you could sleep with Cher or a facsimile thereof, there are two ways to go about it now. thanks to our Marvelous Merchandising Department. Our Merchers have produced life-size stand-up cardboard cutouts of the lady (which'll be distributed to local record stores) and lots of sensuous golden satin pillow cases from where Cher's likeness softly looks up. The pillowcases are part of a press kit being mailed to various radio stations and other Important People on the Press Kit List. You'll recall my description of that monumental on-going Chicago/

Beach Boys tour a few columns back? Billboard recently reported that the intermission includes circus acts. Glad That's All Cleared Up. According to Daily Variety (May 15), "Frank Sinatra was awarded substantial but undisclosed libel damages and an apology from the British Broadcasting Corp. for reporting allegations that he received a role in the pic From Here to Eternity through Mafia connections." From Our Lady of International Fol-de-Rol Anne Marie Micklo, comes another exclusive-to-Circular-photo with



the following explanation, "This one shows famous and infamous British journalists returning to their public (in England Private) school roots, at Stony Brook University, awaiting a Maria Muldaur concert there recently. The stretcher was brought in to alleviate certain tendencies to boredom and recognition of "generation gapitis." The incredible Ms. Micklo appears in this photo and, if you really know your stuff, you'll be able to spot her in a minute. Many thanks to Michael Putland

Bob Dylan insists on a dressing room with a ping pong table while the Grateful Dead get steak and lobster dinners for the band and entire road crew each night.

(UK) for photography. Poor Taste in Public Speaking Award of the Week zips off to Capricorn's Martin Mull who, in his emcee-ish introduction (May 17) of Bonnie Raitt to (NYC) Carnegie Hall's audience said, among other things, "...so I think Bonnie would appreciate a warm hand on her opening." That's not all, either. The next day Mr. Mull delighted NY radio station WQIV staffers by playing bottleneck guitar with a vibrator. Executive length, Martin, or regular? Canadian Concert Lovers prepare to get a jump on the masses of American Event Attenders. June 20, 21 and 22 will see the well-known and established Mariposa Festival at which Kate and Anna McGarrigle will appear. I, for one, have never heard the ladies perform but hallway whispers indicate it's a treat in store.

The evening of May 2 was one for the Doobies. They turned in a hot performance at LA's Fabulous Forum which was closely followed by quite-the-posh-party at which stargazers' eves were rolling. Among guests: Rod Stewart, Britt Ecklund, Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, Cher, Gregg Allman, Bryan Ferry, Our Chairman Mo, plus Richie Hayward, Sam Clayton and Kenny Gradney (all of Little Feat). Speaking of Little Feat, Ben Edmonds recently mentioned in his Coast column of Record World that Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were so impressed with the Feats' past Rainbow show in London, they've reportedly offered Lowell and Co. several dates to play with Themselves, The Stones. Did I mention Rod Stewart? According to another tidbit from Sounds, he's just turned down the opportunity to bare all as the nude

centerfold for Playgirl. Apparently, Viva wanted him too but he put a stop to all of it by declaring nude photos not in "his line of work." Rats, Rod. @ Randy Newman's been voted Most Promising Artist by Germany's Recording Society Academy. ("An Academy Award?" ventured Our International Lady. as she beguilingly handed over this information.) Randy's also been voted in by me under Quote-of-the-Week banner for the following (for which I credit to Rolling Stone magazine), "Although he was scheduled to begin recording his next album this month, Randy Newman told Rolling Stone that he 'didn't know anything about what was to be in it. He said, "Maybe I'll have Bernie Taupin send me the lyrics and I'll do it in 23 minutes."

Circ Skips

The onset of warm weather has induced torpor among Circular's already-hypothyroid staff so, beginning with next week's Memorial Day Week non-issue, this rag will not publish each week after a week in which it has published or, to perhaps state it more clearly, every other weekly issue won't exist. Perhaps you could call us biweekly, for at least as long as the warm weather persists, which means probably through fall. Just like last year.



James Taylor Delivers Unto th

Continued from page 1 own Lenny Waronker and Russ Titelman, pleases James.

On and On. It's Taylor's sixth album in seven years, his fifth for WB and, as always before, the company waited on James' new effort. And waited. But this time it wasn't James' fault.

"I was really for it," he said, a note of pride in his voice.

"I had most of the material writen, hadn't smoked a cigarette in over a year; I was in good shape; I was ready to go in December, but because of Russ and Lenny's schedule we went into the studio in February."

Gorilla marked the reunion of old Taylor regulars Danny Kootch, guitar; Russ Kunkel, drums; and Lee Sklar, bass; plus famous sidemen (as in the George Harrison tour) Willie Weeks (bass) and Andy Newmark, drums. "We got Lowell George (from Little Feat) and Crosby and Nash (from Crosby and Nash) on another track and Carly singing on one track. It's real nice."

Waronker was even more pleased. "James was one of the nicest and easiest guys to work with; it made us want to make a bigger effort."

Taylor and engineer Lee Herschberg invented an instrument for the album, heard on "Lighthouse" and called the hornorgan. It's really two 24-track tape machines running simultaneously through a keyboard (played by Randy Newman); "It took about 20 hours of studio time, and it sounds like a Hammond organ," James said.

Another Reflection. "Lighthouse" is what Taylor calls "the inevitable autobiographical song" on the album, like "Mud Slide Slim" and "Fading Away" and "Hey, Mister That's Me Up on the Jukebox." A less familiar kind of tune is "You Make It Easy," which Taylor composed on the piano. "It has a simpler chord progression, so I guess you could call it a departure," he said.

Waronker (who also happens to be Vice President of A&R at WB) agreed, sort of: "The album's a departure, but to what extent I just don't know. There's more music surrounding him on this record. It seems to blend better or more naturally. We did little things that he hadn't done before and it seemed to work. It's basically more 'up' than the other records."

Between infrequent tours and albums Taylor seems to disappear somewhere on the East Coast, showing up very occasionally at a party wearing a big bow tie and smiling at his sexy wife, Carly Simon. His semireclusive life isn't mysterious. It's normal.

"After Carly and I married (two and a half years ago), we moved to a new place in New York and tried it for a year,

e Planet His Ape

but I don't think it's for us. I've been spending time trying to put the Massachusetts place in shape. And we write a lot and have a baby to raise. The fact that we both do the same things, our schedules tend to mesh a bit."

The baby, Sarah Maria, has her own lullaby on *Gorilla*, not surprisingly called "Sarah Maria." It's Taylor's second lullaby, the first being "Sweet Baby James," written for his nephew.

Mushroom Pad. That house in Massachusetts, by the way, was built by Taylor himself with some help from his friends; originally a small bachelor's place, it has "grown malignantly" to accommodate his family.

Taylor was the first pop star to have his picture on the cover of *Time* magazine, and for a while it seemed as if he was the new Messiah—a loner, sad and pensive, but with a sense of humor that always caught us by surprise. But Taylor is also that rarest of beings, a *smart* star, who's hardly ever impressed with fame or image.

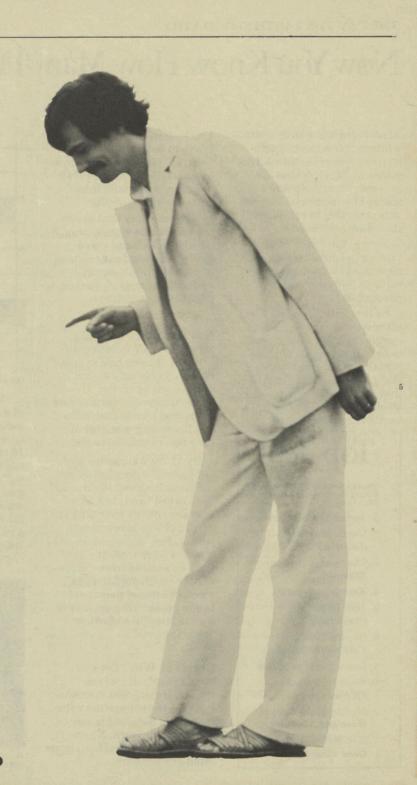
"I don't know how long
I can do this," he said of his
career; he said it so matter of
factly he might have been
discussing his mustache
instead of a million-dollar
career, the kind of career
most musicians would sell
their grandmother to get and
then sell their mother to keep.

"I'd like to move into some other thing," he mused, unconcerned. "Maybe go back to school and learn how to do something else; it would be nice to be able to read music."

Unheard Music. Taylor has vet to explore his potential as a film star; although he seems unimpressed by a film future, he's not indifferent. He did star in one film, Two Lane Blackton, which prompted more bad reviews that it deserved. Since then James (and Carly) has received offers for films, but no script has beckoned strongly. Taylor did write some music for the film Badlands and wrote a song for Shampoo "that was never heard," he said, with the slightest trace of disgruntlement.

James has never pursued stardom. It just sort of fell on him, and though he wears it gracefully he doesn't appear to give a hoot whether he keeps it or not. "I've always thought of myself as a solo act, but lately I've discovered that it's really fun to work with other people. I think I'd like to do that a lot more, as a side man."

He warmed to that topic easily. "It started off working with Carly [they had a hit, "Mockingbird," off her Hotcakes album]; well, no, it started when I did some work on Joni Mitchell's Ladies of the Canyon. But that's what I want to do, spread it around."



Now You Know How Many Holes It Takes To Fill Circ

Birds know when to fly south, winter after winter. Earthworms regenerate themselves, even when their bodies are severed. An atmosphere scarred by industrial by-products struggles to replenish its natural makeup.

Nature has a way of maintaining balance, keeping the elements of a man-ravaged earth in harmony and proportion.

So it is with Circular. Week after week, year after year, the plucky little weekly seems to have just enough of this to make up for a paucity of that; just the right pinch of that to stand in for a missing smidgen of the other thing, neatly filling each issue.

Top Ten

Based on Warner Bros. sales figures for the week of May 12-16.

- 1. James Taylor/Gorilla
- 2. Curtis Mayfield/ America Today
- 3. The Doobie Brothers/ Stampede
- 4. America/Hearts
- 5. Jimi Hendrix/ Crash Landing
- 6. Gordon Lightfoot/ Cold on the Shoulder
- 7. Leo Sayer/Just a Boy
- 8. Seals & Crofts/ I'll Play for You
- 9. Martin Mull/Days of Wine and Neuroses
- 10. Rod McKuen/ Good Time Music

Exception to the Rule. It would be naive, however,

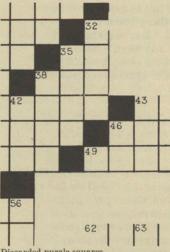
to expect this balance always to be in effect-for the fabric of order, if you will, to be seamless and stainless.

The exception that proves the rule is this week's issue, in which an□-shaped space approximating four columns of type turned up empty as deadlines neared, leaving page 7 companionless.

Not Surprised. Actuallymembers of Circular's staff say-the "brown hole in space" is remarkable only in that it didn't turn up earlier. Hundreds of previous issues were unmarred by any such defect, and it was only a matter of time before this happened.

By 11:30 Wednesday morning-a time when the bulk of the issue is almost invariably "put to bed" and staff members are already weighing the merits of The Magic Apple Inn against the enticements of Frank's Buckaroo-the publication's offices were the scene of sober contemplation, as awed, chastened personnel began considering options in a grim last-ditch effort to "plug the hole."

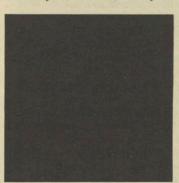
Bereft of Wit. "Let's do a puzzle page," offered one staffer. He watched disconsolately as the suggestion wilted in the cold light of his associates' blank gazes. No one could think of a question, never mind any answers.



Discarded puzzle squares.

"We could run a big square of solid black with a caption indicating that out of 20,000 Circulars printed this week, 10 of them have gold stars under the black ink, which will come off in water," suggested the same guy. "Then whoever finds a gold star in his issue would be eligible for a trip to Burbank to meet Ruby Monday."

Everyone was amused by



Do not hold this black space under running water.

the notion of thousands of people holding their Circulars under running water, only to find out they'd been tricked, but Solomon Penthaus, who had just returned from Washington, worried that the Federal Commission on House Organs might take action.

Cheap Joke. The magazine's Dance Editor thought he should do a wry column announcing that Warner Bros. Records, which knows a trend when it's bitten in the ass by one, was going to initiate a series of timely bump records ("It ain't no harm to do the bump/Some people over there are doing the double bump" was to be a nearby Inspirational Verse, thanks to Joe Simon's "Get Down, Get Down"). Every disc would have a pebbled surface.

Well, that got a chuckle or two from his associates, but the laughter sprang more from nerves than from open risibility.

Big Words. "How about getting Mr. Fine Print to write big this week?" growled Penthaus, veins rising into prominence on his neck like earthworms rise on a golf course between 10 p.m. and midnight.

"Won't work" declared the raven-haired lady who knows Circular's anatomy like she knows the back of Solomon's hand. "All you'll do is crowd Demento and it won't help to fill those empty columns."

"It seems as if we have no choice" snanned the nublisher

Francis Albert (Hall) Sinatra, O.B.E.

Ol' Blue Eyes Is Back and Forth. When Frank Sinatra arrived in London the other week to get sorted out for his



European tour, the press had a field day, or at least tried to. Ol' Blue Eves' every blink was documented with a passion worthy of A. J. Weberman. The man was here to rehearse with his 65-piece, mainly-British orchestra before taking off to the Continent to start playing for real. He is saving the Albert Hall, London, for last. The latest offer I heard for a single seat at that venue was 250 dollars. May has been officially declared Sinatra month by WB and, so far, the weather has been glorious. A special, four-LP boxed edition of Sinatra's all-time best stuff has been prepared, with a ritzy gold and ivory gloss package appropriate to the creme de la creme. Like Frank Z. a few weeks before him, Frank S. went shopping for clothes and ordered a couple of suits from the tailor favored by Roger Moore whose threads O.B.E. had admired.

Soylent Brown. I was trying to eat a chocolate truffle

from the incomparable Maison Bertaux down the other end of Greek Street when Janet rushed up to my desk (which isn't really my desk) brandishing the Sunday Times and pointing to the article about students at Liverpool University who have achieved the ultimate in recycling. They have made biscuits out of what is least offensively known as human waste. The students, who mutter a lot about "overcoming taboos," confess the things don't taste great, but they are impressively high in nitrates. And perhaps a humbling snack for those who maintain you are what you eat?

I've Got the Product in Me. A trekking party set out from Greek Street to distant Manchester, the industrial capital of the north of England, in order to see Greenslade. Things have really hotted up for Greenslade lately. Their growing following, like an assiduously tended coal fire, has now made its presence felt. aiming the group's current LP, Time and Tide, into the charts almost immediately after release. The anecdote I am leading up to is that after the gig, leader Dave Greenslade asked Martin Jennings (Greek Street's versatile second-in-command), "What do you think of our product?" Martin was puzzled. "Do you mean your music or what?" he asked. Dave Greenslade said he thought all record company people referred to music as product, whereupon Martin,

who is known as much for his volatile temperament as his cool head for figures, blew the sort of fit that in comics appears as "&':Z-#&\$;*/?." (Martin still calls the stuff music . . .)

Downs and Ups. All the hearts on fire in anticipation of Emmylou Harris' visit here have had to simmer down because now all of a sudden she's been given something else terribly interesting to do, which I'm not sure I'm at liberty to reveal yet. However, there is some solace in The Doobie Brothers Stampeding into the British album charts.

A Fist Unclenches. There is no doubt in my mind that people who work for record companies are among the very worst record store patrons in the world. They are used to bumming whatever they like from friends in other companies. I'm as bad as the rest. but the other day I forked out for the first time since 1969 to buy Buddy Holly Legend, the double LP released here by MCA. I think it is perfecta textbook in how this sort of package should be done, with the tracks ideally programed. mono left mono, and excellent liner notes-so I felt that paying for it with real money was the only suitable token of my esteem. The good news is that we have a similar project underway here on behalf of the Everly Brothers. Need I say Dave the Rave is masterminding ...

-SHELLEY BENOIT

Vinyl Statistics

Your signature on the enclosed Subscription Reservation Certificate entitles you to examine a FREE Preview Issue of Vital Dreck and reserves you a one-year, 26-issue, subscription for only \$60.76-a full 2% saving over the \$62.00 newsstand price.

VD tells you what's IN, what's OUT—who's IN or OUT plus who's BACK IN and who's BACK OUT, not to mention who's IN AGAIN after being IN and OUT.

As an added feature, VD keeps you informed of the current releases of Warner/Reprise and affiliated labels.

VD has much to stir your interest, we promise you.

Singles

MAY 21

"Geronimo's Cadillac"/
"These Days"-CherWarner Bros. WBS 8096

"Carolyn at the Broken Wheel Inn"/"Again"-Joe Allen-Warner Bros. WBS 8098

"Sally Ann"/"I See the Light"-Bonaroo-Warner Bros, WBS 8103

"Peanut Butter"/"Grits and Gravy"-Razzy Bailey-Capricorn CPS 0238

Albums

MAY 16

Initiation—Todd Rundgren
—Bearsville BS 6957

From Guarded Grooves to Limp Discs

"Notice on this long play record a new raised center and outer edge which is an RCA Victor improvement designed to help protect the playing surface of the record from abrasion, scratches and any contact with other records. This important new feature will give you many hours of additional pleasure from your RCA Victor records."

Thus did RCA Victor ballyhoo one of the neatest tricks in recordmaking history, one 8 that is taken for granted by LP buyers these days. Actually, it's not a case of raising the centers and edges; they remained the same thickness as before, to accommodate changers designed in the 78-rpm era. "Gruve/Gard"as RCA called this process which was adopted almost simultaneously by most American and European record pressers-is more accurately a process of recessing the playing surfaces, thereby making the major part of the disc considerably thinner. Not only does this cut down on scratches, it also saves a lot of vinvl.

The earliest discs with recessed surfaces were made by The Talk-O-Phone Co. before 1910. These are single-sided 78s which also have very fancy embossed gold labels. The idea wasn't picked up again until 1947 when a few Mercury 78s appeared, pressed

on break-resistant plastic. Until 1955, LPs were made just like most 78s—the same thickness all the way across. While the extra heft of these discs may satisfy the tactile senses of the collector, the extra scratch is not likely to please his or her aural senses.

RCA ran into different kinds of problems when it introduced "Dynaflex" in 1971. Dynaflex was basically an exaggerated Gruve-Gard. Except for the edges and labels, the discs were hardly thicker than postcards. They sagged limply in your hands, and could be bent almost double.

The savings in postage, and vinyl consumption, were considerable. Consumers disagreed as to their playing qualities. As a disc jockey, it seemed to me that their main problem had to do with the necessity for keeping the labels and rims at that same old 78 thickness. The rims rose so far above the playing surfaces that the bottoms of certain popular cartridges would bump raucously along the record's edge as one attempted to play the opening track.

In any case, RCA gradually returned its discs to normal thickness, and, a year or so ago, the Dynaflex trademark was quietly dropped.

Question for Next Week.

What prominent Columbia recording artist of the 1950s, born in Yugoslavia, adopted the first name of his Columbia producer as his stage surname? (Hints: the singer's records often featured French horns in the orchestra; the producer went on to become a TV celebrity and successful recording artist.)

ESTABLISHING SHOT of a huge goldcolored COPY OF CIRCULAR. Enter MR. FINE PRINT.

MR. FINE PRINT: Hi. I'm Mr. Fine Print. Remember me? Just a few weeks ago, I was doing a little thing called "You and Your Vocabulary." (Passage from "You and Your Vocabulary" flashes across screen.) Well, now you can relive some of those golden moments of Circular memories with SolPentCo's exclusive Trip Down Flakkery Lane package-including such treasures as Our British Observer's deleted gaffes (DELETED GAFFE flashes across screen), Ruby Monday's triple entendres (TRIPLE ENTENDRE flashes across screen) and the famous Demento Tag that was actually a parody of Eliot's "Four Quartets." And-if you order now -you may be one of the lucky ones who wins a single Warner/Reprise catalog album-just as Dave Walters of far-flung London, England, did by correctly answering Dr. Demento's May 12 ques-



tion! Here's someone now who can tell you how to enter!

ANNCR. (V.O.): Just send the correct answer to this week's Dr. Demento question to Dr. Demento, Circular, Warner Bros. Records, 3300 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Ca. 91505. Entries will be pro-rated for distance, neatness and originality. Always state an album preference, and never eat in a restaurant whose name you can't pronounce.

circular

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