

AGGIELIFE

Thursday, March 30, 2000

THE BATTALION

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Teen band 'N Sync sets sales record 2.4 million copies of latest album, No Strings Attached, sold in 7 days

NEW YORK (AP) — It's been nothing but "buy buy buy" for 'N Sync fans.

In a remarkable display of teen-age buying power, the pop heartthrobs sold 2.4 million copies of their new disc in seven days — more than double the previous record. The disc features their latest hit "Bye, Bye, Bye."

Sales of their *No Strings Attached* album swamped the 1.13 million sold by 'N Sync's fellow boy band, the Backstreet Boys, last year.

In fact, executives at 'N Sync's label, Jive Records, suspect the sales record was broken in just one day, when *No Strings Attached* first appeared in stores March 21. But the executives have no figures to confirm this.

"It's pretty staggering," Barry Weiss, Jive Records president, said Wednesday. "It's pretty amazing, it's pretty numbing, it's pretty great. This is really what the music business needs — it's getting young people interested in music again."

Since 'N Sync came from the same Orlando-based hit factory as fellow Jive artists Backstreet Boys, they have long been considered junior partners at best, knockoffs at worst. Not anymore.

"It's like going into the Super Bowl," said 'N Sync's manager, Johnny Wright. "You always want to come out on top. If you have defending champions, you want to knock them off."

"[The sales are] pretty staggering. It's pretty amazing, it's pretty numbing, it's pretty great. This is what the music business needs. ..."

— Barry Weiss
Jive Records president

A burgeoning teen population — the children of the original rock 'n' roll generation — and a booming economy combined to trigger the explosion of sales, said Alan Light, editor of Spin magazine.

The success of the Backstreet Boys, Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera have paved the way for mainstream media acceptance of 'N Sync, Light said. The band has appeared on magazine covers, was on "Saturday Night Live" three weeks ago and is a regular on MTV.

'N Sync touched off a mini-riot outside MTV's Times Square studio when it performed there the weekend before the album was released.

Band members are personable and accessible to their fans, particularly girls aged 8 to 18 who worship them, Weiss said.

Besides the Backstreet Boys' *Millennium*, only two other albums are known to have sold more than 1 million copies in a week: Garth Brooks' *Double Live* album and the soundtrack to *The Bodyguard*, according to Soundscan.

The company has been measuring album sales in the U.S. since 1991; precise sales figures before then are considered somewhat unreliable.

Jive, which pressed more than 6 million copies of the CD to be ready for the consumer rush, will try to break its own record when the Backstreet Boys release a new album in October.

News in Brief

LifeSavers to keep pineapple flavor

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — LifeSavers' basic Five Flavor roll will stay just the way it is after all — complete with pineapple.

The company, a division of Parsippany-based Nabisco Inc., had toyed with the idea of dropping it from the Five Flavor roll, which for 65 years has been the same: lime, lemon, cherry, orange and pineapple.

But a wave of telephone and Internet votes from customers indicated that most people thought the idea was, well, un-holey.

"There are a lot of pineapple aficionados out there," said Jim Goldman, LifeSavers' president. "That's what they want, so that's what we're going to give them."

He said company research indicated that pineapple was the least popular of the Five Flavor roll. Executives thought adding strawberry or watermelon would boost sales and please palates. So they set up special telephone lines and an Internet site to let people decide whether to deep-six pineapple.

More than a million votes were cast, and pineapple tallied 54 percent of the vote, whipping watermelon (25 percent) and strawberry (21 percent).

To celebrate pineapple's reprieve, the company is hiding special pineapple-only rolls among shipments of Five Flavor. Those who get one will win its weight in gold, a prize Goldman said could be worth as much as \$4,000.

Internet hoaxes, rumors, pranks not limited to April Fool's Day

NEW YORK (AP) — Free trips to Disney World, courtesy of Microsoft Corp.? Free soda from Coca-Cola? Free cars from Honda?

Forget it! You don't have to wait for April Fools' Day. Every day is a joke on the Internet. As the Net grows, so do the number of hoaxes and other mischief carried through email.

Rumors, pranks and hoaxes are not unique to the Internet, but they spread more quickly because of it, said Barbara Mikkelsen, who runs a Web site that tries to dispel such myths.

"Before, when I had a hot piece of gossip, I had to find my best friend and share it over a fence," she said. "Now I don't have to wait."

Take the Neiman Marcus "cookie recipe." Someone supposedly is billed \$250 for the store's \$2.50 recipe. In revenge, she forwards copies of the recipe to friends — and urges them to do the same.

When the rumor began circulating online more than a decade ago, the department store didn't sell cookies at its restaurants. The tale later made its way to the Internet — and the company still gets calls and letters.

To play along, Neiman Marcus created a recipe and then gave it away — for free. "It can be a big distraction," spokeswoman Ginger Reeder said. "The only way you handle it is with good humor and grace."

No one quite knows the roots of such myths.

"I suspect they are the result of creative minds trapped in boring jobs," said Brian

Maddox of Barrington, Ill., a regular recipient of electronic chain letters.

But such messages can clog company computers, trigger mistrust or encourage risky behavior. Internet users tired of virus hoaxes might ignore real threats. Sunbathers believing that sunscreen causes blindness might avoid the salve and risk sunburn or skin cancer.

"There's a lot of hokey on the Internet."



GATES

David Spalding, who writes the online column "Hoax du Jour," said friends and relatives often spread such "cyberban legends" with good intent. They are difficult to stop, he said, because "it's hard to tell Grandma or your brother, 'Don't send me email.'"

While Internet veterans may see through the hoaxes, newcomers often do not. As they get wiser, new generations of believers log on.

"People bring with them some old habits they learned from getting most of their information from the traditional media, mostly the ability to trust," said David Emery, who tracks urban legends for About.com. "They are not prepared for the anarchy."

Emery offers these tips: Assume con-

tents are false unless proven otherwise. Be skeptical if an offer — free Coke, free cars — appears overly generous. Verify before forwarding.

Alissa Strauss of Chicago learned that lesson. On the off-chance that she could replace an 11-year-old junker, she forwarded the Honda "promotion" to friends. Instead of a car, she got back Honda's denial and a friend's threat: "Never do this again."

"I really need a car," Strauss said later. "I just hoped, even though I don't ever believe in these."

Some companies may not be so forgiving. Citing a nonexistent study, one prankster falsely claimed that Kentucky Fried Chicken uses no chicken and thus had to change its name to KFC. The company posted a denial on its Web site and vowed to find the troublemaker.

For Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, chain letters are an abuse of technology and a waste of time. "There's a lot of hokey on the Internet," he wrote on his company's Website.

Charles Hymes, who runs Don't Spread That Hoax online, laughs — and agrees.

"The line between a hoax and a joke is sometimes pretty thin," he conceded. "There's nothing so outrageous, so goofy, that it won't be believed by thousands and thousands of people."

Consider last year's alert: For spring cleaning, all computer users should disconnect from 11:59 p.m. March 31 to 12:01 a.m. April 2, Greenwich Mean Time. Of course, if Internet users did just that, there would be no Internet left to clean up.

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Organized by:
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Thursday, March 30, 2000
 among
 yteller
 COURTESY OF DOWN HOLE
 Saturday at Crooked
 album, Carroll has been
 refreshingly storytelling
 ng
 songs in the folk music genre
 inadequacies and vices. Carroll
 characters temporarily parodi
 humorous anecdotes about
 in everyone's life.
 the Crooked Path Ale House
 show is \$5.
 Tomorrow, found a storytelling
 oll. Imaginative and funny
 onicles the lives of semi-ficti
 through a truly human ap
 He masterfully builds stories
 rough events, but through an
 ploration of situations and
 feelings. In "Cole," for exam
 introduces listeners to a man
 murder but redeemed through
 salvation in his jail cell once
 ough in *South of Town* his
 best (certainly Dylan-esque)
 ect, as well), Carroll gains
 in vocal talent through his
 skillful guitar picking and
 ence. (Grade: B)
 —Chris
 Saturday
 Shadow Canyon
 se — with Haywood
 Show starts at 9 p.m.
 is \$5.
 GO
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 Attention***
 w will be offered only
 once!
 Part III
 Tue Apr 4
 5pm-8pm
 Part III
 Thu Apr 6
 5pm-7pm
 Part III
 Thu Apr 6
 7pm-9pm
 Part IV
 Thu Apr 6
 6pm-8pm
 Part III
 Wed Apr 5
 8pm-10pm
 Part III
 Thu Apr 6
 10pm-12am
 Attention***
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 6pm-8pm
 Part IV
 Thu Apr 6
 6pm-8pm
 behind KFC next to La
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