

Records

STRAITJACKET FITS

Hail (Flying Nun) 12"

Thrown into the deep end of the publicity sea the Fits have bobbed to the surface with this, the title track from their new album, a determinedly thrashy piece. The *Hail* album offers atypical moments of melancholy and delicacy ('This Taste Delight') and let's hope they won't be ignored. 'Hail' the song is rapid and bitter and over all too soon; flip is their cover of the Prince of Wales' favourite performer Leonard Cohen's 'So Long Marianne,' a whirling paean that shines when removed from its Leonard-the-Moaner context. The sleeve artwork's also pretty swellsville. Looks like I've used up all my adjectives on this one.

SNAPPER Snapper EP (Flying Nun)

Snapper click into the increasingly referred-to Suicide groove, but rather than 'Diamonds, Fur Coats, Champagne' we get 'Death and

Weirdness In The Surfing Zone.' Latter track is by far the best on the EP, the others storm past without acknowledging you. Whereas the Straitjacket Fits have had their sound expanded by the studio, Snapper are maybe confined by it—live, surely, Christine Voice's keyboards would swell up more, and Alan Haig's drums would be just plain bigger'n'better all round?

HEADLESS CHICKENS Expectin' To Fly (Flying Nun) 12"

An extended remix from the *Stunt Clown* album, 'Expectin' To Fly' lays down its complaints over a great funk groove, the vocal duet reminding one of someone tres-70s (Alice Cooper?). Winning the Rheineck granted the Chooks the golden opportunity to saddle up and ride into the World That Makes Mainstream—were they pleased or horrified to find themselves in not unfamiliar territory? The flip features three old tracks recorded in the dank dark recesses of the BFM studios. Produced without the production skills of the George Lucas *Star Wars* team, the drums, etc, all have

a better sound—'Expectin' To Fly', despite its polish, must be turned up to flatmate-enraging volume levels before things begin to happen. Groovy. Now when do we get the House mix, guys?

BAILTER SPACE Grader Spader (Flying Nun) 12"

A new 1 x 45 from the much-lauded Baitler Space, on the turntable it went, and, and... Maybe try the flip side... and, and, yes, there it was! Dig that bona fide beat (real drums, no less) on 'Escalator Song', and the sliding tuneful whimsy that harked back to the Clean. But 'Grader Spader's' unvarying industrial texture grabs me not and worse, 'N.B.S.' apparently features the band tuning up, banging stuff. A let down.

CASUALTY Challenge (Do This)

Just in time for the Christmas market, Casualty have released a 45rpm mini album. It has a "hard side" and a "fast side" and that just about sums up the

style. The lyrics are fairly articulate pieces of anarcho-positivism. Thankfully there are no wretched speed-metal guitar solos, only enough melodic riffs and heavy chords to create a mildly Husker Du-ish effect. The drumming gives songs like 'Challenge' and 'Kingpin' the energy they need to be effective.

There's nothing revolutionary about Casualty's *Challenge*, but it's just as good as all the similar and over-priced stuff from overseas.

SINGLES

ICE-T Colors (Sire) 12"

Man of the moment for sure. Evil back beat with Ice doing a gang rap, even more chilling on the acappella version. Better than the film ever was.

PRINCE I Wish U Heaven (Paisley Park) 12"

Don't know about that Lovesexy

thing when heard in total but split into 12-inch versions it sounds great. One of the better songs on the album, and mixes a bit of Housequake to keep you interested. Better is 'Scarlet Pussy' on the flip, crazy piece of P-funk.

PROCLAIMERS I'm Gonna Be (Chrysalis) 7" / 12"

Certainly not a fan of Scottish folk duos, but this one at least has drums on it. Which means it's got a beat for a change, so you can tap your feet and sing along to this paean to crazy love.

JOHNNY DIESEL & THE INJECTORS Don't Need Love (Chrysalis) 10"

Can't quite see the joys in this. Doing big biz in Australia after Diesel's support for Jimbo Barnes, and the similarity between the two is too much for me. There's nothing wrong with Jimbo but there's no need for two of them. Recorded in Memphis, Tennessee, but it sounds like they used Mr Diesel's bedroom for the mix-down. Might sound better in the context of an album, but gets lost on a single.

JESSE JOHNSON Every Shade of Love (Festival) 7" / 12"

Go for the big 12" on this one, real nice funky feel with snatches of cool sax make this essential summer listening. Re-mixed by Keith Cohen who stretches it out without adding any of those unnecessary bits that cause brain damage. Just love the House mix of 'Lovestruck' on the flip, better than the original.

TRAVELIN WILBURYS Handle With Care (WEA) 7"

Sheesh! How could you not like this sucker? Pretty average song but it's got Roy Big O Orbison warbling in the chorus and Bobby Dylan adding vocal encouragement. Better songs on the album, and it's a miracle that even Jeff Lynne sounds good.

SPUTNIK, AITKEN, WATERMAN Success (EMI) 7" / 12"

As the cover says, "another monster from the myth factory." Indeed it is, shrouded in controversy with Sputnik disliking their wunderkind trio's

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