

Success spawns new label

Canada's youngest new independent record company is starting out with one of Canada's most established acts. Vic Wilson and Ray Danniels of Toronto management firm SRO Productions have established a new record company, Anthem Records. Anthem begins with a selection of groups from the SRO artists' roster, including Rush, Max Webster, Liverpool and new signee A Foot In Cold Water.

Distribution and manufacturing in Canada for the new label will be handled by Polydor, who already have been working with Rush, formerly a Mercury group and the new label's most established act to date. Anthem will operate initially only in Canada. Of the four groups on the roster, two, Rush, and Max Webster, already have U.S. deals with Mercury. Liverpool and Foot In Cold Water have yet to create the international scene.

Anthem Records is completely independent from SRO, unlike Taurus Records, on which Max Webster and Liverpool were

previously recorded, which is SRO-owned. Taurus remains in existence, but will take over the role of production company, producing for the same two groups and Foot In Cold Water. A similar move was made when Rush, then recording on SRO's Moon Records, moved to Mercury several years ago. Moon continues to produce Rush.

Managing director of the label is Tom Berry, who has been part of the SRO team for the past year since he joined them to manage the Taurus label. At that time, plans for a consolidated record company were just beginning to be made. Wilson and Danniels wanted to join forces with an experienced record industry man, and Berry had spent four years with RCA Records in promotion.

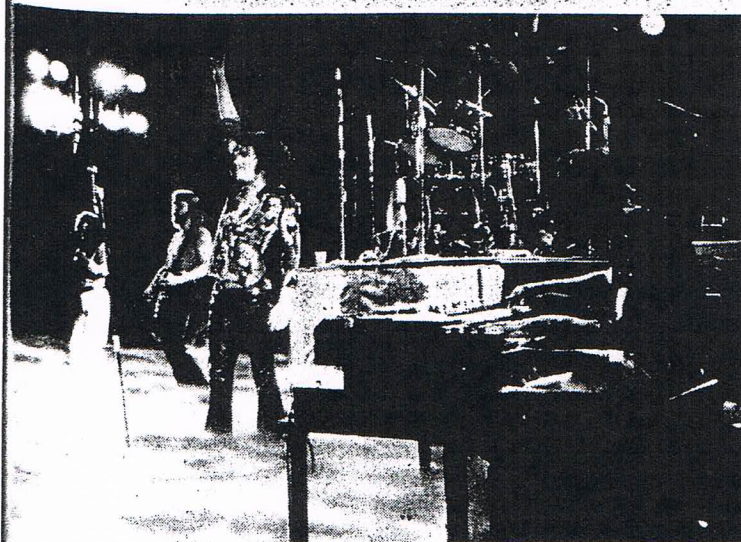
The associate directors are Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart of Rush, the first SRO-managed band to break internationally. Danniels notes the reason for their inclusion in the company: "We felt

that the input that's been given to us by the three members of Rush was invaluable. It was beneficial to us to include them all in."

Partners Wilson and Danniels will handle the corporate business at Anthem, and Berry will handle the company and run the day to day business. He is in charge of promotion, publicity, artist relations and the other various aspects involved in the company's operation.

Berry's assistant Linda Emmerson joined the SRO group one month in advance of the beginning of Anthem, to give her an opportunity to adjust to the system. She has worked as Berry's assistant in the past, and will be involved in the promotion and publicity aspects of the company.

Anthem is preparing release of its first product in mid-May. First album product, slated for May 16 release, is Max Webster's second album, *High Class In Borrowed Shoes*, which is being released in the U.S. on Mercury at the same time. An initial



A Foot In Cold Water



Max Webster

single from Anthem, Making Memories, from Rush's Fly By Night album, is slated for the same date. Product being readied for the future includes Breaking Through by A Foot In Cold Water, the group's first product since its recent signing with SRO in June; Liverpool's debut album, In The Middle Of The Night, slated for August;

... DIFFICULTIES WITH OTHER RECORD COMPANIES ...

and a new Rush album, A Farewell To Kings, due in September. The Rush album will be recorded in Wales over the summer.

Wilson and Danniels are confident in their new venture. Danniels notes: "The main reason we put Anthem together was a desire for complete and total independence here in Canada. We grew up here, and we work here. All of us have individual backgrounds here, over a long period of time. We honestly feel we can accomplish what needs to be done, and accomplish it as well as anyone in this country can. So there's no need for us to have a direct relationship with other record companies."

The two have experienced difficulties with other record companies in the past. Even Rush, of whose five albums, four are now gold in Canada, were originally recorded on SRO's own Moon label. The initial album was later released on Mercury, where it recently went gold. Danniels points out: "We're past the point of being told by A&R people in record companies that a particular act we believe in is not worth signing. We have never yet had an act that was an easy situation to make a good record deal. Max Webster proved to be as difficult as Rush

... ESSENTIAL WE HAVE A SCREW YOU ATTITUDE ...

had. Nobody in Canada would take Max Webster - the same people that two years earlier had passed on Rush. At that point we really realized that it was essential that we have a screw you attitude - we'll do it on our own."

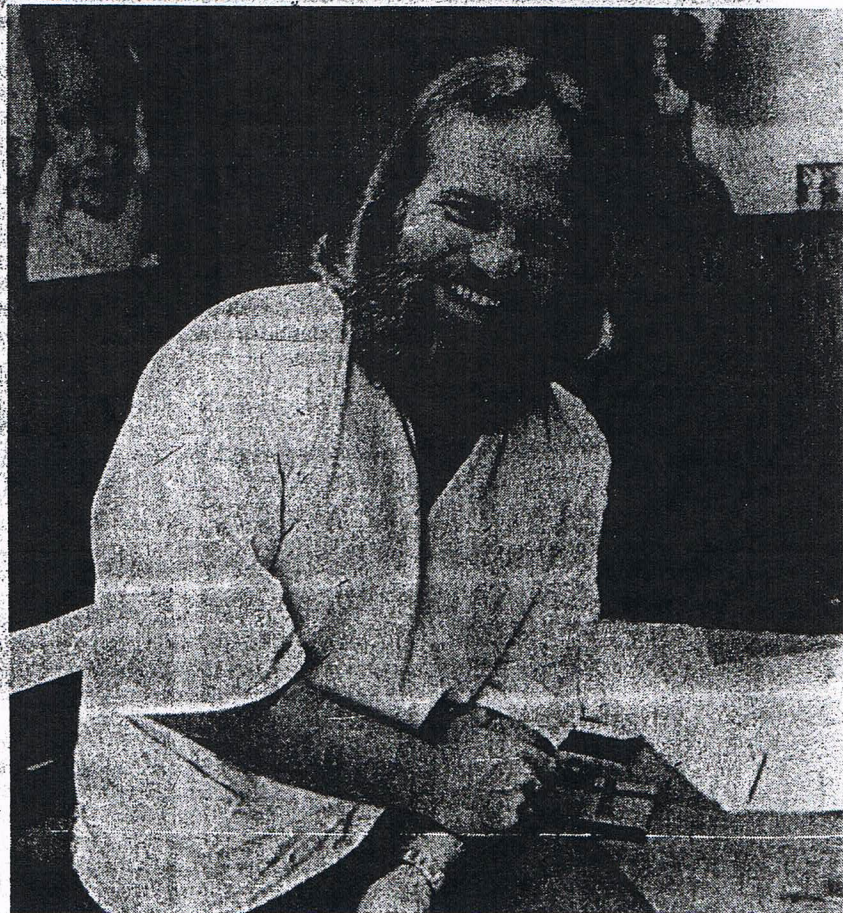
Wilson adds, "We're very promotion oriented. If we feel there's a need to advertise on a station in Wawa, Ontario, we'll go in and do it. We don't have to wait for a week or two weeks for somebody to go and make the decision. By then we could have lost the track."

Berry explains: "What we've done is put everything under one roof. There's only three or four of us that have to make decisions, so decisions are made very quickly."

The three feel very strongly about Polydor as distributor. Anthem is the only independent Canadian company distributed by Polydor with its own promotion staff. Anthem will handle everything but the actual pressing and distribution of product. Berry feels it is significant that Polydor had



Ray Danniels



Vic Willson



Tom Berry

faith in Anthem's ability to function as a profitable venture.

Anthem comes from a background of teamwork. Between the management and record company skills and experience of the company and the input supplied by the artists themselves, the people involved have made Rush one of Canada's most successful bands, Max Webster one of the most promising and SRO itself one of the most successful management firms in Canada. Danniels notes: "This is a family. Four corporations operate out of this office - basically management, promotion, publishing and record company - but it's not like four companies. It's total input from everyone."

"The input that we get from some of the acts in here is unbelievable. There is a



Linda Emmerson

team spirit within the organization at the artist level that I have never seen exist anywhere else. We don't have any jealousies between our acts. Rush has taken Max

ANTHEM IS GOING TO HAPPEN ACCORDING TO WHAT WE PUT IN.

Webster on the road in the States for the last three months, and are perfectly happy to continue to do so for as long as it takes. In return, Max is beginning to become a headliner in Canada. They're taking A Foot In Cold Water out with them.

"What you have in this company is two people, Vic and myself, that think like managers and agents - that was our background. Then you have Tom Berry, who came in here a year ago as a record company man. After a year of working together, he's become much more manager-oriented than he was, and we in turn are a lot more record company oriented. That's what's going to make it work. Between the three of us, we've done everything except being roadies."

Anthem Records is in a unique situation, as a new Canadian label working with established acts, whose catalogue from the very beginning includes four gold albums (they expect two to go platinum). Wilson and Danniels recognize the risks involved. Danniels points out: "It's a bit scary. We don't have the time span to go through the normal growing pains that the other Canadian record companies did. We start from day one on a very heavy level. There's no room for screw-ups. If we fail on this, then we not only fail as Anthem Records, we sure fail as managers, for making the decision to devote a portion of our artists roster to the label. There's just no room for error. So we feel pretty cocky. We feel that we can go out and do it."

Says Wilson: "Anthem is going to happen according to what we put in. We're prepared to put everything we have into it to make it happen."

RCA releases five Cancon albums

RCA Records' releases for the month of May included five albums that qualify as Canadian content. Artists are Carroll Baker, Al Clouston, the Carlton Showband, Wilf Carter, and a collection of Canadian and U.S. country artists.

One of the keynote releases is a re-release of Baker's previous Galety album, titled I'd Go Through It All Again. It includes her hits Ten Little Fingers and Little Boy Blue, as well as the flip side of her current RCA single, Can't Get Enough Of You Baby.

The Clouston release is another collection of stories in the Newfoundland dialect. Clouston is one of Newfoundland's most popular storytellers.

The Best Of The Carlton Showband Vol. 3 includes some of their more requested selections, including Sadie The Cleaning Lady and Harper's Ferry. The Carter release, titled Songs I Love To Sing, includes one of his first tunes, The Capture Of Albert Johnson, as well as country classics Four Walls and Cold Cold Heart.

The compilation album, titled All Star Award Winners, includes songs by a variety of Canadian and U.S. award winners. Canadian artists include Baker, Ronnie Prophet, the Good Brothers and the Family Brown, joined on the album by U.S. artists Dolly Parton, Ronnie Milsap and Waylon & Willie.

Label promo activity for Beauchamp/Fairfield

The Montreal-based promotion firm of Beauchamp-Fairfield has been retained to promote recording acts on CTI, Magique, Capitol-EMI and the RCA labels.

An agreement reached with RCA in Montreal gives the firm a number of albums to work from Ottawa to Quebec City for a three month period. These include the Bob James' BJ4 and Lalo Schiffrin's Towering Toccata, both on the CTI label. The deal was firm by RCA's Dominic Sciscante and Pete Beauchamp.

Under a separate agreement with Capitol-EMI, BF will promote the slick single, This Side Up, on the Arista label. The area covered will also be from Ottawa to Quebec City. The single is already an important part of the Quebec disco charts. Beauchamp made the deal with Arista's Canadian rep, Graham Powers.

Already proving their effectiveness in the independent promotion field, Beauchamp and Fairfield have had a measure of success with the Toulouse single, It Always Happens This Way, on the Magique label. The single has made good gains up the RPM 100 and will be followed shortly by the group's initial English-language album.

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