

guitarist, and the mellower harmonica player George "Mojo" Buford, whom I recall as an engaging rascal on the 1973 New Zealand tour by the Waters band.

It is hard to choose between two albums so similar in intent and content, but *Chicken Shack* may have the edge overall. It's high voltage Chicago blues with the rest of the Waters band giving driving support. Otis Spann's tower of strength piano playing only serves to remind one what an unfillable gap was left by his untimely death. KW

DR FEELGOOD
LET IT ROLL
UNITED ARTISTS
DUTCH TILDERS
DIRECT
STOCKADE

THE INMATES
FIRST OFFENCE
RADAR

The Inmates are one of the newer groups waving the R&B flag that gets run up the pole in Britain every so often. They play the sort of music the Stones and a multitude of others were playing around 1965-66, a mix of bluesy rock and roll and soul music.

At their best, the Inmates attack with the ferocity that epitomised the British R&B of the sixties, seldom a subtle music. Especially notable is Jimmy McCracklin's "The Walk", but the killer is a rewrite (location changed) of "Dirty Water", a mid-sixties classic by the Standells, one of those American garage bands who had one great song in them.

Their failing is a tendency to tackle too many of the songs in the same four-square fashion and a sloppiness, which on the Pretty Things' "Midnight to Six Man" blows what might otherwise have been an outstanding track.

The Inmates start strongly but there's not enough going on to sustain interest.

Dr Feelgood represent an earlier era of public house rhythm and blues. Only the fanatic would deny the Feelgoods' spotty recording career. Despite production by Mike Vernon, the godfather of British blues, *Let It Roll* is pretty lacklustre.

The boys bite down hard on a couple of blues cuts, the slow "Shotgun" which they featured on stage here and an old John Mayall tune, "Riding on the L&N", but by and large even the better songs (there are few) merely echo past successes.

A more restrained and traditional brand of blues is offered by Australia's Dutch Tilders. *Direct*, recorded direct-to-disc, shows him playing acoustic and electric guitars in a syn-copated finger-picking fashion akin to Brownie McGhee. Like McGhee, Tilders' gently swinging style can lapse into predictability. KW



Pearl Harbour and the Explosions

PEARL HARBOUR
& THE EXPLOSIONS
WARNERS
SUE SAAD & NEXT
PLANET

I often wonder what became of Chunky, Novi and Ernie, who made one-and-a-quarter memorable albums back there in the 1970s. The 1973 album, which formed seven-eighths of that one-and-a-quarter, really was a record to hold on to. The front lady for San Francisco's Explosions is one Pearl E. Gates, and she sounds more like Chunky than anyone else I've ever heard. Rock'n'roll abounds in congenital liars, so Pearl (I'm 22) may have been Chunky. What she does admit to is being Leila of Leila & The Snakes, a Tubes spin-off band from whom the Explosions also took their rhythm section of John and Hilary Stench (brothers).

These two are an important part of this excellent album, especially on such tight no-excess catchy-but-far-from-dumb gems like "Drivin'", "You Got It", "Shut Up And Dance" and the quite irresistible "Get A Grip On Yourself". A reviewer into dancing would conclude these songs are as funky as hell. And if Pearl and her Explosions can peel off such exacting little rockers as the aforementioned "Grip" live, without error, then I think you can pencil them in for the 1983 edition of the *NME Book of Rock* (anyone notice The Troggs aren't in the current one?).

Sue Saad & the Next on the other hand use far more conventional weaponry — and producer. Richard Perry did this one, and he excitedly told the person writing the band's bio that this was not only the fastest album he'd ever done (20 days) but also the first time he'd ever allowed anyone to share the production credit. Extremists might have it that Pearl and Sue's bands sum up the difference between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Where the Explosions leave holes through sparse and tasteful instrumentation, understating hooks always, the Next plunge sledge-hammering into every gap they can find. Fast, homogenised, slick, marketable, disposable American new wave. All their cards are played on the first hearing — Pearl and her boys still have tricks hidden after ten.

Roy Colbert

at last a woman who can really
rock



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PAT BENATER
a debut album
In the Heat of the Night



The Blues Band!

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exciting new acts of
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