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Iron Horse LP a satisfying debut

By JOE KONZ

Records

If you like your music on the left side of country-western and the right side of pop-rock, you'll find a happy median in abundance on "Iron Horse," the debut album of a three-man Indianapolis band.

The Iron Horse sound has been described as somewhere between the Marshall Tucker Band and John Denver, or the Wright Brothers band and Dan Fogelberg. But most important, it has been documented on a polished album (Iron Horse PI-9987) produced by the band — Jim Dicks, Mike Yates and Ken Schneidler — and recorded and mixed at studios here and at New Palestine.

Dicks, an Indianapolis native and former member of Sailor, wrote most of the tunes on the new LP — which should be available already at most area records stores — including "Circle of Gold," perhaps the album's strongest offering.

"Circle of Gold," a well-written and catchy pop tune featuring rich harmonies and a tight instrumental arrangement, is an uncomplicated view of the money pyramid scheme that attracted publicity here early last year.

IT ALSO IS THE song, Dicks says, that elicited rave notices from C&W star Larry Gatlin, who stumbled across the band performing at the Brown County Inn shortly before the Gatlin boys became big C&W names.

Another strong number on the album is "Cowboy Day," a robust, knee-slapping rodeo tune doused with a generous supply of "Yippy-yip-i-o's."

Side two opens and closes with songs that are at least the equal of "Circle of Gold" and "Cowboy Day."

On "Peaceful Life," Yates takes the lead vocal spotlight, and puts the listener at ease with the timbre of his soothing tenor. In John Denver fashion, he relates how he's "gotta get away from this here city" because "the air's too thick and living's much too fast."

Scheidler, who is temporarily unable to perform live with the band because of other employment commitments (Kevin Kampenga has joined the band as a permanent member), is stunning as lead vocalist on the album's closing song, "One Last Ride." The melancholy mood in the ballad is sealed by Yates' deft performance on pedal steel.

ALTHOUGH A recording neophyte, "Iron Horse" shows remarkable versatility. It can be cute (Dicks rhymes "Scrooco" with "Morrocco" on the song bearing the country name for a title), and it can be electronically enterprising (a dulcimer embellishes the sound in the instrumental "North Dakota Reel").

Furthermore, Iron Horse handles blue grass with flair and delivers some nimble banjo pickin' ("Run For Cover," "North Dakota Morning," "Fly Away" and "Cowboy Day").

Perhaps the band's most endearing asset is its ability to show a lighter side without being obnoxious, like on Dicks' "I Wanna Go To War," which comes off as a sort of updated parody of Country Joe & the Fish's "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' To Die Rag" — the anthem immortalized at Woodstock.

"The doctor gave me a deferral slip/Said I couldn't go because of post nasal drip/But now I want to help Afghanistan/and bomb the hell out of Viet Nam"

No doubt the real message Iron Horse is trying to impart with its first release is more serious, one that can be found in the lyrics of yet another LP track, "Down in the Canyon":

"...All I'm saying, while I stand here playin', is give me a chance to be heard."

You guys are heard loud and clear in this corner. We like what we hear.

Birthdays this week

Today — **John Mayall**, 48; **Dennis Doherty** (Mamas & Papas), 40; **Felix Cavaliere** (Young Rascals), 37; **Barry Goudreau** (Boston), 30.

Monday — **Dick Clark** (American Bandstand), 52; **Paul Stookey** (Peter, Paul & Mary), 44.

Tuesday — **Billy Paul**, 47; **Lou Rawls**, 45; **John Densmore** (Doors), 36; **Bette Midler**, 36.

Wednesday — **Tom McGuinness** (Manfred Mann), 40.

Thursday — **Ozzie Osbourne** (Black Sabbath), 33.

Friday — **Freddie Cannon**, 41; **Chris Hillman** (Byrds/Flying Burrito Brothers/Souther Hillman & Furray Band), 39; **Dennis Wilson** (Beach Boys), 37.

Saturday — **Little Richard**, 49; **John Cale**, 41; **Jim Messina** (Loggins & Messina), 34.

Recent arrivals

Here is a list of records recently received for review by the Indianapolis Star.

NEW ALBUMS

"All Sports Band" — All Sports Band, Radio Records (RR-1022)

"Wide Riders" — Black Sabbath, Warner Bros. (BSK-3685)

"Progressions" — Tim Bogert, Accord Records (ST-7004)

"Campus Point" — Diamond Dekker, Shift America (USE-15)

"You Could Have Been With Me" — Sheena Easton, EMI/America (SW-17041)

Frank Symphony in D Minor — Chicago Symphony Orchestra, RCA (ATC1-4156)

Gershwin: An American in Paris, Cuban Overture, Porgy and Bess — Dallas Symphony Orchestra, RCA (ACT1-4149)

"Don't Wanna Lose You" — Gloria Lynne, Chase Records (CH-0100)

"Bella Morrisette" — John McLaughlin, Warner Bros. (BSK-3679)

"Private Lessons" — Original soundtrack album, MCA (MCA-5201)

"Greatest Hits" — Queen, Elektra (5E-546)

"Avoid Fraud" — Rough Trade, Shift America (USE-16)

"Greatest Hits" — Savoy Brown live in concert, Accord Records (SK-BK-1003)

Sibelius Symphony No. 1 in E Minor — Melbourne Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jose Serebrier, RCA (ARL1-4003)

"She Shot Me Down" — Frank Sinatra, Warner/Reprise (FS-2301)

"Still Sauzy After All These Years" — Sauzy Sacks, MCA (MCA-5204)

"Can't Shake This Feelin'" — Jammers, Atlantic (SD-19218)

"Memories" — Barbara Streisand, Columbia (TC-37679)

"Mel and Nancy" — Mel Tillis and Nancy Sinatra, Elektra (5E-549)

"High Times" — Dottie West, Liberty (LT-51114)

NEW EP'S

"Walk the Dog" — Laurie Anderson, Warner Bros. (WBSP-49876)

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Olivia still at the top

New York (AP) — The following are hot record hits for the week as they appear in Billboard magazine.

SINGLES

1. "Physical" — Olivia Newton-John (MCA)
2. "Waiting For a Girl Like You" — Foreigner (Atlantic)
3. "Private Eyes" — Daryl Hall & John Oates (RCA)
4. "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic" — The Police (Sting)
5. "Here I Am" — Air Supply (Arista)
6. "Oh No" — Commodores (Motown)
7. "Start Me Up" — Rolling Stones (Rolling Stones)
8. "Truly" To Live My Life Without You" — Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band (Capitol)
9. "Arthur's Theme" — Christopher Cross (Warner Bros.)

TOP ALBUMS

1. "4" — Foreigner (Atlantic)
2. "Tattoo You" — Rolling Stones (Rolling Stones)
3. "Ghost in the Machine" — Police (A&M)
4. "Escape" — Journey (Columbia)
5. "Raise" — Earth, Wind & Fire (ARC/Columbia)
6. "Nine Tonight" — Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band (Capitol)
7. "Bella Donna" — Stevie Nicks (Modern Records)
8. "Private Eyes" — Daryl Hall & John Oates (RCA)
9. "Abacab" — Genesis (Atlantic)

COUNTRY SINGLES

1. "My Favorite Memory" — Merle Haggard (Epic)
2. "Miss Emily's Picture" — John Conlee (MCA)
3. "Bet Your Heart On Me" — Johnny Lee (Full Moon/Asylum)
4. "If I Needed You" — Emmylou Harris & Don Williams (Warner Bros.)
5. "All Roads Lead to You" — Steve Wariner (RCA)
6. "Still Doin' Time" — George Jones (Epic)
7. "Lady, We Do Believe Love" — Larry Gatlin & Gatlin Bros. Band (Columbia)
8. "Love In the First Degree" — Alabama (RCA)
9. "All My Rowdy Friends" — Hank Williams Jr. (Elektra-Curb)

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

1. "The Old Songs" — Barry Manilow (Arista)
2. "Here I Am" — Air Supply (Arista)
3. "Why Do Fools Fall In Love" — Diana Ross (RCA)
4. Theme from "Hill Street Blues" — Mike Post (MCA)
5. "Oh No" — Commodores (Motown)
6. "Yesterday's Songs" — Neil Diamond (Columbus)
7. "Waiting for a Girl Like You" — Foreigner (Atlantic)
8. "Truly" To Say" — Dan Fogelberg (Epic)
9. "I Want You I Need You" — Chris Christian (Boardwalk)

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