

Southern music hits !

by Doug Wavrock

Marshall Tucker Band-Searchin' for a Rainbow [Capricorn-CPO161] & Allman Brothers Band-Win, Lose Or Draw [Capricorn-CPO 156] It seems that in the last couple of years or so the Southern U.S. has come alive with musical talent making it perhaps one of the hottest areas of the music industry. When you consider that the majority of the Northern U.S. groups have either bitten the dust or else now plod along and survive on a T-40 or pre-1968 musical basis and that the Bay area of the west coast has lost so much of its former pre-eminence in the music industry, then the south seems very much alive. The groups of the south have a new type of music that was not formerly exploited to such a great extent by rock and pop producers. In fact, the only way to get anywhere in music in the south was to go to Nashville and hope someone found you ten years later and made you famous. Also, there was that image that if you came from the South you'd be another Conway Twitty or Dolly Parton anyway. But this has been altered and such groups as the Atlanta Rhythm Section, Grinderswitch, the Charlie Daniels Band, the Allman Brothers Band, the Marshall Tucker Band, etc., etc., have now appeared featuring the soul of the south never before sung about, plus some of the jazz influences of the south with some of the rock influences so prevalent in the sixties.

The Marshall Tucker Band in their fourth L.P. **Searchin' For a Rainbow** have created a gem of country-based rhythm. From the sad songs of played-out love, to honky tonks to lookin' for Eldorado, Marshall Tucker has put into a compact 40 minute package the whole sense of the heartbreak and the futility of life. This interpretation of man's futility is brought out not only in their words but most of all in their music that tends to translate many moods. Not only is the so-called traditional country rhythm section used but so are instruments such as sax, flute, congas and electric piano. Coupled with a fiddle, steel guitar, mandolin, piano and electric, bass and acoustic guitars you get some idea of the versatility of the six members of the Marshall Tucker Band. They also had some musical help on the album from Richard Betts and Chuck Leavell who are both members of the Allman Brothers Band, in addition to Paul Hornsby the Allman Bros. producer. So you can see that Marshall Tucker have some friends in the southern music industry in the personnel of one of the best known bands in the area.

The opening "Fire on the Mountain" from its first notes gives us a sense of heartbreak and loneliness which is achieved through the steel guitar work of Toy Caldwell. Again in "Searchin' For a Rainbow" the same effect is created in a similar selection dealing with a man who's left his home and forsaken the comfort of a family in order to strike gold in 'them thar hills' or to find the elusive pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Love ballads include, "Virginia" which deals with a man and his wife looking for a future in the south as they move from place to place though they never quite find it. "Bob Away My Blues" and "Keeps Me From All Wrong" like "Virginia" are slow country ballads bemoaning loneliness. In a slight change of musical tastes Marshall Tucker features an R&R number, "Bound and Determined" that is anything but country and exhibits their musical diversity: Likewise, "Walkin' and Talkin'" is a lively

footstompin' country boogie number; and to outdo anything they've done before, there's even a live number, "Can't You See" which was previously recorded by the group on the L.P. **The Marshall Tucker Band**. It is a jazz-country-rock collage of material that fits well together and gives you a feel for Marshall Tucker live! which is more fun than wrestling in a haystack with a southern belle.

The Allman Brothers Band with their **Win, Lose or Draw**, a followup to their incredible **Brother and Sister** L.P. released over a year ago, have in many aspects moved away from the fluid guitar and steel pickin' of their last efforts and towards an album featuring a pleasing blend of electric blues and country. The majority of the vocal selections are done by the only surviving Allman Brother Gregory L. who creates a rather unique effect with his harsh and bluesish voice. In a slight departure we see Richard Betts doing more vocal work and also penning some of the material for the group on this album. In retrospect, the album seems to feature selections about love: of a man who can't find it, a man who doesn't want it, a man whose score with the love bug is so-so and another man who doesn't know what to do when he discovers he is in love. Hence the title **Win, Lose or Draw**. The vocals are basically hurtin' country songs but the musical backgrounds tend to create the whole outward mood of the selection. The Title cut "Win, Lose or Draw" best shows the hurtin' country song that the Allman Bros. Band are capable of, compare this to "Sweet Mama", an up-tempo country boogie number with generous portions of lead guitar and country boogie piano. "Louisiana Lou and Three Card Monty John" gives one the impression of the style of material featured on **Brother and Sister**, from the familiar guitar chords to the vocal phrasing.

"Can't Lose What you Never Had", which opens the album, is the number which first exposes the listener to the style and mood created on this album: the harsh vocals of Greg, the familiar chords, the wailing steel guitar and the raucous piano of Chuck Leavell. The big surprise of the album is "High Falls" a 14 minute work of art featuring an incredible combination of a steel/lead guitar blend and a percussion/keyboard/moog jazz-flavoured piece that flows and flows and never seems to want to end and upon hearing it you don't want it to end either. This selection more than any other is the highlight of the album. If as a true blue dyed-in-the-wool Allman Bros. fan you didn't like their blues-orientated first side you'll love this. If however you liked the first side of **Win, Lose or Draw** you'll be floored over this piece! It's basically a Deodato a-la Also Sprach Zarathustra number featuring the familiar steel chords of the Allman Bros. Band plus some remarkable keyboard work on the part of Chuck Leavell and the percussion unit of Butch Trucks and Jaimoe.

In conclusion, the Marshall Tucker Band and the Allman Brothers Band have each created an incredible album. That they know and respect each other further increases their abilities on record and on the road. Both albums were recorded at Capricorn Sound Studios in Macon, Georgia, a new and growing centre of the current Southern U.S. music explosion and you'd better believe it if someday people say that Macon, Georgia was as essential in creating an identity of the southern musician as was Nashville, Tennessee.

Warm up to a Frozen Matador.

Frozen Matador
1½ oz. Arandas Tequila
2 oz. pineapple juice
½ oz. lime juice
½ cup crushed ice
1 cocktail pineapple stick

Put Arandas Tequila, pineapple juice, lime juice and crushed ice into blender or shaker. Blend at low speed 10 to 15 seconds. Pour into pre-chilled, deep-saucer champagne glass. Add pineapple stick. Or pour over rocks into pre-chilled old-fashioned glass. Add ice cubes to fill glass.

Arandas Tequila.

The Mixable Mexicano.



Save this recipe and watch for others.