



DECCA/LONDON RECORDS

THEY FOUND SATISFACTION

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The Rolling Stones had been kicking around London since 1962. But it wasn't until 1964 that they scored their first Top-10 hit.

And it wasn't until July 10, 1965 — 60 years ago — that the Stones landed at No. 1 for the first time with their latest release, “(Can't Get No) Satisfaction.”

The Rolling Stones would score seven more No. 1 singles and a total of 23 Top-10 hits over the next six decades.

STANDING APART FROM THE REST OF ‘THE BRITISH INVASION’

In October 1961, Keith Richards of Kent, England was preparing to board a train for London for classes at art school when he spotted his childhood acquaintance, Mick Jagger. Jagger was on his way to study at the London School of Economics but was carrying an armload of blues and jazz albums.

Recognizing their shared musical interests, Richards and Jagger renewed their friendship, began playing together and then joined with other musicians to form a band. Guitarist Brian Jones suggested the name of their band, which he took from the old Muddy Waters classic “Rollin’ Stone Blues.”

In early 1963, Decca records — which was already regretting passing on the Beatles — signed the Stones to a recording contract on the recommendation of lead Beatles guitarist George Harrison. A smart-thinking publicist, looking to create a public persona for the Stones that would

make them stand out from the other Beatles-like “British Invasion” groups forming at the time, decided to label the Stones as an anti-Fab Four. The thrust of his campaign was: “Would you let your daughter go out with a Rolling Stone?”

The campaign was aided by a number of high-profile shenanigans in which the Stones indulged, such as getting arrested for public urination and, later, drug arrests.

On May 6, 1965, the Rolling Stones were playing for 3,000 people at Jack Russell Stadium in Clearwater, Florida, when a large number of fans



rushed the stage. The Stones were forced to end their show after playing just four songs.

That night, Richards said, he woke up with a particular guitar riff in his head. He switched on his bedside tape recorder and played the riff.

He gave the tape to Jagger, who wrote lyrics for it while sitting poolside at their Clearwater hotel. Jagger had found himself unimpressed with the United States, which he considered both real and phony. He envisioned a man looking for authenticity but unable to find it through the haze of advertising that

swamps American media.

Shortly afterward, the Stones recorded the song — now titled “(Can't Get No) Satisfaction.” Richards had envisioned his riff played by a brass section, so he simulated that by using a Gibson Fuzz-Tone. The rest of the band loved the result and talked Richards into keeping the distinctive recording.

The song was released on June 6 — just a month after Richards woke up with the riff. It hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 on July 10 and stayed there for four weeks. It would be released in the U.K. on Aug. 20 and would remain in the top spot there for two weeks.

Ironically, the band would use various sponsorships and merchandising opportunities to make themselves very rich over the next six decades. The Rolling Stones would bill themselves at “the World’s Greatest Rock ‘n’ Roll Band.” And they would mean it.

THE ROLLING STONES’ OTHER SEVEN NO. 1 HITS



GET OFF OF MY CLOUD

RELEASED: SEPT. 25, 1965
NO. 1 FOR: 2 WEEKS

Richards complained that after “Satisfaction” became a hit, “We thought: ‘At last, we can set back and maybe think about events.’” but then their label came calling. “In those days,” Richards said, “hey, they want another single. And we weren’t quite ready for that. So it was our response to the knock at the door: Get off of my cloud.” The group’s second No. 1 hit was again Richards’ melody and Jagger’s lyrics.



PAINT IT, BLACK

RELEASED: MAY 7, 1966
NO. 1 FOR: 2 WEEKS

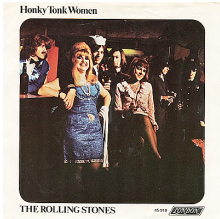
Bass player Bill Wyman was fooling around on organ when Charlie Watts joined in with an unusual double-time drum pattern. This made for an interesting counterpoint to Jagger’s morbid lyrics about attending the funeral of a lover. Guitarist Brian Jones added a sitar, which the Beatles had used the previous year. “That was the time of lots of acid,” Jagger said. “It’s like the beginnings of miserable psychedelia.



RUBY TUESDAY

RELEASED: JAN. 13, 1967
NO. 1 FOR: 1 WEEK

“Ruby Tuesday” was inspired by Linda Keith, who was Richards’ girlfriend at the time. “It was very mournful, very very Ruby Tuesday and it was a Tuesday,” Richards said. “For a songwriter, hey, break his heart and he’ll come up with a good song.” This was the B-side of “Let’s Spend the Night Together,” but that song was a bit too racy for U.S. radio stations, so DJs simply flipped it over and played this side instead.



HONKY TONK WOMEN

RELEASED: JULY 4, 1969
NO. 1 FOR: 4 WEEKS

The song itself is about meeting “loose” women in dive bars, but Richards says he and Jagger wrote this song while visiting a ranch in Brazil and began fooling around with a Hank Williams-type of tune “Because we really thought we were like real cowboys,” Richards said. But when recording the actual track, it morphed into a swampy, blues song. “We were playing around a lot with open tunings at the time,” he said.



BROWN SUGAR

RELEASED: APRIL 16, 1971
NO. 1 FOR: 2 WEEKS

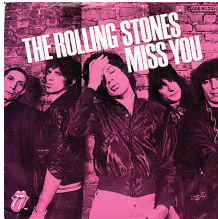
This song is about African slaves sold in New Orleans but then forced to have sex by their white masters. It was partially inspired by one of Ike Turner’s backup singers who dated Jagger for a while in 1969. The group recorded the song at Muscle Shoals studios in Sheffield, Alabama, in December 1969 — just days after their performance at California’s Altamont Speedway in which a fan was stabbed to death by a Hells Angels security guard.



ANGIE

RELEASED: AUG. 20, 1973
NO. 1 FOR: 1 WEEK

A longstanding rumor about this song is that Jagger wrote it for David Bowie’s wife, who walked in on Bowie and Jagger in bed together. Not true, Jagger says. In fact, Richards wrote the song sitting in a drug rehab clinic while his wife was in a nearby hospital, giving birth to their daughter, Angela. “I could finally move my fingers and put them in the right place again,” Richards says. This is one of the few Stones songs that’s acoustic and a ballad.

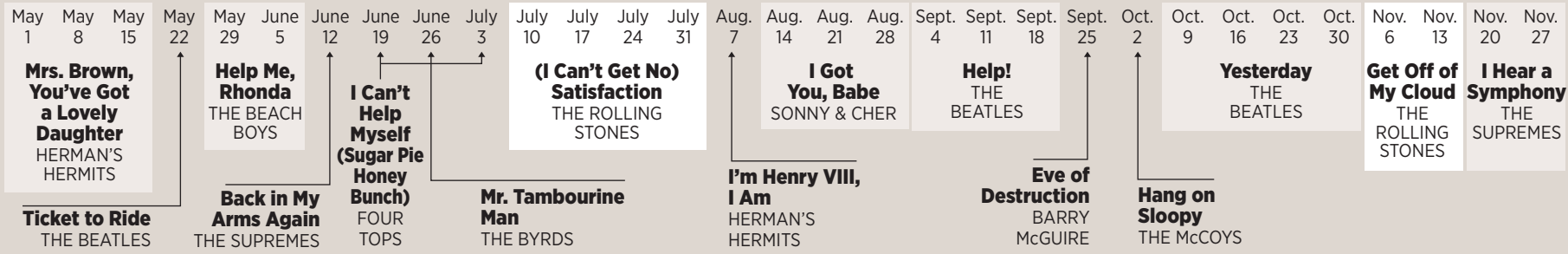


MISS YOU

RELEASED: MAY 10, 1978
NO. 1 FOR: 1 WEEK

While most of the songs in the Stones’ catalog are driven by Richards’ rhythm guitar, this one featured a dominant bassline. The idea for that bass came from Billy Preston, who picked up a bass after Wyman had left for the day and played a completely different way. The band decided to run with it. Jagger and Ronnie Wood insist “Miss You” was not intended to be a disco song. Richards says it was, too, and “a damn good” one at that.

BILLBOARD’S NO. 1 SINGLES OF MID-1965



Sources: “Biography Presents the Rolling Stones: 60 Years of Sex, Drugs & Rock ‘n’ Roll” by Hearst Specials, “The True Adventures of the Rolling Stones” by Stanley Booth, “Origins of a Song: 202 True Inspirations Behind the World’s Greatest Lyrics” by Jake Grogan, “The Encyclopedia of Pop, Rock and Soul” by Irwin Stambler, “The Definitive Illustrated Encyclopedia of Rock” edited by Michel Heatley, SongFacts, Library of Congress, HistoryOfTheDay.com

SINGLE SLEEVES FROM DECCA/LONDON RECORDS AND ROLLING STONES RECORDS