



...is coming.

HzS  G  d

“Get your clothes off and get in the tub!”

#180...January 2014

And now, ladies and gentlemen...

WLSRADIO 89 abc
HIT PARADE

THIS WEEK APRIL 20, 1970 LAST WEEK

1. ABC	Jackie Fire—Mersey	1
2. Kinky	Jim Sturgis—Mersey Brothers	4
3. In The Lullaby To The Roof	Tommye—Mersey	6
4. Incredible Woman/No Super Tonight	Genea Who—S.S.A.	3
5. Something's Burning	Kenny Rogers/First Edition—Ampex	5
6. Let It Be	Paulina—Ampex	7
7. Reflections of My Life	Myron Brown—Columbia	10
8. Love and Sadness	Redd Foxx—Ampex	3
9. Long Loveless Highway	Walter Parke—MCA	8
10. Spill in The Sky	Marlene Brundage—Mersey Brothers	7
11. Woodstock	Crusty, Mike, Hank & Fanny—Atlantic	11
12. Tennessee Bonanza	Jack Blackford/Andy Wayne—Rayford	12
13. For The Love of Me	Randy Martin—Columbia Artists	10
14. Turn Back The Hands of Time	Tyrene Davis—Ampex	10
15. Madam Butterfly	John Lennon—Ampex	10
16. Country	Frank and Ernestine—Columbia	11
17. Love Dream	Edson Lightfoot—Ampex	11
18. Which Way You Going Billy	Peggy Lee—Columbia	21
19. Little Green Bag	Bonny Baker Selection—Columbia	21
20. Love Me For Me So Lonely	Friends of Distinction—A&A	11
21. Working A Mile	Maury May—Ampex	11
22. Just Dibs Easy As	Bobby Short—Mersey	21
23. The Arch	The Archers—Ampex	21
24. My Lonely World	Stephanie—Ampex	21
25. Nothing Remains Like Dreams	Bill Swan/Blackie—Mersey	11
26. Me	Bill Swan—Ampex	11
27. What Is True	Sherry Lee—Columbia	11
28. Bridg' Over Troubled Waters	Gene and Barbara—Mersey	11
29. House of the Rising Sun	High Five—Ampex	11
30. Sweet Theme	Walter Fox—Mersey	11
31. You Had Love Like I Do	Walter Fox—Mersey	11
32. My Around The Bend	Clayton Knight—Ampex	11
33. Somebody's Out of Town	S. J. Thayer—Mersey	11
34. Everything's Beautiful	Ray Brown—Mersey	11
35. Lullaby	Them Big Boys—Mersey	11
36. Love Remains	Sam Morrison—Mersey Brothers	11
37. Don't Stop Now	Kate Brown—A&A	11
38. One Good	St. Charles—Mersey	11
39. Puppet Man	VFM Selection—Ampex	11
40. Slaughter of Barbers	Paul Jones—Mersey	11

LARRY LUJACK READS KLUNK LETTERS

2-6PM

Records listed on the WLS Hit Parade are selected by WLS after evaluating and considering record sales, listener requests and the station's past schedule of their audience appeal. Late in receipt of the record is prohibited. Violators will be prosecuted. *SERVICES PARTIAL WEEK*

...a little more than just "Superjock" died last week. I'd argue that Larry Lujack was top 40's last iconoclast on a grand scale.

In mornings for sure but afternoons especially - whether on Chicago's "Musicradio" WLS or "The Voice of Labor" WCFL - Lar' played by his own rules. Never mind "Superjock": Lujack was the "anti-jock." While it's tough enough today to find out if an air personality even likes a particular song, Lujack made no secret of what music he loved or despised on-air. Making fun of commercials, in fact, just talking extraneously between them, the way Larry did? Just try that now. And sparring with listeners, airing calls between lots of songs, making fun of listener correspondence on "The Klunk Letter of the Day"? Not likely these days, but it wouldn't have been Lujack's show without that.

While most listeners took to the kinder gentler "Uncle Lar'" who read "Animal Stories" and ruled mornings during his second go-round at the Big 89, real fans surely loved him best when it sounded as if he was doing top 40 with boxing gloves on. You can hear that even as he transitioned WCFL to easy listening on an afternoon in 1976 http://youtu.be/c_PeJXmp54M, recommending those still wanting the hits to turn to "KHJ Los Angeles" and, over the ocean waves sound effect that ended CFL's top 40 era, suggesting everyone else "get [their] clothes off and get in the tub."

So why is it that as Lujack's unusual nature may have opened the door for the FM rock 'shock jocks' that came after, it also eventually closed it for top 40 hosts? How did the format get it so wrong?

Whether it was the increased meddling of consultants and researchers, or the heightened focus on music as top 40's most important product, there's been a clear move from jocks whose personalities don't necessarily fit the 'isn't this a great day, let me read you something funny' mold and toward a lineup where every live (and not live) host's intent is simply to serve as companion to the hits. In most cases, this has resulted in a lack of something I call 'talent variance': the idea that from one DJ to the next, you don't necessarily know what to expect day in day out. It's as if the more careful the format's become not to lose listeners, the less likely it is to be a good fit not only for anyone along the lines of Dan Ingram, Don Steele or Lujack - larger-than-life personalities who made top 40 the powerhouse it became in the first place - but for anyone even a little different.

It's worth noting that radio's rebels aren't completely gone from the airwaves. For that you can thank hip-hop-based stations, where tell-it-like-it-is format jocks who are encouraged to be themselves are alive and well. While at the same time I understand why there's been a conscious shift away from talent variance (read: ratings, advertisers, job security in a riskier-than-ever business) at mainstream and adult-oriented top 40, it's done the listener a disservice when there isn't a place for the next "Superjock."

Farewell, Mr. Lujack. That big top 40 station up there - without all those rules - just got a whole lot better.

NOW THIS...

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Happy Hz-idays.

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