

Advertisement

# NEW COUNTRY MUSIC COMES TO F.M.

## When You're Hot You're Hot.

I wonder whether Jerry Reed the country singer/picker who wrote those memorable words, years ago, ever imagined in his wildest dreams how hot country music would be as we head into the 90's.

Country megastar Garth Brooks is the top selling artist in all formats. He's been on the cover of every magazine worth reading, even the ultra conservative financial monthly FORBES. One of his concerts sold out in 47 minutes. 35,000 tickets. He sat on top of the Billboard charts for 18 weeks.

Garth is the leading edge of a country music tidal wave that is literally sweeping the competition aside everywhere in North America.

Country radio up 6 million listeners. Rock and Adult Contemporary, down 6 million.

No one even wants to cure the Cyrus "virus": the Beatle like hysteria that breaks out everytime Billy Ray belts out Achy Breaky Heart.

5 out of 6 anthem singers during the World Series games in Toronto were country singers.

The Canadian Country Music Awards Show on CTV has beaten the rock and roll flash of the Junos in the ratings for the third straight year, hands down.

Country's young "hunks" Clint Black, Alan Jackson (and of course Billy Ray) are attracting a young female audience to Country music.

Reba McIntyre outsells Elton John.

And yet, even with country music exploding all around us, until now there has been no downtown Toronto evidence of what has to be classed as a "phenomena."

We are witnessing the phenomenal growth of country music, on radio, in record stores and on concert stages. And yet, in Toronto, Canada's biggest city. IT. The Big Smoke. The centre of everything. Home to anything that means anything. Everything but a big city style country music station.

## January 27. That changed for good.

A new country FM. A big time, big town, country boomer. The new 92.5 CISS FM, is on air, at last.

And, this country is set to take jaded, "seen it all," Toronto by storm. Toronto radio will never be the same.

The management, the on-air personalities, the newpeople, the salespeople, are all totally convinced that this station is going to be super successful.

This writer can tell you that after a recent visit to the station's new high style, high tech, downtown digs, I'm starting to think they could be right.

Everybody down at 92.5 CISS FM looks decidedly uncountry. Bay Street suits, Queen Street hip, and everything in between.

These people mean business.

Isn't this supposed to be a country station?

## A "NEW" Country Station

Keith James, the general manager is eloquent and sophisticated. Anything but stereotypical "country".

I cornered Keith. I needed answers.



Cliff Dumas & Jane Brown

"This is most definitely a country station, but we play NEW country music," was the word.

So what is a NEW country station? What is NEW country music you ask? So did I.

Keith handed me a Rolling Stone Magazine with a highlighted paragraph. "The audience is wide and the hunger is deep for emotional directness and song-oriented craftsmanship. The raised-on-rock generations of the Sixties and Seventies, now paying mortgages and raising families, no longer see their concerns reflected in computerized dance beats or heavy metal cartoons. They hear in Wynonna what they love in Bonnie Raitt; identify with the bluesy, blue-collar populism of Travis Tritt as the honky-tonk equivalent of Lynyrd Skynyrd; appreciate in the tunefulness of Trisha Yearwood what they previously prized in Linda Ronstadt (while particularly enjoying the duets with Don Henley); and find their Elvis (or at least their Elton) in the boy-next-door sincerity and concert razzle-dazzle of Garth Brooks."

The light bulb went on.

NEW country is the Adult Contemporary music of the 90's. That's why it's so popular. It's the music that reflects what we're all going through now.

That's why I like it. It's about me. I can sing along. And there's millions of me's in Toronto.

(It was beginning to sink in why 92.5 CISS FM was making this huge investment. Capturing the NEW country audience in Toronto would be like winning the radio World Series).

## Country's Hottest Team

Draft Picks. Trades. Signing Bonuses. Sports jargon, but as I found out, a real factor when going after radio's big prize. Toronto. Remember, 92.5 CISS FM is going all the way, and they have put together an all-star team to go for it.

Take the critical morning drive slot (that's a little bit of radio speak I picked up). CISS FM lured CLIFF DUMAS, arguably the most successful country announcer in Canada, away from Hamilton's country station. Cliff is the only Canadian on-air personality to ever win an award from the Nashville based CMA, the Country Music Association. Rumour has it, big bucks were involved here, but as I discovered CISS FM is not afraid to spend what it takes, to do it right. More proof. Joining Cliff on the "morning team" will be Jane Brown, a popular personality from a major Toronto station.

## Toronto Air Quality Improving

It struck me early during the preparation of this piece, that this new station has some powerful cards in its deck.

There are the obvious ones. It's the first ever Country FM in Toronto. It's new, the first new station to sign on in 8 years. It will be fun to listen to. They play the hottest music happening right now. They cater to big city tastes with their news, sports and traffic. Plus a nice twist: 30 minutes of continuous NEW country music commercial free every hour, all day. 92.5 CISS FM Country is sure to upset the radio apple cart in Toronto. Competition has a wonderful way of improving quality, all round. The radio consumers of Toronto finally have some choice. As one of the station's slogans says, "Life's too short for ordinary music." Amen to that.

# NEW COUNTRY MUSIC HAS COME TO FM!

## Life's too short for ordinary music!

Turn on the new 92.5 CISS FM and discover today's hottest music from today's biggest stars. **New Country** on the new 92.5 CISS FM is on the air!

**92.5 CISS FM**  
TORONTO'S ONLY COUNTRY FM

