

Songwriting mandolinist finishes first album

Randall Hylton, whose compositions have been recorded by the Lewis Family, the Bluegrass Cardinals, Vern Gosdin and many more artists, has finished work on his first album.

Banjoman Shawn Shook, bassist Phil Winkott and Station Inn proprietor J.T. Gray on guitar back the songwriting mandolin picker.

Hylton, by the way, has been rendering yeoman service well beyond his duties as treasurer to the new International Bluegrass Music Association, which held its first public meeting in Nashville last month.

Also in the studios: Doc Watson cutting his first bluegrass album with help from super-pickers Alan O'Bryant of the Nashville Bluegrass Band, Bela Fleck and Sam Bush of New Grass Revival; the Bluegrass Cardinals waxing their first all-gospel effort since joining the Sugar Hill Label; and Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver recording their third sacred album at Biss Studios in Springfield, Va.

Seasoned by a busy summer on the festival circuit, Lawson took his new backup band to Holland, Italy, and West Germany last month. I'm sure they'll all be ready for Quicksilver's traditional November vacation.

The Seldom Scene headed east on their first junket to Japan with appearances scheduled for Tokyo, Kyoto, Sapporo and Osaka. Berline, Crary and Hickman, meanwhile, go north to Alaska to participate in the "Arts Alaska" program.

The rumors have circulated for a long time, but now it's official: New Grass Revival has signed a major label deal with Capitol Records.

CBS Records, meanwhile, scooped up Marty Stuart, who hit the bluegrass circuit a decade ago as the teenage phenom mandolin picker for Lester Flatt. In recent years, his hot licks and good looks have spiced Johnny Cash's show. He'll stay with his father-in-law's band until January.

When Stuart heads out on his own he'll have a superb band, featuring fiddler Mark O'Connor, guitarist Jody Maphis, Tony Newman on drums, Earl Ball's piano and Anthony Crawford playing steel.

Stuart finished recording his first CBS long player at Jack Clement's Cowboy Arms and Recording Spa during October with release scheduled for the first of the year. Meanwhile, he and Cash collaborated on an acoustic