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Robert K. Oermann • July 25, 2012

Newcomer male artists are jostling for position this week.

Duking it out for the **DisDiscovery Award** are Nick Verzosa, The Clay Wilson Band, Troy Cook Jr. and Chad Sullins & Last Call Coalition. Cook is a Nashvillian. Sullins hails from Oklahoma. Verzosa and Wilson are Texans. Our winner is **The Clay Wilson Band**, for having the complete package of solid singing, a fresh instrumental approach and super songwriting.



Clay Wilson, Gordon Mote

As a Music Row session musician,



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Gordon Mote usually works in the shadows of big country stars. Today, he steps into the spotlight with a Disc of the Day award. He may be blind, but he has the sharpest country-music vision of the week.

NICK VERZOSA/7th Year Senior

Writer: Nick Verzosa; Producer: Walt Wilkins; Publisher: none listed; NV (www.nickverzosa.com)
—It's a burbling, bubbling, tangy, twangy, quasi-rockabilly fun fest. "They say that college is the best years of your life, so why would you want to graduate?" So he's drinking all night, sleeping until noon and being a goof-off. Dude, sounds like a plan.

CHARLIE McCOY, RICKY SKAGGS & ROY CLARK/Mind Your Own Business

Writer: Hank Williams; Producer: Charlie McCoy & Eric Paul; Publisher: none listed; Diamond Disc (track) (www.charliemccoy.com)
—Country Hall of Fame member McCoy has a Hank Williams tribute CD called *Lonesome Whistle*. His mournful harmonica tones are perfect for Hank's bluesy melodies. Among his guests on the set are Skaggs and Clark, who join him for a swinging version of this classic. Ricky not only sings, but provides a mandolin solo; and Roy does the same on electric guitar. The whole collection is highly listenable.

CHELSEA BAIN/What If I

Writer: Tommy Collier/Jim Cooper/Terri Jo Box; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Starplane/Jimvision/Songs of Merf, SESAC/ASCAP; Rock Ridge/Jobe
—Lilting, pleading and yearning, to the accompaniment of soft strings and twinkling acoustic instruments. Extremely well produced, whoever you are.

LUKE BRYAN/Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye

Writer: Luke Bryan/Jeff Stevens/Shane McAnally; Producer: Jeff Stevens; Publisher: Sony-ATV Tree/Peanut Mill/Chrysalis/Big Motor/Crazy Water/Little Blue Egg, BMI/ASCAP; Capitol (track)
—It may be over, but that's no reason not to go to bed together one more time. Uptempo, which is what he does best.

CHAD SULLINS & THE LAST CALL COALITION/That God for Jack Daniels

Writer: Erspamer/Sanchez/Sauder; Producer: Wes Sharon; Publisher: Radio 229/Scout World, no performance rights listed; Smith Entertainment (track)
—I like these guys. Sullins has a dry, dusty, slightly raspy delivery. The song is a wry, winking little gem. The rocking band kicks serious butt. And when everybody shouts along in unison at the finale, the party is in full swing.

THE ROYS/Still Standing

Writer: Lee Roy/Elaine Roy; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; Rural Rhythm (www.theroysonline.com)
—This bluegrass duo serves up a sprightly ditty of survival with plenty of fleet-fingered instrumental support. Their strongest outing yet.

THE CLAY WILSON BAND/Not OK

Writer: Clay Wilson; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; CWB (www.theclaywilsonband.com)
—She's gone, and he's definitely down in the dumps about it. The intimacy of the vocal, the solid songwriting and the moody instrumental support are all first rate. It builds to a surprisingly frothy, thrashing conclusion. Yet another welcome gift from the Lone Star State.

GORDON MOTE/Call Me Gone

Writer: Kenneth D. Hinson; Producer: Gordon Mote & Phil Johnson; Publisher: Songs of Calvary, BMI; New Haven (track) (www.gordonmote.com)
—Gordon is a first-call session keyboardist for the likes of Brad Paisley, Faith Hill, Martina McBride, Rascal Flatts and Alan Jackson. He also has a side career as a gospel record maker. His latest offering is titled *Songs I Grew Up Singing*. This lead single from it is as country as grits, saturated with moaning melody, spiced with a recitation, full of rolling piano work and led by a heartfelt vocal. Say Amen.

SHAWNA RUSSELL/Sounds Like a Party

Writer: Shawna Russell/Keith Russell/Tim Russell; Producer: Julian King, Clif Doyal & Tim Russell; Publisher: Blue Buckaroo, BMI; Way Out West (615-319-1863)
—Bopping and energetic, if a little generic sounding.

TROY COOK JR./Lazy American Dream

Writer: Don Bradley; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Peachmint, BMI; TCJ (www.troycookjrmusic.com)
—He thinks people on food stamps have 52-inch, HD television sets and free, all-inclusive health insurance. Also, they go out on the town while the kids are away at school and have "a real nice place to live." I prescribe a tour of an urban housing project.

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