

Average White Band – Feel No Fret (1979)

Written by bluelover

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01. *When Will You Be Mine* (Gorrie/White) – 4:20 02. *Please Don't Fall In Love* (Gorrie/Ball) – 3:43 03. *Walk On By* (Burt Bacharach/Hal David) – 3:58 04. *Feel No Fret* (Gorrie/White/Stuart/Ferrone) – 6:33 05. *Stop The Rain* (Gorrie/Stuart) – 4:30 06. *Atlantic Avenue* (Gorrie/White/Ferrone) – 3:12 07. *Ace Of Hearts* (Gorrie/Stuart/Ferrone) – 3:50 08. *Too Late To Cry* (Stuart) – 3:45 09. *Fire Burning* (Gorrie/White) – 3:14 10. *Kiss Me* (Stuart) – 3:49 11. *Love Won't Get In The Way* (Gorrie/Christopher/Stuart) – 5:09 12. *Love Gives, Love Takes Away* (Gorrie) – 4:05 13. *Growing Pains* (Gorrie/Foster/Stuart) – 4:30 Personnel: – Alan Gorrie – lead & backing vocals, guitar – Hamish Stuart – lead & backing vocals, bass – Steve Ferrone – drums, percussion – Onnie McIntyre – guitar, backing vocals – Roger Ball – keyboards, synthesizers, alto saxophone – Malcolm “Molly” Duncan – tenor saxophone + – Lew Delgatto – baritone saxophone (5, 9) – Mike Brecker – tenor saxophone (5, 9) – Randy Brecker – trumpet (5, 9) – Zeca Da Cuica – cuica (6) – Airto Moreira – percussion (6) – Luis Carlos Dos Santos – surdo (6) – Luther Vandross – backing vocals (8) – Ernie Watts – saxophone (10, 11, 12, 13) – Bill Reichenbach – trombone (10, 11, 12, 13) – Gary Grant & Jerry Hey – trumpets (10, 11, 12, 13) – Gene Paul & Average White Band – producers

From their self-titled sophomore album of 1974 to 1978's Warner Communications, the Average White Band enjoyed a commercial winning streak in the '70s; all of the albums they recorded for Atlantic during that period went either gold or platinum in the United States (and that is in addition to their impressive sales in Europe). But if any AWB album demonstrated that all good things must eventually come to an end, it was *Feel No Fret*. This 1979 LP marked the first time since 1973's *Show Your Hand* (also known as *Put It Where You Want It*) that an AWB album didn't enjoy either gold or platinum sales in the U.S., and it was also the most uneven album they recorded in the '70s. So what went wrong? Perhaps the absence of Arif Mardin was a factor; Mardin had produced all of AWB's previous Atlantic releases, whereas they produced *Feel No Fret* themselves. If Mardin had been encouraging the Scottish soul/funk band to go that extra mile, they settled for decent or competent on this record. *Feel No Fret* is far from a total meltdown, and the material is generally likable -- especially the good-natured "Atlantic Avenue," the slow-grinding "When Will You Be Mine," and a remake of the Burt Bacharach/Hal David favorite "Walk On By" (which became a minor hit and made it to number 32 on Billboard's R&B

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singles chart). But after Mardin-produced treasures like AWB, Soul Searching, Cut the Cake, and Warner Communications, AWB followers had become extremely spoiled -- they expected excellence, not a record that was merely adequate. Nonetheless, hardcore devotees (as opposed to casual listeners) will want to hear this album, which Rhino reissued on CD as Feel No Fret...and More (with four bonus tracks added) in 1994. ---Alex Henderson, Rovi

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