

THE FORTY FIVES

Get It Together (Ng Records)
The Forty Fives are so defiantly retro that they don't even have their own Web site. How's that for revolutionary?

The Atlanta quartet has reinvented the 1960s on its debut disc "Get It Together." The foursome relies on the old mod-rock standards — guitar, drums, bass and, believe it or not, the great Hammond B-3 Organ, harnessed in service of solid white-boy blues rock.

The Forty Fives' attention to historical detail pays off. The music is loud, slightly lascivious without being openly crude, and a whole lot of fun, just like good old Beatles-inflected pop of, say, 1968 or '69. The album wouldn't be out of place next to your Dave Clark Five, Small Faces and Badfinger records.

The album does take a few minutes to get cranking — the first six tracks are pretty much interchangeable. But at the halfway point, the band lets loose with the quirky, catchy "King of Mexico" and never looks back. It reels out a series of pop gems that would do credit to any "British Invasion" band.

For those of you mourning the breakup of the Beatles and vainly awaiting the next hit single by the Foundations or the Searchers, be sure to catch this nifty little album. — Sean Scully

PEBBLES

Greatest Hits (Hip-o Records)

Pebbles seems like a curious choice for a greatest-hits package. She had three inoffensive top-five singles in the late 1980s and early '90s — "Girlfriend," "Mercedes Boy" and "Giving You the Benefit" — but hardly qualifies as a superstar. Or even a star, for that matter.

She has a pleasant but unremarkable voice, which she uses to sing mildly catchy but unremarkable R&B songs, which are jammed on this overlong and heavily padded collection.

While she has a few genuine hits on her resume, Pebbles has been in a serious rut for most of a decade. As the liner notes of this collection gamely admit, her recent albums have tanked, meaning her few greatest hits are well behind her. — S.S.

"Now Hear This"
July 15, 2000