

Rolling Stone

[REVIEW | NEW CDS]



Anka turns grunge into appealing schmaltz.

Paul Anka



★★★

Rock Swings
Verve

Hilarious Vegas-style covers of rock nuggets such as Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and Van Halen's "Jump"

AN APPEALING NOVELTY FROM a former teen idol your parents may be too young to remember, Paul Anka's *Rock Swings* is destined to be the one big-band album in many college kids' record collections. Packed with schmaltzed-up covers of Nirvana, Oasis and Bon Jovi, Anka's bid for latter-day cool falls flat—which is part of the appeal. The horn-y arrangements and Anka's Sinatras turn "Smells Like Teen Spirit" into something surreal,

replacing grunge gravitas with geezer dreaminess. "Jump" may take the prize for postmodern hilarity: Splashy horns announce Eddie Van Halen's signature synth riff, and Anka turns an already cheesy lyric into a joyful celebration of rock-dude cal-

lousness. *Rock Swings* could have been done

apt soundtrack for a summer road trip. Farfar drowns his sorrows on mellower cuts such as "Atmosphere," but by finding the right mix of pastoral beauty and bar-band swagger, *Okemah* usually keeps his head well above water. **CHRISTIAN HOARD**

KEY TRACKS "6 String Belief," "Afterglow 61"

by any number of middle-aged crooners, but it's brimming with good humor and silly fun—and it's far less annoying than a Cherry Poppin' Daddies record. **CHRISTIAN HOARD**

KEY TRACKS "Smells Like Teen Spirit," "Eye of the Tiger"