

## Mp3 Wimp Factor 14 - Ankle Deep



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Lone album from Pittsburgh popsters, permanently out of print. 14 MP3 Songs POP: Bubblegum Pop, POP: Quirky Details: Pittsburgh's Wimp Factor 14 first made waves with a series of excellent early-'90s singles the first of which, "Train Song" (each copy packaged with a genuine train-flattened penny), was among 1991's 7-inch best. On those records, the group mixes basic strum-pop with interesting instrumental touches (melodica, toy ukulele, zither, plastic bucket drums, etc.) to achieve an unusually inviting sound. That sound, however, wouldn't have added up to much without the superior songcraft of singer Frank Boscoe. On the quintet's only CD, Ankle Deep (packaged in a six-by-nine-inch manila envelope, which probably didn't help its prospects any at retail), Boscoe displays a consistent knack for combining the introspective with the topical, resulting in a playfully conversational songwriting style. Many artists would be reduced to novelty when tackling such subjects as college term papers ("I Is for Incomplete"), day-job drudgery ("(It's Ok to Work for) Rockwell International") and how to avoid losing small objects ("How to Avoid Losing Small Objects"). But Boscoe, who had shown a knack for this sort of anecdotal approach on the group's 1992 "Botch" single (another day-job lament, about messing up a production run of chess pieces), is smart enough to make it work throughout the bulk of Ankle Deep.

-Paul Lukas, Trouser Press

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