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COLLECTOR

# Reviews

★★★★★ ESSENTIAL   ★★★ EXCELLENT   ★★★ GOOD   ★★ FOR COMPLETISTS   ★ DON'T BOTHER



## 78 ALBUMS

REM push for a *Reckoning*, as their second album gets expanded and reissued, while Gong's Daevid Allen tells us about the happiest time of his life.

### REM

*Reckoning: Deluxe Edition*

★★★★★

Universal, cat no tbc (2CD)

**The 25th anniversaries aren't going to stop soon**

REM's second album, released in 1984, represented a shift – in much the same way later albums would jar next to one another – from the alluring murk of debut *Murmur*. It was an attempt (and a successful one at that) to capture the band as the live, fun beasts that they had evolved into in their first three years of existence.

Producers Easter and Dixon remained on hand, but this time the sense that they were being provided with raw material so tightly-honed and downright loveable was palpable in every groove. *Reckoning* remains a highpoint in REM's first chapter of existence. Central Rain

sounds like a lost soul classic, Camera swells to a climax hitherto unknown in REM quarters, while (Don't Go Back To) Rockville was practically a singalong – perish the thought. Michael Stipe remained fascinating but Peter Buck could now be heard stepping out on the likes of Pretty Persuasion, while the backing presence of Mike Mills was evident everywhere.

A bonus disc of 17 tracks from a Chicago gig of the same year finds the foursome equally joyous; now a unit. It must have proved tantalising for the

Young guns: early *Reckoning* for REM.



crowd too – Driver 8 wouldn't appear until album three, and Hyena album four! Rich pickings. *Jake Kennedy*