

Prelims turn into 'The Late Show'



By TERRY JOSEPH

TOUTED to start promptly at 7 p.m., Thursday night's Panorama large-band adjudication programme never got underway until nearly one hour later, with the first orchestra, BWIA Invaders, "taking the count" at five minutes before 8 p.m.

In a smart move, Invaders eschewed panyard romanticism and moved its instruments across the street and into the Queen's Park Oval car park, to accommodate the predictable crowd on hand to hear the band render De Fosto's "War 2004".

The delay, which Pan Trinbago accounted for with the single word "logistics", stretched to 90 minutes



MEMBERS of Neal and Massy Trinidad All Stars perform "Ah Play Mih Dues" for the Panorama prelims at their panyard on Duke Street, Port of Spain, on Thursday. Photo: DEXTER PHILIP

by the time judges went by PCS Starlift, before coming to the Hamilton Street panyard of Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove, where a wheelchair-bound musical director Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, on

short recess from St Clair Medical Centre, waited in pyjamas.

It was 9.10 p.m. when the panel was ready to hear Phase II render the Sharpe/Alexis composition, "We Like to Play", before a crowd of hundreds, including former chief justice Clinton Bernard, artist Jackie Hinkson, hotelier Ken Duval, former finance minister (and patron of Angostura Woodbrook Playboyz) Brian Kuei Tung and pan pioneer Sterling Betancourt MBE.

But by then, much of the crowd that had earlier gathered at the Phase II panyard had already left and was en route to T&TEC Power Stars to hear the work of Ray Holman on the self-composed "Doh Touch Mih Carnival", reportedly the best effort in many years from the St James band.

Like the majority of pan aficionados, we adopted the principle of preceding the judges at selected panyards rather than trying to strictly follow their route, given parking horrors and the sheer impossibility of getting to each next band before they began playing.

No one advised when or where the judges would take a dinner break



A MEMBER of bpTT Renegades in deep concentration during his performance in the preliminary round at the band's Charlotte Street, Port of Spain, panyard. Photo: DEXTER PHILIP

or refresh themselves, so after leaving the Phase II panyard, while it seemed reasonable that they would reach Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars (next in line after Power Stars) by 10 p.m. at worst, they never arrived until about an hour later.

Next stop was bpTT Renegades but again, the hundreds already gathered at that band's Upper Charlotte Street panyard had consumed all parking opportunities for several blocks in any direction; making it impossible to secure one's vehicle and reach back to the venue before the band started.

A turnaround to Laventille Road, hoping to get a good spot before the crowd reached the Witco Desperadoes panyard was already too late, as parking began more than half a kilometre south of that venue and getting there would be all uphill.

Pan Trinbago yesterday promised

to tidy tonight's transportation and administrative difficulties in the attempt to present a more predictable programme. Notwithstanding, the organisation's marketing officer, Ian Clarke, was high in praise of police escorts for the judges and their handling of crowd management at the various panyards.

Tonight, the preliminary round for conventional orchestras in Trinidad will end with defending champion Exodus among the large bands playing in the eastern conference. Exodus plans to make a full evening out of the event, with DJ and live performances of pan calypsoes.

Again, all performances are listed to begin at 7 p.m.

(Note: Single-pan bands will all play for the judges next week and not this weekend as earlier reported)



ARIMA ANGEL HARPS bassist Damian Richardson has all the notes on his nine-bass covered during the (East Zone) medium band's performance of De Fosto's "War 2004" arranged by Sharpe/Alexis at its Olton Road, Arima panyard on Thursday night in the Panorama preliminaries.

Photo: ROBERT TAYLOR

Full listing for tonight

EASTERN REGION LARGE BANDS/ TUNE

1. Nu Tones / "Pan in Meh Blood" - Blackie
2. Birdsong / "Jamboree" - Steve Sealy
3. Exodus / "War 2004" - De Fosto
4. Pamberi / "Whop Cocoyea" - Shadow
5. Solo Pan Knights / "Rosie" - Robbie Greenidge

SOUTH-CENTRAL REGION MEDIUM BANDS/ TUNE

1. Point Fortin Tomadoes / "Pan on the Road" - Jit Samaroo
2. Petrotrin Siparia Deltones / "Homer Man Crying" - Shadow
3. Couva Joylanders / "The Challenge is Minor" - Mark Loquan

NORTHERN REGION SMALL BANDS / TUNE

1. Panatics / "Jamboree" - Steve Sealy
2. West Stars / "Finger Pointing" - De Fosto
3. Merrytones / "Pan on the Road" - Jit Samaroo
4. Hummingbirds Pan Groove / "Pan on the Road" - Jit Samaroo
5. St James North Stars / "The Challenge is Minor" - Mark Loquan
6. Crescendoes Musical / "Pan on the Road" - Jit Samaroo
7. Blue Diamonds / "Don't Go" - Baron
8. Highlanders / "We Like to Play" - Sharpe/Alexis
9. Morvant Ebonites / "Pan on the Road" - Jit Samaroo