

Despers smokes 'em in Fiesta final

SEAN NERO

LAVENTILLE-BASED Witco Desperadoes Steel Orchestra walked away with the conventional band prize in Pan Trinbago's inaugural National Republic Pan Fiesta competition on Saturday night at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port-of-Spain.

Delivering a flawless rendition of "This Melody Sweet," composed by Winsford Des Vignes and arranged by Clive Bradley, Desperadoes unleashed its musical might to beat out a field of 12 challengers to take home the \$50,000 first prize and the Ray Holman Challenge Trophy.

Appearing in position number three, Desperadoes, led by Bertrand Glasgow, took the spotlight around 11 pm, to the jubilation of the audience.

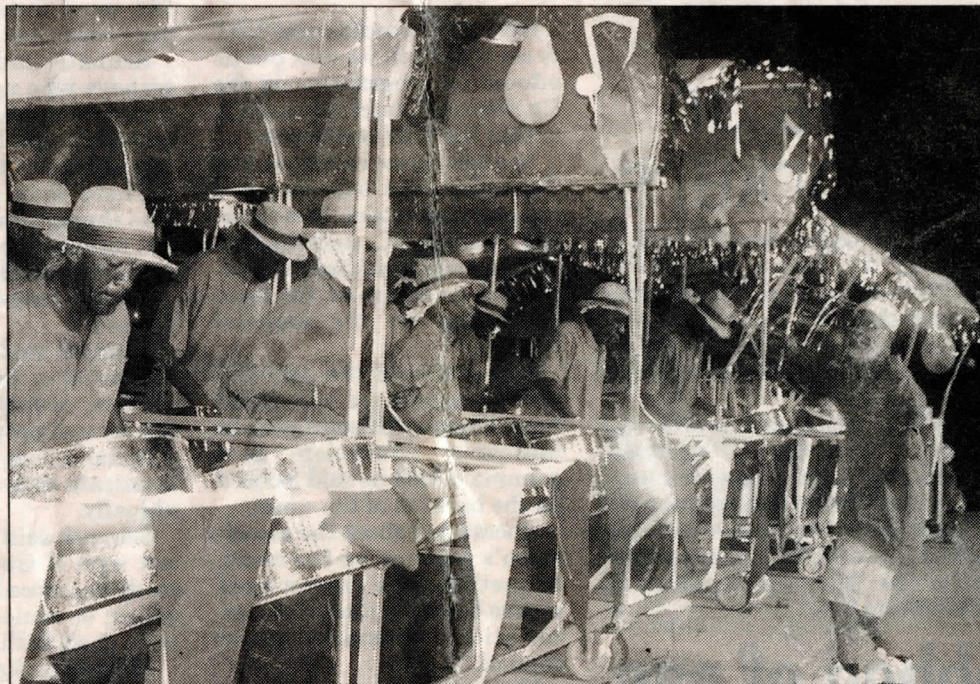
By the time the band was settled into its rendition of the song, it found accompaniment from satiated fans who sang the chorus: "Lord, this melody sweet."

The singing, mixed in with the dynamism exuded by the Desperadoes pannists, alongside the antics of Bradley on stage, formed the cocktail for a memorable exhibition.

According to the panel of adjudicators, comprising David Waddel, Merle Albino De Coteau, Andy Chichester, Desperadoes improved by 10 points from its preliminary judging, where the band scored 266 points in taking an overall lead in the competition.

During the call of the results on Saturday night, patrons were at the edge of their seats since many felt Tobago-based Katzenjammers Steel Orchestra, the dark horse in the competition, could pull it off.

In the end, Katzenjammers tied for second place with reigning National Panorama champion Exo-



Arranger **CLIVE BRADLEY** conducts the Witco Desperadoes Steel Orchestra during the inaugural National Republic Pan Fiesta competition at the Queen's Park Savannah, Port-of-Spain, on Saturday night.

PHOTO: LESTER FORDE

odus, both with a score of 272 in the competition, which was in tribute to steelband composer Ray Holman.

Katzenjammers, playing an Auburn Wiltshire arrangement of Len "Boogsie" Sharpe's "This Feel-

ing Nice," woke up the sleeping Savannah audience at 1 am, with a scintillating delivery of this selection.

Exodus, with its Pelham Goddard arrangement of "Fire Down Below," another item from the musical bible

Results

CONVENTIONAL BANDS

1. **Witco Desperadoes:** This Melody Sweet – North (276).
2. **Katzenjammers:** This Feeling Nice– Tobago (272).
2. **Exodus:** Fire Down Below – East (272).
4. **Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove:** Party – North (271).
5. **Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars:** Musical Volcano – North (267).
6. **BWIA Invaders:** Pan On The Run – North (264.5).
7. **Tropical Angel Harps:** Pan By Storm – South/Central (264).
8. **Excellent Stores Silver Stars:** This Feeling Nice – North (262).
9. **NLCB Fonclair:** Woman Is Boss – South/Central (261).
10. **Courts Laventille Sounds Specialist:** Steelband Paradise – North (259).
10. **Petrotrin Hatters:** My Band – South (259).
12. **Pamberi:** I Music – East (255).
13. **PCS Starlift:** Musical Volcano – North (252).

SINGLE BANDS

1. **Peake's Scrunters Pan Groove:** This Feeling Nice – North (266).
2. **Angostura Woodbrook Playboyz:** Pan By Storm – North (263).
3. **Shades In Steel:** Pan By Storm – South/Central (263).
3. **La Horquetta Pan Groove:** Fire Down Below – East (257).
5. **Harlem Syncopators:** Pan By Storm – North (255).
6. **Marsicans:** Woman Is Boss – East (252).
7. **Trinidad Nostalgic:** Party – East (247).
8. **La Creole Pan Groove:** Mind Yuh Business – North (240).
9. **D Original Woodbrook Modernaires:** Pan On the Run – North (239).
10. **Laventille Phasphonics:** Fire Coming Down – North (238).
11. **Dem Boys:** Fire Down Below – Tottago (235).
12. **Laventille Serenaders:** Party – North (232).
13. **Pan On the Move:** Mind Yuh Business – East (230).

explanation.

Present at Saturday night's finals, which featured 26 bands — 13 conventional and 13 single pan — were

ing Nice," woke up the sleeping Savannah audience at 1 am, with a scintillating delivery of this selection.

Exodus, with its Pelham Goddard arrangement of "Fire Down Below," another item from the musical bible of Boogie Sharpe, was by far the best dressed band of the night with its pan racks draped in the national colour of T&T, complemented by the outfit worn by the players.

Its performance was further accentuated by dancers from the Malick Folk Performing Company.

Sharpe, the composer whose music dominated the event jointly produced by the National Carnival Commission, led Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove into fourth place with 271 points.

The band chose Clive Bradley's "Party" as its tune of choice, which "Boogie" arranged.

Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars, which opened the conventional competition at 10.17 pm with a dynamic rendition of Robert Greenidge's "Musical Volcano," arranged by Yohan Popwell, placed fifth with 267 points.

The inaugural National Republic Pan Fiesta was held under the patronage of Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

But the Prime Minister did not make an appearance and neither Pan Trinbago nor the NCC could offer any

explanation.

Present at Saturday night's finals, which featured 26 bands — 13 conventional and 13 single pan — were acting President Dr Linda Baboolal, Minister of Culture and Tourism Pernelope Beckles, Minister of Community Development and Gender Affairs Senator Joan Yuille-Williams, Tobago MP Eudine Job-Davis and members of the Tobago House of Assembly.

In the single pan band category, Peake's Yacht Services Scrunters Pan Groove emerged winner in an upset.

Playing a Seion Gomez arrangement of Sharpe's "This Feeling Nice," the band climbed seven spots coming out of the prelims.

For its achievement, Scrunters Pan Groove will receive \$20,000 and the Holman Challenge Trophy.

Laventille Serenaders and Harlem Syncopators, forerunners in this category with a joint score of 255 points in the prelims, were in for major disappointment on final night.

Serenaders, for its rendition of "Party" arranged and composed by Clive Bradley, dropped 23 points into 12th position with a score of 232 points, while Syncopators held its preliminary total of 255 points, but finished fifth.