

PANORAMA '82

Catelli All Stars they not easy

CAN "CATELLI All Stars" make it three-in-a-row? There are some who say that "All Stars" will, finally, be beaten by the law of averages — but I am not so sure.

"All Stars" is a legend in Trinidad and Tobago, but, even with their dominance in the steelband world over the last two years there are some who persist in underestimating the band.

It seems that every time they win a competition there are some who feel that that was achieved by some fluke, never to be repeated again.

Actually, it should be the other way around — whenever "All Stars" triumphs and they are yet to be beaten in the last two

Panorama competitions, to say nothing of the 1980 Steelband Festival, people should realize how

difficult it is to beat that band.

To my mind, Catelli All Stars is one of the most disciplined steelbands in Trinidad and Tobago. In fact the only reason I have not described them as the "most disciplined" is because I have not, personally, checked out all the steelbands in the land.

As Jewel 22's rival captain, Eldon "Patsy" Ross told me in conversation:

"Catelli don't make joke with discipline."

When you add to that discipline, the emergence of Leon "Smooth" Edwards as a top arranger as well as the playing ability of the members, themselves, the real picture emerges.

And that picture reveals a steelband that

has been moulded in the early fires of the movement, has had its lean periods when many of its stalwarts either emigrated or stopped playing, and yet has managed to become the steelband for a new generation of panmen and panlovers.

That is the "All Stars" experience and it is that package of experience, discipline and talent that has made them champions and which also makes them so difficult to beat.

The truth is that if I were a steelbandsman playing in a band other than "All Stars," I would face the reality of the "All Stars" brilliance, work night and day perfecting my sound and hope that

"Catelli" make a stumble or two on the day of the competition.

I would also, at the same time hope to begin beating them early, from the first round, because the experience is that if "All Stars" begins on a winning note by the time they reach the final night it is not all that easy to beat them — as Renegades found out last year when for all their magnificent late bid, All Stars' extra edge made the difference in the mind of the judges.

So the thing to do, as the pans roll down the track today is not to underestimate Catelli All Stars. As the man said, "they not easy."

KEITH SMITH