

'SOLO' WAS A VIRTUAL WINNER

By DALTON JAMES

THE 1972 Panorama contest came in with the unusual excitement of pre-J'Ouvert and went out with the stain of some public dissatisfaction about the results on the savannah stage. So what else is old?

Only this year the gripes are unique though understandable to an extent. The major one implicates the controversial CIBC Starlift. The Woodbrook band, after a few years of Panorama victories, boldly decided this year to manufacture some Third World music for the revellers in the hope of bringing off revolutionised pan talent.

Therefore it was shocking to the Starlift people that the judges slipped them into third place behind Solo Harmonites and Carib Tokyo, and they can't understand why the capacity audience at the show was waiting for something to happen during their low-key (excitement-wise) performance.

I agree that the tune was well arranged, but it seemed the crowd was forced to marry a beautiful woman without taking time to know her.

Another major grouse came not only from supporters of Catelli Trinidad All Stars but also from many people filtering through Grand Stand exits on their way to their delayed coronation of Carnival.

Most confident

All Stars must have been the most confident panmen on Sunday night when they released a legion of gas-filled balloons to the light of the moon and psyched the awed audience with an emotional display of "Mrs. Harriman's" wares. The arrangement by Rudolph Wells, A New York resident, was good enough to convince many of a Solo-All Stars or reverse forecast. But this is Panorama.

The rest of the strong show followed the pattern of last Friday night with one exception. Dark horse Carib Tokyo played even more brilliantly than they did in the semi-finals and overwhelmed their counterparts with bases that worked overtime and an impressive "Mrs. Harriman" coupled with an equally impressive overture.

WITCO Gay Desperadoes seemed to have a thousand flutes hidden somewhere among those chrome pans. However, Despers were inclined to coast through the finals with sweet pan and blinking lights above six, loud rocket pans. But they treated us to much jazz and less "Rope". If acoustics is the science of sound as their apollo pad told us, then the Radoes belonged on a stage with jazz artists.

Shell Invaders and Mosco Tile Fonclaire with "Toronto Mas" and "Panorama Night" respectively got good needlework from the applause metre. Yet they both flattered to deceive. The oilmen relied too much on their unmistakable rhythm and snatches of good cello music, and the southmen dwelled too much on their funky drummer.

With Solo Harmonites a virtual winner on the strength of only the memory of Friday night's test, it was only a matter of time until the end of the show to acknowledge the band as untied Panorama champs.

with a swanky J'Ouvert arrangement of "St. Thomas Girl" that spelled out beautiful passages from key to key, they were cocky enough to pull off another victory that could very well place them in the language of dynasty.