

ML 1040

EXPRESS

Features Section

Steelbands venture into new fields



Players Symphony of Belmont will play at No. 14

APART from the 1987 Panorama assuming the appearance of being the keenest in the 24-year history of the competition, a number of exciting colour stories are emerging as well. Even the draw for the preliminaries tells its own curious myths.

While a few participants have chosen Kitchener's *Pan in 'A' Minor*, a composition of test piece dimension; *Kaka Roach* — also by the Road March King of the World — is the selection of at least one steelband. Arranger Robert Thompson is the daring arranger doing *Kaka Roach*, for Melodians of Arima.

Corquettes, playing De Alberto's *Rambo* is another band with a unique selection; as is Trintoc Invaders with its De Fosto piece — Unfi-

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nished Symphony. In Invaders' case, the piece is being arranged by the Headley brothers, formerly of Exodus.

Other bands that have dared to venture where others apparently fear to tread are Pandemonium, Boystown, Trinidad All Stars, Sforzata, Valley Harps, Birdsong, Tokyo, Players Symphony and Laventille Sound Specialists.

The band holding the hot spot, position number one in the North/East preliminaries is Sound Specialists, and it is playing its own composition. This Laventille Quarry band's selection will be the little-known *Giselle*, about the well-known Miss World 1986, composed by Winston Davis and sung by Errol "Sparky" Alleyne.

Trinidad All Stars and Sforzata have selected Mighty Trini's *Curry Tabanca* as their piece, and there's even tassa rhythms in the All Stars version.

Natasha Wilson's *One Day* will be played by Boystown, from Point Cumana, and Valley Harps. It's interesting to note here that the Boystown piece is being arranged by Edmund Charles, brother of late Desperadoes administrator Rudolph Charles. It is reported that Clive Bradley, arranging for Valley Harps, has secured a three-year contract with the Petit Valley steelband, a decision which much auger well for the band's future.

Bradley has also given Pandemonium a most unusual but melodic arrangement for Scrunter's *She Want Me To Sing In She Party*. This consistent Belmont band is now graced with the beautiful smiling faces of St Francois students. Pandemonium's co-Belmont band, Casablanca, is playing *Pan in 'A' Minor* and has recruited a number of young members from the visiting Mangrove's Steel Orchestra, of London, into its fold.

Natasha's other pan song — *De Mas in We* — is the choice of Players Symphony, led by Neale "Speedy" Greaves.

Phase II Pan Groove's celebrated arranger Len "Boogsie" Sharpe has



Phase II pan groove will play at No. 25

successfully experimented with tassa and Chinese rhythms in the past. This year, in his arrangement for *This Feelin' Nice*, Sharpe has gone the African way, embellishing the piece with Shango rhythms.

American Stores Exodus, the livewire band from the east, now has the services of former Starlift/Pandemonium/Antillean All Stars arranger Ray Holman, and will be playing Holman's *Pan Woman*.

Clive Bradley is no longer with Carib Tokyo, but the John John band has talented Gerald Charles and Supt. George Scott. Tokyo has

ranger in the person of Casablanca arranger Bendix Cumberbatch. This popular south band is also taking an unusual selection to Skinner Park, in Kitchener's *Sexication*.

It is also significant that Tropical Angel Harps is playing the same selection as Phase II Pan Groove — *This Feelin' Nice*, while Trintoc Starlift, the '78 national champion, is playing Sharpe's other pan tune, *Pan Progress*.

In the area of innovations, Fernandes Vat 19 Fonclaire, defending south champ, is introducing a new instrument to the Panorama this year. Named after its inventor, it's called the "Butch-pan," and is a six-pan ensemble with a range from seconds to cellos.

WITCO Desperadoes is also expected to send the Savannah crazy with the full use of its "ying ying" pans in Kitchener's *Pan in 'A' Minor*, arranged by Beverly Griffith, Robert Greenidge and Clive Bradley.

As far as the draw in the respective categories are concerned, the trivia runs the gamut. For instance, former pan-round-neck winner Pan Jammers have drawn the number one position, with reigning Festival champ TCL Skiffle Bunch pulling the 19th and last position.

In the North-East group, Trinidad All Stars is appearing immediately before arch-rival Desperadoes and, further down in the line-up, two of Bradley's charges are performing in succession, Pandemonium at position 35 and Valley Harp at position 36.



also selected a unique piece, *Memories* by Shadow, for its bid to enter winners' row.

Among the bands playing Baron's *Say Say*, popularly referred to as *Fire*, are Merrytones, Nutones and Blue Diamonds. Merrytones has contracted overseas musician Lincoln Waldron to arrange its piece, with some assistance from policeman Kendall Lewis.

Cary Codrington is the arranger who will attempt to wrest the East Zonal title from Nutones, for Birdsong, with Bally's *Party Time*.

In the South-Central Zone, Antillean All Stars has yet another new ar-