

EARLY OCT, 1989 - G'DIAN

# Pan Ramajay finals was sweet pan

By BRIAN NG FATT

I ASKED a pal if he was going to the Pan Ramajay finals at Exodus panyard. "Nah!" he said derisively, "dat is a small island ting."

Well, the pan experts who were there will tell you that he missed a treat, that "dem small islanders cyar ramajay like we."

Talk about sweet pan. The spacious Exodus panyard was transformed into a pan lovers paradise as the ten finalists in the innovative ten-a-side competition ramajayed for the judges.

In terms of pure entertainment, the show was terrific.

The popular view here is that anytime is Trinidad time, but the Pan Ramajay organisers didn't know anything about that. The show started

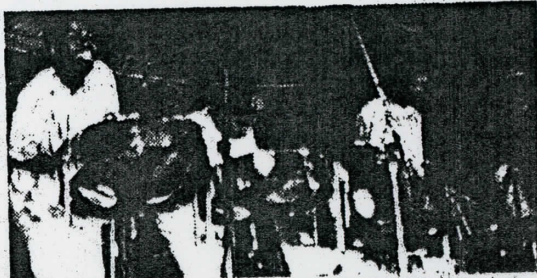
promptly as scheduled. I couldn't believe it.

Exodus Steel Orchestra, the hosts, got the show going with a delightful medley of kaiso and pop songs. Guest artistes David Rudder and Black Stalin kept the programme on an enjoyable level with their repertoire of pan-related calypsoes.

## Two Selections

Contrary to your stereotypical egotistical calypsonian, Rudder also took the opportunity during his performance to sing Happy Birthday to the Libra-born Stalin, who was celebrating his birthday. It was very touching.

The next segment of the programme featured the ten finalists and from this amateur's viewpoint, I enjoyed listening to all of them. I was particularly impressed with Phase II



FINAL: PHASE II performing at the finals of Pan Ramajay. Photo by JOEL PIERRE.

Pan Groove's two selections, Tambu's 'Free Up' (their calypso of choice) and Milt Jackson's jazzy number, 'SKJ' (their tune of choice).

Vat 19 Fonclaire, joint winners with Samaroo Jets, laid down a groovy number with their tune of choice, 'Sifting through the Notes,' a piece composed by the band's arranger Ken "Professor" Phil-

more. The band's calypso of choice was Kitchener's 'Symphony in G.'

The Samaroo Jets really went to town with their tune of choice, a Bossa Nova number titled 'Tico Tico.' They too chose a Kitchener number — 'Two to Go' — as their calypso of choice.

Talking about Kitchener. The Pan Ramajay was staged as a tribute to

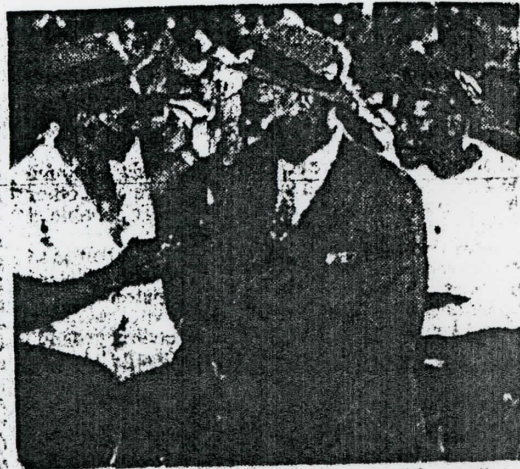
the grandmaster himself. The organisers honoured him with a commemorative plaque for "his tremendous contribution to the steelband movement."

## Soca Music

During a break at the finals, fans kept the kaiso great busy signing autographs on \$20 TT notes.

I noticed Kitchener was liming with his good friend Pretender, "the undisputed master of extempore," and his protege Organiser, who had a hit this year with 'Dat's Ah Bandit.'

It was a pity that DJ Davy's Scorpion, who kept things in a party mood with hot soca music, didn't play the 'Bandit' song. That was my only disappointment of the night.



PAN RAMAJAY FINAL: PRETENDER, Kitchener and Organiser, at Pan Ramajay final at the Exodus panyard. Photo by JOEL PIERRE.