

Maritime Life Hatters— pride of the South

BY their pattern of progress and success and by philosophic reasoning, Maritime Life Hatters should take the national Panorama title. That is the strong belief of their captain and arranger, Steve Achaiba.

Hatters who were first runner-up last year had a Skinner Park crowd carried away last Sunday during the South Panorama preliminaries. "That is an indication of things to come," he deduced.

"This must be our year" he said as he related a string of misfortunes which plagued him and the band since the middle of last year. "With all that bad luck it is only fair that our luck must change."

Difficulty in finding a place to practise, protests from people in the area, problems in getting steel drums and a motor accident in which Achaiba's wife was critically injured were the blows which hit Hatters.

Since October last year the Hatters boys have been hard at practise at their Broadway, San Fernando panyard. And now with the season in full swing the 162 men beat out their 320 pans every night, Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. Their selection? "Tribute to Spree Simon."

The band, the pride of San Fernando, has a sparkling record dating back to 1968 when they were still an unsponsored band. That year they placed third in the South Panorama and second in the "bomb" competition. On Carnival Tuesday they won "Best Beating Band."

The following year with Kitchener's "The Bull" Hatters won the South Panorama finals, came second in the "bomb" competition and retained their title as "Best Beating Band."

Beset by problems and with their cap-

tain out of the country in 1970 they did not place. But with a bang they came back in 1971 to win the South Panorama contest, place second in the "bomb" contest and again win the title of "Best Beating Band." They were also in the finals of the national Panorama.

In 1972 It was an identical repeat of their successes of the previous year. But in 1973 Hatters lost the South Panorama title and placed second.

Last year they placed third in the South competition but went on to come in as first runner-up in the national Panorama. Also last year Hatters came second in the "bomb" contest and won the prize for the "Best Beating Band," in the San Fernando competition.

For their prize as national Panorama runner-up the Broadway boys went to Minneapolis in July last year. They made an impact on the Americans not only because of their music but also because of their discipline.

Indeed they were awarded a certificate which noted that of the many steel orchestras to leave Trinidad on tours, Hatters was the only band in which all the members returned.



Maritime Life Hatters
(above) and Stag
Fonclaire, two
very strong
Southern contenders.

