

## OUR OPINION

# ... and each band should be proud of their efforts...

BY TONIGHT, or at least by the early hours of tomorrow morning, the 1983 Panorama champion will be announced and steelbandmen, and their fans, will be able to rest easy at night.

For the winner, the weeks of practice sessions that went into the late hours of the mornings will now seem worthwhile in retrospect, but the 11 steelbands who made it to the finals should not be heartbroken if the top prize does not come their way.

They have given the public over the competition days a high standard of musicianship and while ranking is inherent in competitions the truth is that any of the 11 steelbands on stage tonight is capable of providing music to raise one's pores.

It is in recognition of this fact that Pan-Trinidad has introduced a more equitable sharing of the prize-money rather than the winner take the lump-sum practice that obtained in the past.

Once again the competitions were packed to capacity and once again Trinidadians proudly revelled in the ability that the steelbandmen consistently displayed.

If the norm that has been established continues, the likelihood is, however, that the same thousands who applauded the steelbands as they went through their paces in the Grand Stand will desert the steelbands on Carnival Mondays and Tuesdays, leaving them lonely and desolate spectacle as they cross the Savannah stage.

There are some signs, however, that things will be different this year. For one thing, more steelbands than usual have registered "mas" bands with the Carnival Development Committee (CDC), although this may be mere routine not to be translated into actual fact on the Carnival days.

In addition the "Bomb" competition is back in place and for the thousands for whom Jour Ouvert is Carnival, the question will be whether the music played will revive that competition in all its glory -- it used to be a Carnival highlight, if we but remember.

The pan pundits will remember some of those glorious moments if pressed -- Invaders' rendition of "in a Monastery Garden," the now defunct Ebonites' "Roses from the South," Highlanders' "Let Every Valley" and "Italiana in Algerii (Dance of the Italian Girl in Algiers) to name a few.

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Another new competition on the cards is an old-time calypso competition which offers the prospect of the leading steelbands playing some of the classics of yesteryear and while we suspect that not much will come from this event, the first time around, it deserves to be avidly promoted in the future.

Pan fans will thrill, we have no doubt, to the prospect of Solo Harmonites, for example, playing once again Lord Kitchen-er's "Wrecker" or Starlift playing "Queen of the Bands" or some band from the South paying tribute to both Lord Melody and Cavaliers by rendering that 1965 gem "Mas."

In a sense, however, the most exciting of Pan Trinbago's Carnival 1983 innovations is its "Las Lap" competitions which seeks to revive "Las Lap" as an entity in Carnival. Over the recent years, "Las Lap" has all but vanished, with the ubiquitous disc-jockeys being the only "music-makers" keeping the Carnival alive.

With the introduction of the "Las Lap" competition on Carnival Tuesday night, however, Pan Trinbago is plainly trying to bring back to life a dead tradition when steel-bands from every corner of the city and its environs wended their way through the city, finally massing in front of Police Headquarters on St. Vincent Street for a final fling.

For ourselves, we would like to congratulate not only the steelbands who have made it to the final rounds, but all those steelbands which have laboured long into the nights to make Carnival '83 a memorable one, whatever else tomorrow and Monday and Tuesday will bring.