

CARNIVAL in Trinidad and Tobago provides a unique spectacle as virtually the entire population of the country sets out to enjoy itself in a pre-lenten period of gaiety and laughter.

It begins at j'ouvert on Monday and continues without let up until las lap which ends on the stroke of midnight on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday ushers in the 40-day lenten period.

For two days, Carnival turns the streets of Port-of-Spain into glittering rivers of colour and spectacle. Bands in fancy dress parading in the streets dance along to the accompaniment of road marches — calypso tunes whose popularity has been won by popular acclaim.

Carnival is a riot of colour

College boys shocked the onlookers

and spectacle, out without music it would lose its charm and spontaneous gaiety. And the music of Carnival is the music of the steelbands, and so it is that in this atmosphere the Texaco Dixieland Steelband was formed.

Trinidad's carnival of 1950 saw for the first time, a band of College students

armed with an assortment of steel pans, dustbins and brake drums parading through the streets.

Onlookers were shocked, yet, amid understandable protests from relatives and friends, these boys went on to become the now famous Dixieland Steel Orchestra, winners of the 1960 Music Festival, and finalist in the 1967 Festival, third place winners in the 1968 Steelband Panorama Competition, and standing head and shoulders above the rest, in a land where good steelbands are a dime a dozen.

Their leader, Curtis Perre, is the driving force behind their success, aiming as nothing less than perfection. He never rests until fully satisfied that he has extracted every ounce of talent and energy from his boys.

And the boys? Each one is a wizard on his instrument and is capable of taking charge of the band at a moment's notice.

The Texaco Dixieland Steelband has thus far produced three recordings. Their unique style has won for them the admiration of thousands who have heard them perform in New York, Miami, Boston, Montreal, London, Paris, Rome, Switzerland, Rhodesia, Nassau, Haiti, Curacao and several of the smaller West Indian Islands.



THOSE fire chiefs keep the road hot on Carnival days.

Their sponsorship spreads as far north as Antigua

OVER the years, Texaco (Trinidad) Inc. has been doing a really good job in improving the standard of steelband music throughout the Caribbean. Texaco's sponsorship, which stretches from Antigua in the North, to Trinidad in the South, entails the supply of pans, stands, uniforms and transport and payment, of the tuners' and arrangers' fees.

In Antigua, there is a band of 20 players which is regarded as one of the top three bands there. Texaco sponsorship began two years ago. Leader is Mr. Albert Jardine.

The 12-man Texaco Astro Jets is on the Dutch island of St. Maarten's and received the company's patronage two years ago.

The leading steelband in St. Kitt's is Texaco Maple Leaf, which has 15 members.

Enthusiasm

Offering a strong challenge to the bands in Grenada is the Texaco Dixie Stars of Carriacou, whose leader Tyril Frank, is now in Trinidad to collect the accoutrement for his 25-strong band.

Mr. Hugh Walke, the Texaco official responsible for organising the Company's steelbands in the western hemisphere, said the success of the Carriacou band was due mainly to Frank's enthusiasm, while a lay apostolate helped them with the music.

There is on the Island the Madonna House Apostolate, where a group of young Canadian women who volunteer their services free to under-developed countries, live. It was one of them, Miss Marilyn Williamson, who taught the Dixie Stars music. She has since returned to Canada.

Tourist season

Sponsorship of Texaco Megnuts in Grenada started six months ago. They were the original Wayside Symphony Orchestra, who won the steelbands festival in that State in 1967/68.

This 25-member band has already appeared before Dame Hilda Bynoe, Governor at a Command Performance. Last December, the band contracted with the Tourist Board for the entire tourist season.

EVEN IN REMOTE AREAS TEXACO PANS BEAT OUT TUNES

The remote Tobago village of Black Rock is kept humming and alive by Texaco Katzenjammers, who have won more prizes than any steelband in Trinidad and Tobago.

In the 1967 Steelband Festival, they won the prize for the Best Tune of Choice when they played "Funiculi Funicula," for which they earned high praise from the adjudicator.

This 30-member band has been sponsored by Texaco for nearly seven years now. Leader is Ethelbert Williams.

During a recent visit, Mr. Walke urged the Katzenjammers to form a co-operative to engage either in agriculture or livestock. They have already spoken to the Minister for Tobago Affairs, Mr. Basil Pitt, and the plans are fairly well advanced.

In Guyana

Apart from Dixieland, Texaco also sponsors Texaco West Stars of Pointe-a-Pierre.

In 1966, the three Texaco Trinidad and Tobago bands, Dixieland, West Stars and Katzenjammers made a long-playing record entitled Texaco on Steel and last year another, More Texaco on Steel.

Texaco (Trinidad) Incorporated also sponsors a steelband in Guyana.