

Carib All Stars make history in Britain

By NATASHA BARSOTTI

CARIB LONDON All Stars Steelband, a family and friends' act out of Brixton, swept aside the opposition presented by 12 other London bands to capture the First National Steelband Festival title staged at the Royal Festival Hall in Waterloo, England last month.

In doing so the 32-member panside headed by Trinidad-born Frank Rollock Sr created history in Great Britain becoming the first steel orchestra to clinch both the UK Festival and Panorama titles.

They won the Nottingham Panorama competition in 1985 but bowed to their rivals, Caribbean Tones Mangrove last year.

Interestingly, the Steelband Festival

Committee selected a calypso entitled "Josephine" as its test piece, composed by internationally recognised pop star and Grammy Award winner, Trinidadian Billy Ocean. The All Stars played Rossini's "Barber of Seville" as their tune of choice.

Instruments Stolen

The Festival was jointly organised by the Steelband Association of Great Britain and the London Brotherhood of Steel.

Some six members of the All Stars are in Trinidad on a month-long visit and will be playing alongside local pannists in this year's Panorama competition.

While Rollock and All Stars percus-

sionist, Alvin Thomas will lend their talents to Moods Steel Orchestra, Rollock's son, Frank Jr, England's Steelband Player of the Year (1985), and friend, Gary Archer will jam with Ferrin Pandemonium. Rollock's other son, King will be attached to Catelli Trinidad All Stars. Last year, the Rollocks played with their sister band, Carib Tokyo.

Mr Rollock told the Guardian that their Festival triumph, which occurred on January 26, was somewhat dampened when they discovered the theft all their instruments the following day.

The band is making arrangements for the purchase new instruments with steelband dealer, Winston Graham who distributes pans to the United Kingdom, the Virgin Islands and the United States.