



ALL STARS SET FOR TONIGHT

CATELLI Trinidad All Stars will be among the eight bands contesting tonight's final of the 1984 National Steelband Music Festival at the Jean Pierre Sports Complex, POS.

All Stars topped the preliminaries with 514 points and the semi-finals with 830 points over the past fortnight. Also in the finals are Birdsong, AMOCO Renegades, MAT Securities Merry-

A. We carried, as did Casablanca, the Cross of Lorraine as our emblem. We thought, this is critical, let's get rid of this cross, because 'Blanca might fight over it. A fella named Vats actually quit 'Blanca to join our band, saying "This music you all are playing, boy, all yuh is stars. So we changed the name to Trinidad All Stars.

Q. What was the source of the famed discipline?

A. I was voted captain in an election held for a successor to Sgt. Markoff, our previous leader. I think I was voted in because of my family background and training. My Bajan

grandfather passed on typical Bajan strictness to the family clan. It was discipline to the point of cruelty. So when I was elected I thought that act one of divine inspiration. I was the first to set up a committee in a steelband. I had a book with everybody's names and addresse. I told the fellas no fighting or else I'd submit their names to the police. That worked great.

STOLE DRUMS

Q. How were you able to buy drums given your poor lifestyle?

A. We used to steal greaser drums from the gas stations. Biscuit drums we got from the

tones, Pamberi, Samaroo Jets, and Exodus.

TCL Skiffle Bunch won the ole time steelband category while Tobagonian Delbert Henry won the soloist title.

Above members of All Stars playing Sparrow's "Doh Back Back."

Photo by ALVA VIARRUEL.

factory on Duncan Street. When we saw drums on the pavement, we'd play little games, like acting like we were waiting for somebody.

But we'd be inching the drums away little by little with our feet. Same thing with coconut oil drums. There was always a way to bring drums to the panyard. Look, if you only had dirty clothes in a drum in your own backyard, we'd empty the drum and run with it.

Q. Was the police a problem during this startup period?

A. Always. They weren't authorised to crash your gates and take away your drums. But they did. They even

smashed them, and those that they kept would get us arrested when we went to retrieve them. The police had a vehicle called the Black Maria that was the most dreadful looking think you ever saw. It was painted blue till it looked black. Many a steelband man rode in that thing to the jail.

Once, Jules was arrested for beating pan on the hill (overlooking Port-of-Spain). He mamagued them by asking permission to step outside the van to empty his bowels. Jules was nobody's fool. He immediately took off for freedom. The steelband asserted itself after the war, though when a more organised approach was tried.