

THE ALL STARS — CATELLI 'BREAK UP' BY VALENTINO SINGH

A 'PAVEMENT COUNCIL' TOOK OVER — JEMMOTT

JERRY JEMMOTT

IT WAS like any other practice night at the All Stars panyard on Duke Street last Wednesday.

In the far corner, a group of members carved out their interpretation of Scrunter's "Woman on the Bass," negotiating in the process for acoustic space with Barry White's "Love Theme" which was being worked on by another section somewhere closer to the middle of the yard.

Resignation Of Six

The scenario bore no evidence that the 20-year relationship between the band and its former sponsors, Catelli Trinidad Limited, had been sharply severed amidst resignation of six of the band's leading members — music director Jerry Jemmott, arranger Leon "Smooth" Edwards, secretary/treasurer Barbara Critchlow-Shaw, John "Poison" Douglas, Anthony Guy and Bunny Wells — only days before.

Signals that something was wrong came during the Carnival celebrations after All Stars finished a disappointing seventh in this year's National Panorama Competition.

Speculation that "Smooth" Edwards, the long-serving arranger, had walked out on the band was hotly debated in the post-Carnival period.

Years Of Service

"Smooth" has remained tightlipped over the events, as have many other All Stars players, who look upon the chain of events as a "family squabble" and incidents which the public have no right to get involved in.

But Jemmott, whose years of service with the band has spanned its entire sponsorship and whose sense of discip-

line has been a stabilising force in the band's record-breaking four victories in the Music Festival, claims that a "Pavement Council" had infiltrated the membership over the years, bringing with it indiscipline and a lack of respect.

"This is not something which happened for Carnival. It was much more than that," he explained.

A Real Gentleman

"When a Musical Director goes in front of a band, he sees and feels everything. If a man winks, it comes out and somehow the body language was just not

gone too far.

"We didn't deserve to lose our sponsorship but the feeling among members of the band is that these people wanted out.

"It was they who wrote to the sponsors about problems within the band and after two meetings, one gets the impression that while the new management was all for reconciliation, the resigned six had already made their decision."

Telemaque admits that there was a certain amount of indiscipline creeping into the band but it's not to the extent which people have been making it out to be.

"You can't blame any particular party

respect."

Turning to charges that drugs was being used by members he said: "I have been here for 16 years and I can't point fingers at any one member who is on drugs.

"If you look at the panyard, you will see a wide open place where all kinds of people come.

"If we see someone going into the far corner we can't stop him, but we ensure that our members are told in no uncertain manner that they have a duty to the band and that drugs are out."

Telemaque agreed that the withdrawal of sponsorship was a big blow to

us. We have to put what happened behind us. This band is much bigger than any individuals."

Telemaque said that some members of the band were in fact saying that the decision of the six resigned members was good for the band.

Given The Best

"They feel that for an organisation to be good, there must be differences of opinion and one can't agree with what a minority says at all times.

"If criticism is constructive, then someone has to look at it."

LEON 'SMOOTH' EDWARDS

just a question of working with it."

In the next few weeks, the band would be looking towards a number of fund-raising efforts to revert to a sound financial position and Telemaque said that the band wanted to thank the sponsors for their contribution over the years.

He pointed out that both Jemmott and Edwards were two very talented persons and whoever benefitted from them could be guaranteed of getting the best.

The Only Problem

"The only problem is that I am not sure that whoever they go to will be able to perform as we do. I think they will have to work twice as hard with any other band."

He ended by stating that the next few months will be good; hard, challenging ones for All Stars and promised its supporters that like the Phoenix rising out of the ashes the band would continue to live on.

...but says management member: *We will survive*

for the problems. I think it was a basic lack of communication."

He spoke of the sessions for Panorama when the arranger appeared not to be getting the best from the players.

"If the arranger is unhappy with something it is only natural that you can't function at your best.

"The band's view was that nothing was wrong with the way we were playing but that the arranger could have done a bit more with the tune.

"The arranger probably was not satisfied with the manner in which the band attempted to get this message across to him and it might have been seen as dis-

the band "but All Stars is not a fly-by-night operation."

"It is an institution and nothing can stop it from functioning. I think the general membership understands what has happened," Telemaque said.

"We can't say for sure that no member would leave but the majority are behind the management and are all ready to put in whatever extra is necessary to maintain our standards."

He said the band had already started negotiations with new arrangers but it was premature to announce who these people were.

"This festival is of vital importance to

He promised that whoever took over the arranging and Musical Director role of the band would be given the best.

"We have the best players, the best equipment and whoever comes here will be guaranteed of having the best. It's



ALL STARS members going through their paces.