

The Greatest Show on Earth IT'S CARNIVAL TIME AGAIN

Amoco Renegades on top, revellers' turn to 'Free Up'

BY KEITH SMITH

THOUSANDS and thousands and thousands of Trinidadians are on the road today as the Carnival celebrations reach their frenzied climax in a final two days of masquerade, music and merrymaking.

If the build up to the celebrations have been any guide, Carnival '89 is going to be remembered for its frenzy, Chris "Tambu" Herbert's *Free Up* interpreted, in fetes up and down the country, as invitation to do so excessively and licentiously.

Indeed, Saturday's Panorama public wanted to drown in music and tribute must be paid to the nation's steelbandmen who, in the short time available to them, delivered just what the public wanted.

In the end, Amoco Renegades playing *Somebody* took the first prize, making of Baron's lilting love-song a wanton copulation that, when the scores were tallied, saw them ahead of odds-on favourites, Phase II Pan Groove and Vat 19 Fonclaire.

Panorama '89 was in fact a watershed. Seventeen years after arranger Ray Holman earned widespread ridicule for eschewing calypsonians' calypsoes and writing his own tune for the then CIBC Starlift, arranger Len Boogie Sharpe's *Fire Down Below* was played by so many bands that it was second in popularity only to one of the great lyrical melodies composed by Winston "Joker" Devine.

Renegades' was a triumphant performance and the judges found it impossible to separate Sharpe's Phase II and Ken Philmore's Fonclaire but, placings aside,

panatics will retain lasting memories of WITCO Desperados' fine run, hauling themselves from the brink of a shout-out, showing, once again, that no band is more dangerous than "Despers" with their backs against the wall. One day Panambi is going to win a Panorama and on this Panorama showing they showed that that day might not be too far off, winning new friends with a splendid performance of Goodwyn Bowen's *Posse*, in spite of the fact that was the least familiar tune in the entire Panorama.

If Saturday night into Sunday morning was filled with reflections and recriminations, some elements in Phase II, for example, finding it difficult to concede that the great Woodbrook band threw away a chance at an un-

precedented hat-trick, Trinidadians, in large measure, spent some part of yesterday predicting the outcome of last night's National Calypso Monarch and King and Queen of Carnival competitions.

By this morning, however, competitions had lost their place at the top of the Carnival calendar. With J'Ouvert came the signal for mass participation in the mas, Trinidadians, high and low, thin and fat, short and tall, revelling in the fact that for the 155th time, it is Carnival time again. (See PETER RAY BLOOD's Panorama report on Page 3 and OPINION on Page 8. More stories and pictures on Pages 2, 3 & 26)

