

Invaders don uniforms

By Tony Mitchell



AS A BOY, "playing sailor" meant one thing . . . throwing powder on lookers-on and rolling on the ground until you became as dirty as ever.

Then with a mad rush, you mingled with the crowd who just could not escape being soiled all over. A rainy Carnival day made it all the merrier.

Today, it is sailor mas' with a difference. The rolling sailor is no more. Instead you see sections upon sections of lily white sailors parading in military fashion with the MPs making sure everything is in order.

For example, if a cool walk is taken along Tragarete Road around 10 o'clock on Carnival Tuesday morning, you will see a line-up and sectioning of thousands of sailors opposite the Queen's Park Oval.

You will also hear the soft melody of the pans of the Shell Invaders Steel Orchestra as they prepare for their assault on the city and the Queen's Park Savannah.

That's right. The Woodbrook boys will be playing a "frankoment" sailor mas' this year.



And whenever a steelband decides on a straight naval depiction, they are sure to be well patronised—Trinidad All Stars is a good example.

So Shell Invaders are all geared for a march on the city with able-bodied seamen, naval ratings, captains, admirals and of course the ever-present SPs.

And as usual, leader Ellie Manette, after the many weeks of getting his boys ready for the big day, will be way down in the back beating on some piece of iron, controlling the tempo for the pan beaters.

The Shell Invaders will be joined by thousands of followers come Carnival time, and for good reason at that—it's "sweet pan."

● IT'S practise time in the pan yard.