

Jan 18, 2007 pg. 5
(NEWSDAY)

Meet Khion DeLas

ML 1040

TEEN PAN ARRANGING PRODIGY

By RICHARDSON DHALAI

HE IS an accomplished musician who plays twelve musical instruments, attends one of South Trinidad's prestige secondary schools and may very well be one of the youngest arrangers in this year's Panorama competition.

Khion DeLas, 18, who hails from the rural village of Rousillac and who readily admits that his "music" is normally formulated during his meditative periods (usually when he's asleep) was recently asked to perform the duties of arranger for conventional steel band in the small bands category — Panasonic Connection of Maccoon Street in San Fernando.

His appointment, according to band captain Clyde "Cid" Byron, was influenced by

DeLas' arrangements during the Christmas season when he arranged a number of "stage" tunes for the band.

"When I first met Khion, I knew that this was the man for the job and after he arranged for the band last year, everyone agreed that he would be the arranger for the Panorama," he said. DeLas who got his start after his parents enrolled him for piano lessons at age five, also taught himself to play the pan and read music at an early age, then graduated to the violin, guitar and drums while still at primary school.

In 1997, DeLas placed second in the Twelve and Under competition. In 1998, he took first position at San Fest in the best instrumentalist category. However, it was at secondary school that his true talent came to the fore when, in 2003, he led

Presentation College, San Fernando to the South Zonal title in the Pan in Schools Coordinating Council steelpan festival.

DeLas said while that experience proved invaluable to his musical development, arranging for a Panorama band was "totally different" from arranging for a school side.

"It is totally different with a longer time period and a greater variety of music that is involved in the tune. What I would do is listen to the song. In this case I chose "Iron Man" by Lord Kitchener, and then play along on the tenor pan and allocate one part of the tune to a section of the band. But I would normally turn the song over in my mind, dissecting the song and then in the morning all the parts would fall into place," he said.