

Where is Pano

SANDRA L BLOOD

The track was prepared. The stage lights signaled. Having cued 50 single to small, 14 medium and 17 large steelbands, respectively, to compete in the semi-final round of the Golden Jubilee Panorama competition, the Panorama pistol was shot off on Saturday and Sunday.

In great anticipation of the winner of the big guns and gauging from the placement of the ten moving through to the final stretch, stakes are high—they have begun to reel in big bets.

Main power horses in the race

Congratulations to Phase II for topping the semi-final leg of the race but intense focus is still on the three main power horses dominating the Panorama race—Trinidad All Stars: the current champion; Desperadoes: the only band with the most first-place titles, ten; and Renegades: the only large band that holds the hat-trick and runs second with the most first-place titles, nine.

Enhancing quality

In the attempt to win the coveted prize, arrangers are pulling out all the stops. All ten qualifying competitors have taken heed of the judges' comments and are working toward enhancing the

quality of their music for the final-yard stretch on February 9.

A marred 50th-year history

This year's Panorama competition is considered a prestigious and historic one given its 50-year milestone, but that milestone was marred when the semi-final round was not televised live.

Adding insult to injury, while Sunday's large-band competition was in progress, a 7 pm television newscast reported the president of Pan Trinbago as blaming failed negotiations with and a television station and the station's head for "not understanding" the way in which the 'thing' goes..." with the other stations. In a separate interview, the 'head' blames Pan Trinbago.

Whichever which way, thus far, this is certainly not the quality of history, reputation and brand to be proud of.

Poor skills-set

In the real business world, this faux pax is viewed as proactivity, planning, communication, management, budgeting, promotion and marketing disciplines gone wrong. It's a disrespect to Panorama.

Is Pan Trinbago, therefore, now required to pay a private agent to acquire this semi-final product for archiving? When should television broadcast negotiations begin?

If one wants to broadcast their product, who should pay for it? What is the correct procedure?

Climaxing with other burning questions

Lingering in the minds of pan enthusiasts are other burning questions as the race climaxes. What is this Panorama milestone first prize? How many notches up will pan move following this era, given the next 50-year short to medium-term plan? When will we get an indication from the organisers about a 50th anniversary? Will the track be beautifully adorned? Will the stage or stands be?

Is there a 2013 National Panorama Golden Jubilee best seller available? A signature T-shirt, perhaps?

Memorabilia, memorialising

Apart from steelbands having been exposed globally over the 50-year period and prior to, when they visited the 'mecca of pan' in the 1990s, 2009 and 2011, respectively, the Prince of Wales, Prince Phillip; the 44th President of the United States of America, Barack Obama and, the Prince and Duchess of Cambridge were presented with a tenor pan each.

What higher prominence can we give pan in recognising its importance in the Diaspora?

One wonders, now, what Golden Jubilee

Where is Panorama at 50 years?

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memabilia will they be receiving or, how is either one being called upon to help us glorify and memorialise this auspicious occasion in the "mecca"... perhaps, an e-mailed or skyped speech for our history slate? What about the most distinguished one presenting the winner with their prize on the final night? Or, will Pan Trinbago be launching T&T's first steelpan store where ensembles can be purchased?

Failing the pannists, what Golden Jubilee memorabilia are the spectators taking away from this season as a keep-sake?

Where is this 2013 Golden Jubilee is taking pan?



Neal and Mssy All Stars are aiming for a hat-trick of wins in this year's Panorama. PHOTO: ANDREA DE SILVA