



COURTNEY YEATES

Rudy's dream comes true

George Yeates' son plays for Despers on gift from 'Charlo'

STEELBAND HAS long been the domain of 'big men'.

In days of old, when bands clashed in real war, you would

hardly expect to find a ten-year-old beating a tenor pan on the frontline.

Especially if he must stay in the panyard until long after midnight, practising his scales and runs, and then having to attend school a few hours later.

In the circumstances, there is little wonder now why little Courtney Yeates is sons known on Laventille Hill as "Raj" (King).

The young Don Ross Primary School student, is one of the few persons beating the tenor bore pan in the WITCO Desperadoes Steel Orchestra.

Also significant is the fact that the son of Despers' former Captain George Yeates, started learning to play the Instrument just six months before his Panorama preliminary debut with the home band.

But, that was not his first outstanding feat on pan.

Courtney played the Nigerian National Anthem on his tenor pan for the visiting Ooni of Ife last year.

Raj also plays with the Morvant/Laventille School Band which won last week's School Panorama, and is one of seven students of a pioneer project: the Rudolph Charles Pan School, run by Edmund "Sadman" Charles.

The little tenor player makes no bones about practising late at nights, and then turning out to school, bright as ever, the



RUDOLPH CHARLES



EDMUND "Sadman" CHARLES

following day.

His father, George explained to Mirror: "Charlo (Rudy Charles) gave him two tenors before he died, and commissioned Raj to beat pan.

"He was seven years old, then, and did not have a pan stand," George added proudly.

"It was only after Charlo died that he started learning, and even came up with the idea of the pan school," said Yeates.

From the look of Courtney and other talented youths on display during Panorama '89, there is no denying the steelband is in safe hands.

Raj, is just the tip of the iceberg of talented youths to take up the challenge and make Charlo's dream come true.

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Son of George Yeates