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# Schools set high standard in pan

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By JESSY MITCHELL

**THERE** were approximately 100 people in the west stand at the Jean Pierre Complex last Monday at the start of the 1989 School's Steelband Festival.

However, the young pannists have never, and probably never will, allow this to daunt their spirits. They played before judges Merle Albino-DeCoteau, Joycelyn Sealey and Ovid Alexis.

The Festival with the theme "Reaping the Harvest" was opened by the president of Pan Trinbago, Owen Serrette, who then invited Oswald Hem Lee, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Dexter Lyndersay, of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Creative Arts to speak.

Three of the five newcomers to the Festival played on Monday afternoon — Toco Composite, FATJO (Fatima College and St Joseph's Convent combined) and Melodians Junior Groove from Arima. Melodians Junior Groove is comprised of four schools, El Dorado Junior Secondary, Arima Senior Comprehensive, Arima Government Secondary and Arima New Government Primary. Because some members came from a primary school, a few of their pannists barely reached the top of the pans.

Melodians Junior Groove, formed in April 1987, gallantly performed the test piece "From Sonata to Calypso" composed by Alexis. It lacked some expression and gusto, not really capturing the mood of the song which judges blamed on lack of experience. They ended well. They also entered a gospel/calypso composition, "Praising My God" composed and arranged by Sherman Fyfe. This piece needed more variation and dynamics.

The engine room in Manzanilla Police Youth Club was excellent. Guided by Paul Campbell to whom this year's festival is dedicated, they made full use of dynamics with their cymbals screaming out. They played Scrunter's "The Will" as tune of choice. It was fast, the tenors excelled on their runs and the band on their phrases.

Toco Composite, well represented in the audience, captured a sweet, lilting effect on their tenors in their test piece. Their tune of choice, "The Power of Soca", was well played, the members comfortably dancing while performing.

South East Port of Spain were controlled and composed in their performance. There were the right kinds of expression and explosions that enhanced their pieces. Their tune of choice was "Intermezzo in E Flat" composed and arranged by Anthony Prospect. They held a note then got louder to end "From Sonata to Calypso." The "Intermezzo" was full of tone and body, yet tender and played with the utmost control, their notes clean and clear. The drums kept a steady yet gentle rhythm, their end was loud and strong yet not boisterous, "a beautiful interplay of parts" said the judges.

FATJO's renditions were very slow. They lacked experience and it showed in their rendition of their tune of choice Ras Shorty I's "Watch out my Children". Their arranger was Winsford DeVine.

"A Journey to Soca Land" a medley of calypsoes by Diego Martin Junior Secondary was arranged by Selwyn Tarradath. It took us from Africa with Tambu's "Journey" and Bally's "Shaka" to India

## THE RESULTS

**THE** following are the results of the first night of the 1989 School's Steelband Festival:

Manzanilla Police Youth Club — 534

Pleasantville Senior Comp — 529

South East Port of Spain — 512

Diego Martin Junior Sec — 496

Malick Harmonettes — 488

Melodians Junior Groove — 408

FATJO — 399

Toco Composite — 353.

The Schools Steelband Festival continues tomorrow at 4 p.m. with the third and last preliminary. The following bands are expected to appear: El Dorado Senior Comprehensive School Steel Orchestra, Tranquility Government Secondary School Steel Orchestra, Matelot Community School, Woodtrin Steel Orchestra, North Eastern College Steel Orchestra, Port of Spain/Laventille Police Youth Club Steel Orchestra and Success Stars Pan Sounds Steel Orchestra.

with Mike Tobas's "Tassa" and then through China using some oriental phrases. Then the tenors rang out to herald the Caribbean with Rudder's "Song For A Lonely Soul". In their test piece their dynamics were excellent, broadening and expanding, though some runs could have been cleaner.

Malick Harmonettes were soft and peaceful at the start of the Test Piece. Their expression was good and the band controlled, grabbing attention from the calypso section onward. Their tune of choice, "Keys to the City" by Leston Paul lacked some dynamics and variation.

Pleasantville Senior Comprehensive were 55 members strong, the largest band to perform. Their tone was full-bodied, a notable contrast with the smaller bands. Their test piece was well done, with good timing and excellent control at the top though their entry into the calypso was a little boisterous. They ended with "Hammer" as their tune of choice. Their runs were clear and clean.