



AUBURN WILTSHIRE... former member of two-time national champion and 17-time national finalist Phase II Pan Groove.

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# Sounds of pan enter a new age

By REY DAVIS

PANORAMA judges have the unenviable task of awarding points to steelbands for their "ten minutes of glory" on stage.

One person who thinks Panorama judging is no cup of tea is Auburn Wiltshire, a former member of two-time national champions and 17-time national finalist Phase II Pan Groove.

Wiltshire thinks there is a new wave of pan music and musicians as well. This wave, he says, exists in the youth, whose involvement in the steelpan is an instrument for personal development. Steelbands, he says, are virtual community centres.

Wiltshire himself has arranged the Len "Boogsie" Sharpe composition Mind yuh Business for Belmont's Supersonics in the pan-round-de-neck Panorama this year.

"The sounds coming out of Panorama is 'new-age' music. We have to be careful of those who cannot come to terms with that.

This new-age music is not constant. It moves," he says.

"Take something like tempo. How does one determine a score for tempo? Neither the scoresheet nor the rules have a standard for that. Suppose the tempo is dead slow as seen fit, what's the score? How does that

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measure up to the thinking that it should be slightly quicker?"

"A musical decision, a musical arrangement comes from within its composer. It's like interpretation. There is no boundary. Some feel the freedom to go solo, go total. The chord progression is there for use," he says.

"Harmony and re-harmony must command more

appreciative ears. The pan is pulling some nine-chords, 11-chords, 13-chords for which there is no human voicing to match. Re-harmonisation and substitution chords deserve big ears."

"Melodic development and motific development are inescapably ringing through the music in ways you may term 'wrongside', but is that really so?"

"The musicians dictate the pace of the music. The joy it brings to people — like in the North Stand — will never end. New-age music is either going to maintain the spirit of Carnival in its outpouring or subdue it according to which side of the coin is flipped.

"Reggae/dub, the crossover is symbolic of new-age music. There are messages in the rhythm, the lyrics. Pan catches that too. The youth are caught in its wave and that's something to analyse. The disco appeal has lessened.

"So many youths are yet caught up in this Panorama diaspora. Check the bands for Panorama — 120 strong, more than 50 percent youth."

"Yet one has to be careful of overload. I remember in practising for a Festival we were allowed breaks to go play a round of basketball, small goal-post football or 'bubble a pot' or something. It helped build all our musical character and more.

"So the panyards know they must lead by example, proffer the right image," he advises.