

ML1040

The saddest hattrick

By TERRY JOSEPH

EVERY ARRANGER wants to do — what basketball has dubbed — a “threepeat” (or hattrick) of Panorama wins, but none among them wants to miss it for any one year, far less three in a row.

Len “Boogsie” Sharpe, who has taken Phase II Pan Groove to two dozen Panoramas, will this year miss his third... in a row.

Sharpe, who ran into difficulties with the law in the US where he is based, was thought to be coming home this year to take his band through the paces of “Mind Yuh Business”, his own composition.

He has been called the “Prince of Pan” and “Mozart”. But to the players of Phase II Pan Groove, the band he helped found, he is simply known as “B-Sharpe”, describing perfectly the impossibility his music sometimes throws up.

Sharpe has written music not only for pan or his band, but has produced entire albums for soca singers like Elsworth James and the band Taxi.

His soft spoken and self-effacing personality belies the depth of his music which invariably contains sweet chord progressions and interludes fit not only for steelbands but, as has been demonstrated, all forms of orchestration.

Sharpe could not be released from probation in the US to come home to complete the song he

started with the band last year while here for his father’s funeral.

Unfortunately, many members of Phase II Pan Groove seemed to stay with the hope that he would still be coming; hoping to the last minute he would come weave his musical magic.

The band only recently acquired the services of Annise “Haffers” Hadeed, himself a Phase II Pan Groove crackshot and international musician, to do the work on “Mind Yuh Business”.

Haffers came home last week and was busily applying his finest musical tricks toward bringing the band back into winners’ row.

The band has won the competition twice (1987 and ’88) and has been second on three occasions.

They were the first unsponsored band to win Panorama and the first band to win with their own composition.

All of these tricks had been done by the famous B-Sharpe, but this year he is not with what has come to be known as “his band”.

Haffers, who by his own admission is a disciple of Boogsie, has an awesome responsibility. He has to not only put in a Herculean effort in an extraordinarily short time, but must be seen to be saviour of a band that has always played under the direction of a miracle-maker.

He has to wipe away the notion that “Boogsie Rules!”

Countdown to Panorama

A message from NCC

AUGUSTUS constrained by time in this our first year in the administration of the Festival.

Our thinking for pan should in no way be interpreted by these same limitations.

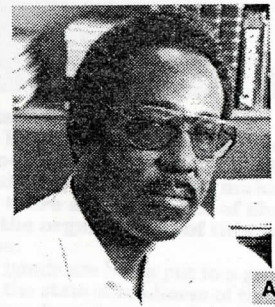
The NCC and this government wish to reaffirm their commitment to the furtherance of pan; and not just in terms of the intangible vocal supporters associated with the instrument.

Already there is evidence of this commitment and we

preparation so that we can now sit back and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

We would like to ensure their effort has not been in vain. So immediately this Panorama and the Carnival is completed, we shall start to address some of the problems which are either longstanding or discovered through careful analysis of this year’s Festival. This in order to bring about a smoother passage of the 1997 competitions.

The reintegration of pan



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But the link is not purely emotional, as the function of the NCC requires pragmatic approaches to the solution of problems involving the national musical instrument.

The government of the day has already begun to fulfil its promises to the steelband movement. And the NCC, being the agency most directly involved with the staging of the Festival, has a number of areas of direct responsibility in this regard.

Much as we would have liked to bring about a balance between the facilities offered to the Northern Region of Pan Trinbago and other regions (including Tobago), we found ourselves locked into a space largely

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Already there is evidence of this commitment and we intend, in the fullness of time, to make good these promises.

Tonight when the Panorama competition begins, it marks what many think to be the official start of the Festival.

In fact, we have been working with Pan Trinbago from the very day of our appointment toward a more satisfying Panorama. And what we manage to achieve this year is due in no small measure to the maturity of Pan Trinbago as an organisation and the representatives as people.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the thousands of men, women and children who have spent weeks of

preparation so that we can now sit back and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

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The reintegration of pan in the wider Carnival has been one of our ambitions, and even with the limited application of this concept in 1996, we feel the die has been cast for a larger role for pan in the national festival.

On behalf of the Commission and myself, I should like to wish all of the participants and the audiences of the 1996 Panorama an enjoyable time.

Of course, we have every confidence that the best bands will, in fact, win their various categories.

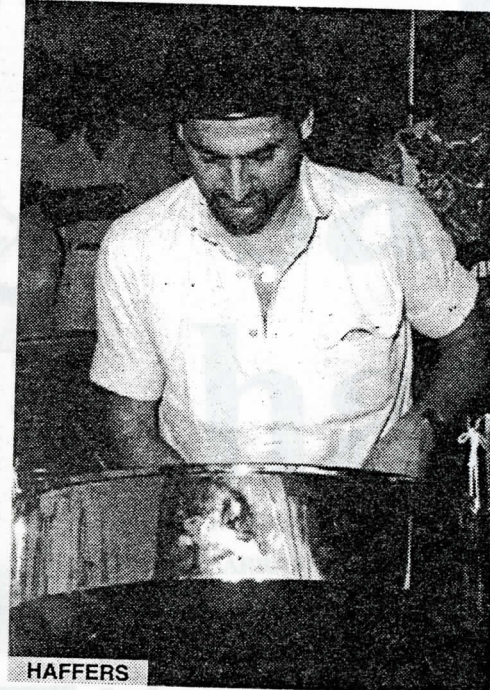
Sincerely,
ROY AUGUSTUS
Chairman,
National Carnival
Commission

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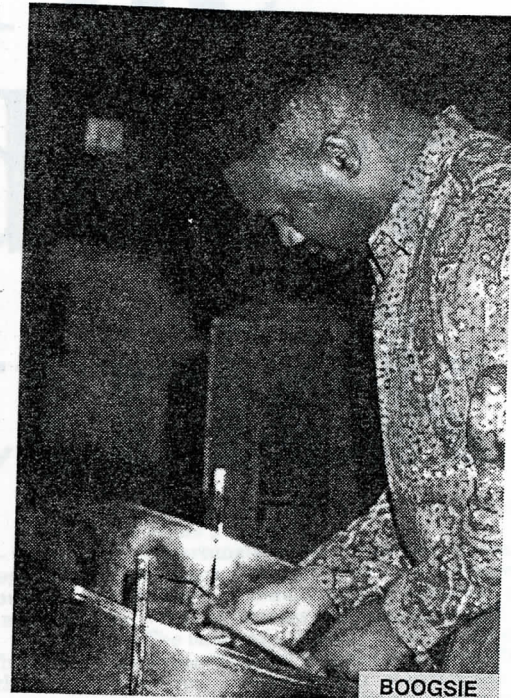
HAFFERS

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BOOGSIE

A message from Pan Trinbago

1996 marks the 33rd edition of the Steelband Panorama. And while the number may not be special for the people whose heads are buried in the making of the music, there are a number of challenges for the organisation of this year's competition.

Member bands are being put to a greater test, in that the state of readiness of their music has to be richer from the onset. In addition, lead time between the condition of the tune at its preliminary stage and the treatment it is given at the zonal and national semi-finals has been greatly reduced.

In fact, there is just no time at all between the preliminary round and the zonal finals, as winners of the zones and national semi-finalists

will both be determined based on the single performance at the national preliminaries this weekend (and Tuesday next in Tobago).

The national semi finals will also see a major change in its presentation, now that this aspect of the competition takes place next Sunday in the form of a daytime Savannah party such as we have had over the years for the North/East zone preliminaries.

Pan Trinbago has been able to effect improvements in the package that will rebound to member bands, not only as a result of the savings these changes have brought about, but also through tough bar-



SERRETTE

gaining with the National Carnival Commission (NCC).

It is often felt that the steelband movement spends the larger part of its time demanding more money for every next year of its existence.

We find, however, that the remuneration which reaches the pannist is hardly commensurate with the effort on their part to produce the kind of Panorama that you, the pan lovers, demand.

Fact is, these players have been at it for several weeks before their leaders thought the product good enough for your ear. And it turns out to be a labour of love, as payment for the actual performers dives

after recurrent and capital expenses over which we have little control.

That too must change, but we are not able to wreak all the improvements in a single year. The promotion of the South/Central and Tobago regional activities must begin to match the enthusiasm with which even the media respond to events scheduled in the North and East Zones.

But this is as much as we can get done in 1996. Pan Trinbago is committed to the continuous improvement of Panorama so that we can be truly sincere when we say "Have a Happy Carnival".

OWEN SERRETTE,
President, Pan Trinbago