

Woeful Monday night pan in South

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After the fourth steelband passed the judges during the Carnival Monday Night Steelband Competition in San Fernando, one woman said, "I am still waiting to hear a real band play."

Another said: "Is this all the bands in San Fernando? Like I have to wait for Skiffle to pass."

The usual excitement on Carnival Monday night was not visible on the faces of those gathered and so many of them began to walk around aimlessly.

However, the midnight mas rescued the celebrations for hundreds of spectators as for the first time in many years, masmen brought creativity to the competition which had been plagued by ordinary jersey mas.

After mundane performances by only four steelbands out of six, fancy sailors with well-timed choreography, a festive Mardi Gras depiction and a group of raunchy night nurses awoke hundreds of spectators.

However, lazy police officers, who chose not a patrol by feet, constantly hindered the masqueraders' performances before the judges as they frequently drove back and forth.

There was no DJ at the judging point and also no emcee to give details of the performances to the spectators.

The pan competition, a tribute to late calypsonian Stanley Cummings, better known as Squibby,



kicked off at 10 pm with only three bands actually entering the competition.

Although bands were not asked to register, they were required to play one of Squibby's songs.

Junior Sammy Group of Companies' Skiffle and San Fernando newbies South Landerz did not enter but chose to entertain.

They played Ray Holman's composition of Sooknah and Machel Montano's She Ready, respectively.

By the time the sixth band, Golden Hands Steel Orchestra, passed they met empty tables and chairs where the judges once sat.

Kicking off the competition, South Landerz gave a slow version of the song which a few people chipped their feet to.

San City Steel Orchestra executed a well arranged rendition of Squibby's Distant Drum.

However, with 17 players, the band sounded unbalanced as the music from the background pan drowned out the tenors.

Old Tech Steel Orchestra, a usual crowd favourite, started beautifully with Squibby's Iron Man, and with good tempo they got spectators dancing.

Despite the efforts of the teenagers, errors by individual players could be heard by those

standing nearby.

They left the judging point with a sweet delivery of Latin composition Malindo Cafe.

However, it was not the song they were being judged on.

It was not until Junior Sammy Group of Companies' Skiffle played, that the customary pan-jam session associated with Monday night pan began.

In their typical manner, the players rocked the float and chanted "hey" and "yeah" as they delivered the best performance of the night.

Sweet background melody accompanied the tenors and double tenors, and the rhythm section carried a well timed beat.

The mas competition kicked off ten minutes before midnight with the revellers of Mon Repos Posse displaying an ordinary portrayal of Section 34.

Darren Sheppard & Associates took a novel approach to the mas when they teamed up with Fusion Steelband to present Mardi Gras.

Instead of the regular music trucks accompanying masqueraders, they had live artistes singing along to pan melodies, which sent masqueraders into a frenzy.

2 Bad Promotion added humour to the celebrations with their portrayal of Naughty Nurses.

Beginning with a short skit displaying men with hand and head injuries, the sexy nurses showed that ailments that occur around Carnival time can only be cured with rum.