

Panorama— the final conflict

By TERRY JOSEPH

PLAYING de Fosto's "War 2004", reigning National Panorama champion, Exodus Steel Orchestra will perform in the penultimate position of eight large bands in tonight's nail-biting final, going into the joust a mere eight points ahead of arch-rivals Witco Desperadoes.

Even so, Panorama lore makes it a tight contest, one Exodus will perhaps best remember as the band approaches the stage tonight. In 1992, the Tunapuna-based band went into the final trailing Renegades by 23 points but eventually won the final by ten.

Indeed, final-night stories abound and certain orchestras are considered major threats at this level, regardless of earlier positioning. Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars, currently at sixth position, is one such band; its history in this regard forever causing frontrunners to look over their shoulders.

"It certainly isn't over until it is really over," Exodus manager Ainsworth Mohammed said yesterday. "Panorama is not that kind of competition. Although we have prepared properly, we know that still, anything can happen on final night, so we are treating it as seriously as if we were going in trailing everyone else and putting that level of effort into our performance."

With musical arrangement of "War 2004" by Pelham Goddard and Dr Pat Bishop, Exodus is coming up directly against Clive Bradley's work on Shadow's "Whop Cocoyea". If the latter wins tonight's battle, it will chalk up an 11th victory for the Laventille band. Another Exodus triumph will bring their tally to four.

Tonight's playoff, which takes place at the Queen's Park Savannah from 7 p.m., also embraces the final of the medium-sized band category, currently led by Excellent Stores Silver Stars, who wrested the top spot from Valley Harps at the semi-final stage.

The semi-final shuffle in the medium band grouping makes tonight's contest an equally intense battle in that category, as Silver Stars and Courts Sound Specialists of Laventille made significant leaps from tying at fifth place at the end of the preliminary round to occupying first and second slots (respectively).

And while Exodus and Desperadoes retained first and second positions among the large conventional orchestras, a major reshuffle took place further down the line, bringing Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove and RBTT Redemption Sound Setters, who were tied at tenth place after the preliminary round, into the reckoning.

In addition to a first prize of \$200,000 the large bands will be vying for the Arnim Smith Memorial Challenge Trophy, a new award designed by Gillian Bishop in tribute to the former Pan Trinbago president, who passed on last November.

In both categories, seven judges—selected from nine immediately before showtime—will comprise the panel, each awarding a maximum of 40 points for musical arrangement, another 40 for general performance, ten for tone and ten for rhythm. Of the seven score-sheets for each band, the highest and lowest will be eliminated, making the final tally the aggregate of five members of the jury.

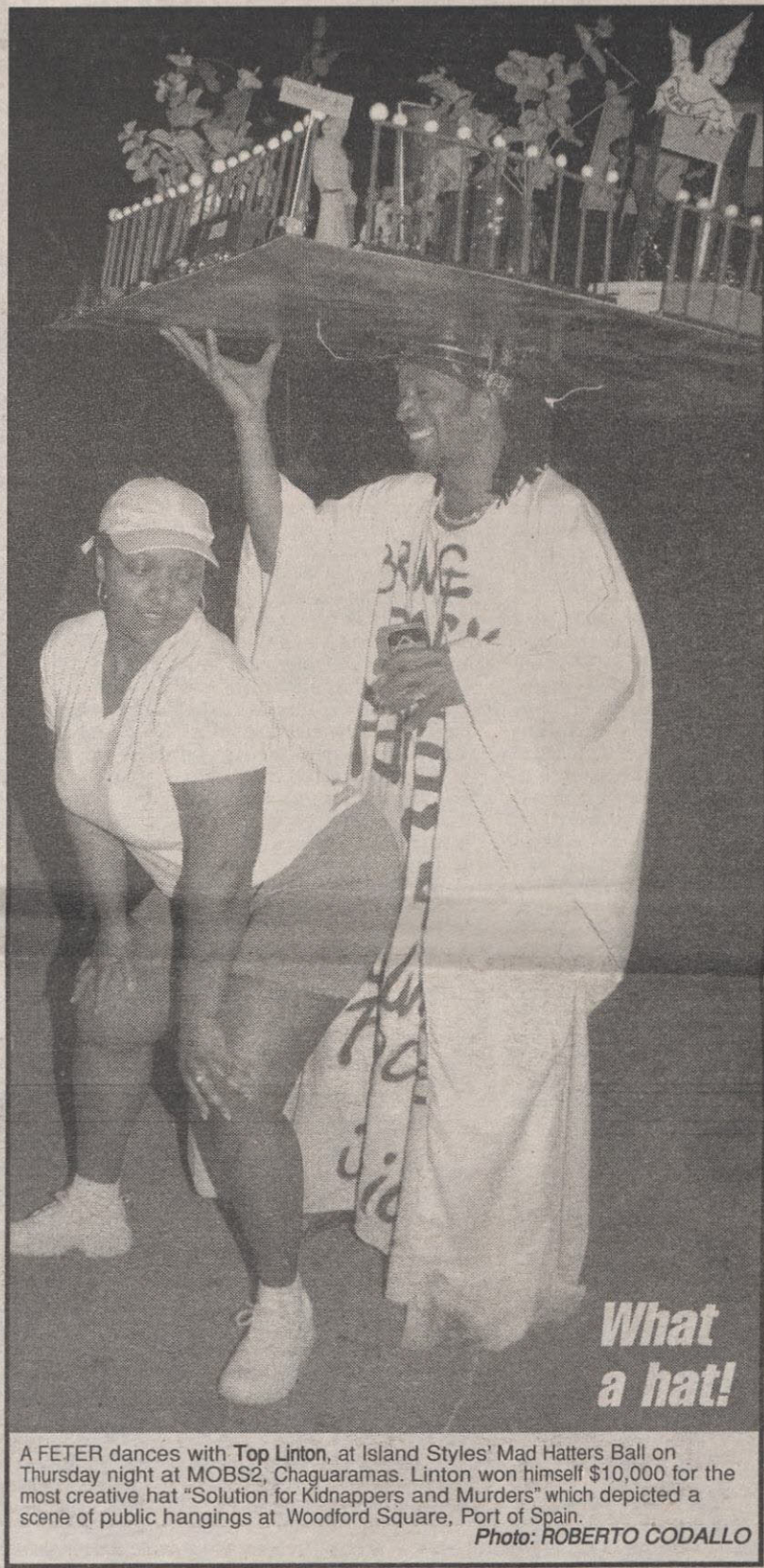
ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Large Conventional Orchestras:
Position/ Band/ Semi-final Points /Tune/ Arranger

1. RBTT Redemption Sound Setters / 438 / "War 2004" / Winston Gordon
2. bpTT Renegades / 428 / "Pan on the Road" / Jit Samaroo
3. Witco Desperadoes / 450 / "Whop Cocoyea" / Clive Bradley (assisted by Andre Robley)
4. Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove / 447 / "We Like to Play" / Len "Boogsie" Sharpe
5. Neal & Massy Trinidad All Stars / 436 / "Ah Paid Mih Dues" / Leon "Smooth" Edwards
6. TCL Group Skiffle Bunch / 436 / "War 2004" / Liam Teague
7. Exodus / 458 / "War 2004" / Pelham Goddard - Dr Pat Bishop
8. NLCB Fonclaire / 418 / "War 2004" / Darren Sheppard

Medium Conventional Orchestras:
Position/ Band/ Points /Tune/ Arranger

1. Belmont 5th Dimension / 433 / "Pure Party" / Brian "Bean" Griffith
2. Carib Dixieland / 433 / "War 2004" / Eman Ector
3. Courts Sound Specialists of Laventille / 442 / "Don't Touch We Carnival" / Cary Codrington - Kareem Brown
4. Excellent Stores Silver Stars / 445 / "Pure Party" / Edwin Pouchet
5. Valley Harps / 441 / "We Like to Play" / Michelle Huggins-Watts
6. Potential Symphony / 434 / "War 2004" / Carlon Harewood - Anslern Campbell
7. Parry's Pan School / 430 / "Play on, Mr Panman" / Selwyn "Parry" Paul
8. Harmonites / 434 / "Jamboree" / Kenneth Guppy.



What
a hat!

A FETER dances with Top Linton, at Island Styles' Mad Hatters Ball on Thursday night at MOBS2, Chaguaramas. Linton won himself \$10,000 for the most creative hat "Solution for Kidnappers and Murders" which depicted a scene of public hangings at Woodford Square, Port of Spain.

Photo: ROBERTO CODALLO