



FULL STORY

Steel Xplosion rises to the top

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SIX bands and close to 500 pannists from Tobago will create history when they play in the "Big Yard" in the National Panorama Large and Medium Band finals at the Queen's Park Savannah on Carnival Saturday night in the Greatest Show on Earth.

Steel Xplosion, playing A "wicked" "Radica", showed who's boss in the Medium Band category placing first with 270 points, the same it received in the preliminaries. The band got the right count and exploded midway into the song. Valley Harps and arranger Michelle Huggins-Watts played "Battle Zone" and are hot on the heels of Xplosion.

Valley Harps scored 269.5 points. Play on Michelle, nice blend of music.

Most impressive NLCB Buccooneers played "Surrender" and scored 267 points, placing third.

In this category the Tobago bands took full control.

There was a tie for fifth between Katzenjammers and Carib Dixieland.

Katzenjammers playing "Lightning Strikes Twice" scored 263 points. The band really played well with a free flow of rising crescendoes.

Dixieland and arranger Len "Boogsie" Sharpe also played another "sweet" piece of music, with their version of "Somewhere in Tobago".

West Side Symphony and CLICO Sforzata tied for ninth position and will be in the "Big Yard" in the finals.

West Side played a slower version of "Somewhere in Tobago" and must speed up the tempo with the rhythm section.

In the Large Band category "Boogsie" and Petrotrin Phase II Pan Groove playing BSharpe's arrangement of "Pan Army", pulled away scoring 277 points to edge defending champion PCS Silver Stars (273 pts) into second, while TCL Group Skiffle Bunch (272 pts) placed third.

But the sad part of this year's Panorama is "big band" Exodus will not be there making it 20 years straight in the finals.

The last time the band failed to make it to the

National Panorama finals was in 1989 when they played "One More Officer" also arranged by Pelham Goddard.

Since then "the marriage" have won the title four times and have not placed lower than fourth at the national finals.

RBTT Redemption Sound Setters and arranger Winston Gordon played a fiery piece of music in their version of "Pan On Fire". For sure Gordon will have "something special" on final night.

Our Boys and arranger Brian "Beans" Griffith got the tempo too slow when the band played "Something Special". Our Boys placed 14th and did not make it to the finals.

Meanwhile, the entrance fee for the Drag on Carnival Saturday night will remain in place, Pan Trinbago president, Keith Diaz, said.

It is the first time in history that so many steelbands from Tobago have qualified for the semi-finals and now the finals.

There are also three bands in the single band category that will appear before the judges in Port of Spain tonight (Friday). They are Golden Lane Panthers, Pan Fanatics and Hope Pan Groovers.

- See full results on Pages 20 & 21
