

The Carnival evolution

THE Carnival fever has officially taken root in the hearts of the masses. The Animal observed the not-so-subtle change in temperament last weekend as hundreds began to free up in earnest and the "palace wave" cascaded onto the shores of popular culture.

JW and Blaze are ever-present in most events and their appearance invokes a rush of joy that is incomparable and almost immeasurable. In a strange season devoid of the "HD Boy" and the "Darling Diva", some folks initially expressed concern that our saviour should come in the form of this comedic radio duo cum artistes, but over the past month, JW and Blaze have proven their worth onstage and the potency of their offering has been magnified by the warm embrace of the masses.

This year is definitely one of change and this evolution is being evidenced everywhere from politics to Carnival parties. Over the

last decade, all-inclusive norms have become the norm rather than the exception, so a fixture like

"Bazodee Friday" is now somewhat of an anomaly. Years ago, Pier 1 was the place to be on a Friday night as their weekly "free drinks" phenomenon helped to wash away the stresses of the work week.

Produced by the Bacchanal Factory, "Bazodee Friday" did not follow either the free drinks or all-inclusive formulas and instead sought to earn the greatest incomes while enhancing the event with loads of free sponsored products. Patrons paid \$180 to enter and received free Holiday Snacks, Axe deodorants, ice-lollies and other goodies, but were obliged to face the dreaded chit system in order to purchase drinks.

Performances from Kes The Band, Patch, Tallpre, Iwer and TC preceded Shurwayne Winchester and YOU's closing set, but unfortunately most patrons did not arrive before 1 a.m. so the early sets were wasted on

the chilly sea breezes. While some described "Bazodee" as "Boo-zodee" and boring in general, the patrons who arrived later seemed to enjoy the tardy energy and many stayed until the wee hours of Saturday morning. Bazodee Friday rolls in averagely at 5/10.

Saturday night was a monster of a night with two major events on the calendar (CIC and Blue Range all-inclusive) and one new event (Defence Force fete), which threatened to be a buss-fete, but picked up late and turned out to be a lot of fun instead. CIC scored big-time with a well-attended fete in uptown Port of Spain. As usual, there was a wide assortment of food and drinks available, along with entertainment by Dil-E-Nadan, Kes The Band and YOU. The Saints definitely had the ladies marching on gloriously that night, and while the advantageous female-male ratio probably left many ladies without a dedicated dancing partner, it definitely made most men happy to see and share in their bountiful presence. CIC rises up to a 9/10.

Defence Force fete looks to become a rival to "the original Army fete" in time to come and its debut held the promise of participation as the brand becomes cemented on the calendar and in the minds of the masses. Before midnight there were definitely more machine guns present than fetes, but similar to Bazodee Friday, the masses arrived early in the morning instead of late at night and immediately got down to the business of having a good time. This is the type of fete where "batty riders" and the now fashionable "liquid leggings" appear in abundance and those who wear them aren't afraid to get down and dirty in them. Kes The Band set the

pace right to start off the live action, while KMC, Red, White and Black and the formerly-retired Ronnie McIntosh followed and turned the heat up several notches. By this time, Blue Range all-inclusive was in full swing and because we missed this event completely last year, The Animal grudgingly left the fun in progress at the Queen's Park Oval and headed for bluer pastures. Defence Force fete enters the fete calendar with a strong 8/10 debut.

Meanwhile, a throng of hyper fete-lovers invaded the usually tranquil Blue Range community and attempted to consume their money's worth in food and drinks. It's hard to describe the feverish energy that sparked throughout this venue, but Hollywood Saatchi's sudden disappearance off the stage after introducing JW and Blaze put it all in perspective: this is one of those events that's so superb, one wrong move can send you hurtling through space toward the ground... and a rather painful landing.

Similar to Tribe's "ICE" (albeit minus the coolers), there were no live bands and DJ Dane controlled the tempo in between the live performances. Add free drinks, food, snacks, desserts and an abundance of beautiful women and you have a fete that's guaranteed to be legendary. Blue Range all-inclusive reigns in at 9/10.

Just when The Animal thought he had seen it all and was attempting to recover from a sizzling Saturday night, Yorke Inc pulled another 10/10 out of their well experienced hats on Sunday. Hosted at the UWI Senior Common Room, this installment of the annual event improved upon all ingredients and attracted a magnificent interactive crowd com-



STYLISH: Alison Hinds, left, and Sanelle Dempster stood tall at the UWI Senior Common Room on Sunday during Yorke Inc's 2010 Carnival fete. —Photos: JERMAINE CRUICKSHANK

prised largely of lovely ladies. This crowd was so sweet they even brought out the best in a previously struggling and boring Shurwayne Winchester and YOU. Truth be told, YOU adjusted their set for this engagement and found favour with the fun-loving audience, which in turn gave them even more confidence and appeal.

Eddy and Traffik played for Iwer, JW and Blaze and Kes The Band once again delivered an entertaining set. Quietly, Kees and company are filling the void left by the

absence of Mr HD, and The Animal must commend this outfit for displaying an outstanding level of professionalism and consistency. The food was delectable and special mention must be made of the creamy cassava pie, fish wantons, Yellow-tail Rose wine and special guest, Alison Hinds and her gorgeous green dress. If we could award a 12/10, this would be the event that earned it. It was definitely the best of the season thus far and should never be missed.

Until the next one!



BROUGHT HIS BEST: A bare-backed Shurwayne Winchester led YOU to the Yorke Inc fete on Sunday.