

# Stevenson Beats Drummer

By BOB BRADY  
Special To Q-Notes

Leather's biggest night of the year.

That's how Drummer magazine once described its annual Mr. Drummer Contest, and the same was true for the East coast semifinal, Carolina

## Charlotte Runnerup Invited To Compete In National Contest

Drummer magazine, at the suggestion of Q-CQ, invited Chuck Lance to compete in the National Drummer Contest, and Lance accepted.

Lance, Asheville's entry in Carolina Drummer '86, had planned to attend the contest as a spectator, according to Q-CQ president Robert Sheets. Lance finished a very close second to Butch Stevenson in the Charlotte regional.

Sheets was beaming.

"It's quite a compliment to us," he said. "The chance that we'll have a 1-2 Carolina finish in the nationals is exciting. It'd be great even to have two out of the top five."

The invitation couldn't have been extended without the okay of Carolina Drummer winner Butch Stevenson.

"Butch was flattered that they would consider asking Chuck," Sheets said. "Butch is behind Chuck almost as much as he is behind himself."

Both Stevenson and Lance have indicated to Q-CQ that they would be very glad to help out in 1987 not only with the regional, but with all preliminaries.

Territory won't be set for the 1987 contest until September.

Drummer '86, in Charlotte May 31.

Hometown contestant Butch Stevenson, sponsored by Scorpio, took first place, winning a trip to San Francisco to compete for the national title on June 27.

First runnerup was Chuck Lance of Asheville, sponsored by Urban Aborigines. He won a weekend for two at Fifty Folly Place, a bed-and-breakfast house in Charleston, S.C.

The second runnerup was Mark Jackson of Charlotte, sponsored by Brass Rail.

All three went home with a medallion commemorating their winning roles in a night unprecedented in Charlotte's gay history.

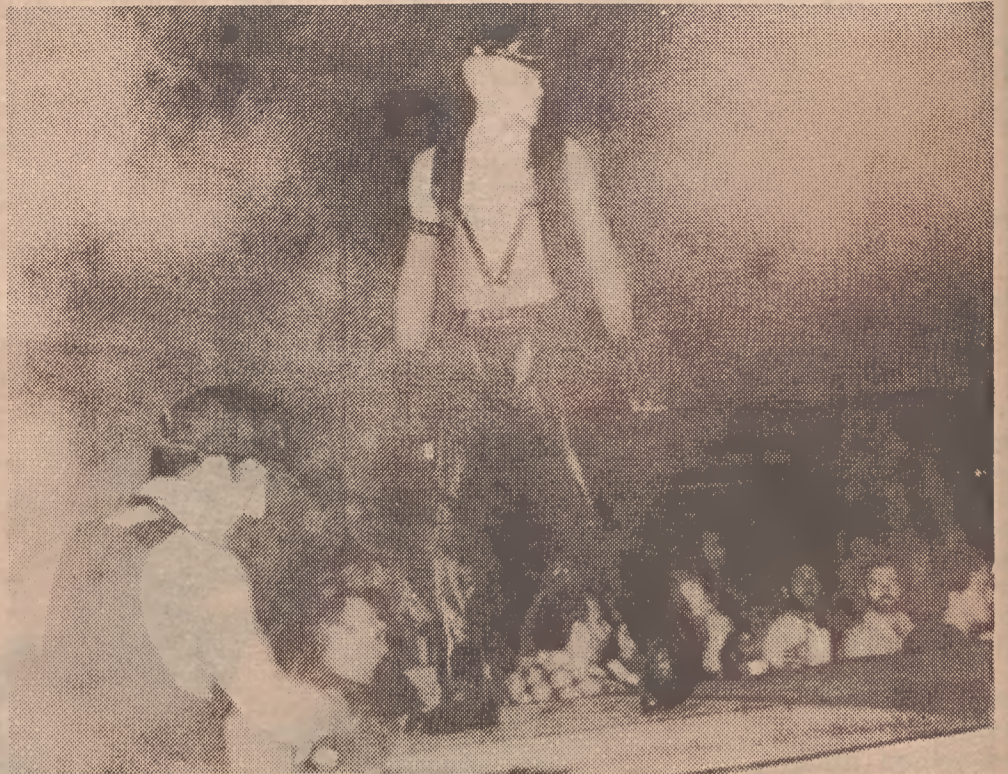
Hundreds of men trooped into Park Center for the night's entertainment, which included singer Sam Baker, performer Boom Boom Latour and six contestants strutting their stuff on a 40-foot runway.

Boom Boom's humor, the cool professionalism of emcee Martin, flawless mixes of the latest music by soundman Tracy and spirited beer and wine sales kept the crowd warmed as they waited for out-of-town judges to arrive.

Judges and spectators were from more diverse locales than the mostly Charlotte contestants.

"It was a good mixture of people from all over the place," Robert Sheets of the sponsoring group, Queen City Quordinators, said of the audience. But he said the organizations and businesses which could have sponsored contestants seemed to shy away from entering this year because the contest was not in one of the major metropolitan areas such as Atlanta or Washington.

Q-CQ organized the contest as a fundraiser and "made a little bit of money," Sheets said.



Butch's Fantasy Included Fog, Harley-Davidson

Standing in line at the concession counter, it was evident that many a cow had lost its hide to scores of patrons clad in all of the things for which the Drummer man is known — from engineer's boots right up to black leather armbands. The crowd was ready for this, and it was showing all over.

Inside the auditorium the stage was appropriately decorated (which is to say, palm trees and not petunias). The runway parted a sea of tables to end up thrust in front of the judges.

Judging from the number of gyrations and undulations that washed

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## Trip To San Francisco Began Leather Interest

By DON KING  
Editor

It was so very, very close.

But in the end, articulation with a microphone won as the judges — two from Atlanta, one from Raleigh — hailed Butch Stevenson, a Brass Rail bartender sponsored by Scorpio, as winner of Charlotte's first leatherman contest May 31.

Runnerup Chuck Lance, 26, of Asheville may have had an edge in jock strap — the part of Carolina Drummer '86 that showed off the body. Fantasy and leather attire were both exceptional, but Stevenson's verbal acumen was clearly superior.

Still, judges and officials of Q-CQ, which sponsored the contest, meticulously double checked every judge's tally card, then checked and rechecked totals to rule out mathematical error.

And America's East Coast will be represented in the national Mr. Drummer Contest by the 40-year-old truck driver who is a native of Tazewell, a small town in southwest Virginia, and one of 12 children.

It's been eight years since Butch's life was changed on a trip to the West Coast.

"The first time I noticed how much I liked the leather community," he said, "was when I walked into the Brig (now the Powerhouse) on a trip to San Francisco. I had always liked masculine gay men, and being in the Brig was like being in heaven."

"I guess I entered the Drummer contest because people kept telling me I couldn't do it. Both times, I was surprised when I won."

Butch's road to the national contest June 27 started when he won a Carolina Drummer preliminary at Scorpio.

"I knew it would be awfully close at Carolina Drummer," he said. "All the contestants had their own form of leather, each attractive in its own way. All were just super. Yet, only one of us could win, and I'm glad to be representing us in San Francisco."

I'm really proud I was able to do it at my age.

"I want to make people understand that this part of the gay community has lot of love to give. We have a lot of pride, a lot of dignity; and I want to help bring that out."

He brought out a lot of it on a poignant trip to see his parents the weekend of June 14-15.

"I showed them the photographs from the contest," he said, "and explained to them how much it meant to me. They've known I was gay since I came out of the closet in 1969 by going to the old Neptune bar that was on North Tryon Street. Mom — she's 75 now — told me that they always support their children when they do something that makes them feel special and doesn't hurt others."

"My whole family is close-knit. My folks had seven girls and five boys. I'm the 11th."

Well wishers in and out of Charlotte's leather community have congratulated Butch.

"It really is special winning a contest like this," Butch said. "Now I'm in a position where I can help all of us love and respect each other more. We are a family; and though we can sometimes be awfully vicious, we are also the most understanding."

Butch drove a truck for 14 years and is taking a break while working at the Rail.

"I'll eventually do it again," he said.

Rail manager Dennis Carey and Larry Collier accompanied Butch to San Francisco where the schedule was full:

June 25: Dinner with Drummer publisher John Embry.

June 26: reception at the Powerhouse and rehearsals at the Trocadero Transfer.

June 27: rehearsals and Mr. Drummer Contest at the Trocadero Transfer.

June 30: riding on a float in the San Francisco Gay Pride Parade.

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