

Yahoo! It's time for the King Mango Strut again!

By LINDA RODRIGUEZ BERNFELD

The King Mango Strut will wind its way down the streets of Coconut Grove Dec. 30.

Yes, it's the parade that pokes fun at the seriousness of most parades and part of a loose network of marches spoofing holiday bowl game spectacles everywhere.

Organizer and creator Glenn Terry said the purpose is to "put the nut back in Coconut Grove." The 1989 theme is "Things May Come and Things May Go."

This is the eighth parade put on by Mr. Terry and friends. He started it when he and his kazoo band tried to get into the Orange Bowl Parade and were turned down. "We said 'what the hell' and started our own pa-

rade."

He calls it a "cute little parade." It's two blocks long and includes a lot of performances.

"I think of it as street theatre," he said.

Everyone with a good idea can join in. This year's event will include 46 groups. Mr. Terry said — last year it had a group of homeowners from Morningside participate as a brigade of hookers. One year, a group from Kendall played "Marching Barbies."

One yearly institution, led by Fred Tasker of the Miami Herald, is the Marching Freds. Mr. Terry said they're generally followed by a group making fun of them. Another long-time regular organization is the Florida Ladies Against Women,

commonly known as the members of the National Organization for Women, or NOW. And there's the Corporate Ho's Synchronized Briefcase Drill Team.

A new group to be seen Saturday is the "Thomas Root and His Asleep-At-The-Wheel Airmen," who plan to cruise as they snooze. Also new is the Coconut Grove Jaycees' entry, a rolling jailhouse titled "Club Fed: Celebrities in the Slammer."

Problems with area merchants who didn't want the King Mango Strut have been resolved.

"We made peace with the merchants who felt we were bad for business," Mr. Terry said.

Those problems created difficulties for last year's effort, which was

held before Christmas and was only half as long.

One merchant, restaurateur Emilio Calleja, owner of Sharkey's at 3105 Commodore Plaza, thinks the parade is just fine.

"It's a tradition here. It's the kind of parade that says it's Coconut Grove and not downtown," Mr. Calleja said. "I'm all for it. I think it's good. It adds to the Grove."

It's not only good for the Grove, but for his restaurant. Mr. Calleja said people watch the parade and stop at his cafe to eat and drink.

This year, merchants are supporting the parade but the City of Miami isn't. Budgetary problems have led the city to stop its practice of giving in-kind services to the parade.

That's increased the costs of running the parade. Mr. Terry said the first year it cost \$200. This year expenses are at \$2,000.

"We try to put on an event with a zero budget," Mr. Terry said. "We try to set an example of what a public event should be."

Mr. Terry said there may be changes in the coming year. "The Jaycees may take it over next year because they're better equipped and they're a fun-loving group and understand what it's about."

Expenses are paid by the sale of t-shirts and posters. The poster was created by Lisa Remy and features the King and his friends strutting across a sunset.