

Group: Starburst
Show: Hairspray
Venue: Samuel Cody Specialist Sports College
Date: 11 July 2015
Director: Peter Woodford
Musical Director: Paul Darrah
Producer: Shaun 'Lofty' Garrett
Assistant Producer: Max Topliss
Choreographer: Liz Woodford



HAIRSPRAY – The Broadway Musical (based on the film) is a feelgood show from start to finish. From the opening song “Good Morning Baltimore” to the closing “You can’t stop the beat” the foot tapping numbers pile up, the audience sing along and the stage comes alight. Set in Baltimore in 1962 our heroine, Tracey Turnblad adores the regulars and pop idol (Link Larkin) on her favourite tv music show and seeks to join them, but her ample curves don’t fit the bill as far as the show’s producer (and former Miss Baltimore Crabs) Velma Von Tussle is concerned. Tracey’s mother (Edna) also discourages her fearing Tracey’s size will lead to rejection but her father encourages her to follow her dream. And guess what? Tracey succeeds, appears on the show and becomes a hit! She then sets her sights on racial integration. As if that’s not enough, she finds herself in detention because of her hairdo!

FRONT OF HOUSE: The Front of House team were welcoming and very well organised and helped to create the atmosphere ready for the production.

PROGRAMME: The A4 programme gave very clear information about the members of the group, cast and production in an imaginative and informative way. There was a helpful synopsis of the action, some lovely rehearsal photographs and information about some of the children that the charity has helped.

SCENERY/SET/PROPERTIES The set design by Peter Woodford, Paul Ibbott and Ian Robertson, worked well and helped make the changes look simple. Tracy’s home was set separately to the left of the main stage and was very in keeping with the 60s setting.

COSTUMES: The costumes were fantastic; colourful, vibrant and evoked memories. There was great attention to detail ranging from Tracy’s school clothes, the full skirts of the ensemble, Edna and Tracey’s matching gowns and the sparkling suits of Corny and Link and sequined dresses of the Dynamites.

LIGHTING: The lighting was effective throughout and well controlled.

SOUND: The music, under the direction of Paul Darrah, proved a great asset to the show and kept the lively music going. However, occasionally, the volume overpowered the voices of some of the performers.

THE PRODUCTION: The duo with Wilbur (Gary Phillips) and Reece Fitzgerald as Edna in “You’re timeless to me” was hugely popular and was both touching and hilarious. Kirsty Kingham as Tracey was hardly ever off the stage and sang with great emotion and gusto. Her enthusiasm was infectious. She was perfectly cast. Supporting Kirsty with some enjoyable

performances were: Louise Johns as her friend Penny Pingelton, Alex Barron as Amber Von Tussle, Natalie Harris-Briggs as Amber's mother, Velma and Nickie Deely as Prudy Pingleton. Equally impressive, Reggy Zippy excelled as Seaweed J Stubbs and Victoria Amoade simply stunned the audience as Motormouth Maybelle with her knockout voice.

Charlie Murray clearly enjoyed the role of Corny Collins (the star of the show within the show) and Curtis Varns was excellent as Link Larkin, the object of Tracy's affections.

Congratulations to Producer Shaun 'Lofty' Garrett and his crew, Director, Peter Woodford who drew polished performances from the hugely talented cast and Liz Woodford's first class choreography. Hairspray deals with some serious issues (body image and racial segregation) but in an uplifting way. STARBURST should be proud to add Hairspray to their list of successes. The whole evening buzzed with energy and was fun and fabulous. It was simply AWESOME!

A short version of this report will appear on the NODA website in due course.

CHRIS HORTON
DISTRICT 14 REPRESENTATIVE
NODA SE REGION