

## WITTY PARODY OF LIFE IN GIRLS' SCHOOL

For its spring production, Stage Two Downham chose Denise Deegan's play 'Daisy Pulls It off', a gloriously witty parody about life in a boarding school for 'gels.'

The action centres round Daisy Meredith's attempt to blend her elementary school back-ground into the snobby confines of Grangewood School for Young Ladies. The plucky heroine undergoes many tribulations before finally achieving her aim.

The play calls for complicated staging, lighting and sound effects, ably executed by Dave Scott, Geoff Barkess and Michael O'Hagan respectively - a most impressive team, under the direction of Barbara Taylor.

As for the players, Miss Gibson, much loved head-mistress, commandingly played by Barbara Price, brought all the authority required to the role.

Mr. Scoblowski, the enigmatic Russian music teach, was in the capable hands of Bob Cleeve.

The remaining two members of staff, very different types, were both played with style by Pat Hargreaves, not forgetting her third character, Daisy' mother - quite a feat. The final senior member, the mysterious Mr. Thompson, played by Mel Scolah, beautifully caught the spirit of the play. Coming to the 'gels,' and what a contrasting mix of characters they were. In the lead role of Daisy, Lesley Knight was on stage for almost the entire performance, admirably coping with a demanding part. She was very ably assisted by Dorothy Cushing as Trixi, the madcap of the upper fourth, who captured schoolgirl mannerisms and exuberance to perfection. As head girl, Jane Bennett looked and acted the part, obviously enjoying herself, as did her partner Sarah Uttley - what a double act!

Stella Barnes as Sybil, the conceited daughter of very wealthy parents, succeeded in bringing out the comedy of the character, with good support from Hayley Smithies as the snooty Monica. Tracy Owen portraying Belinda, the fair-minded captain of the upper fourth, looked and acted impressively, along with Michelle McClurg in the dual roles of Winne and Dora.

School uniforms helped to set the scene.

Two of the high points in the production were the hockey final and the rescue scene, both very well staged and performed.

Producer Barbara Taylor is to be congratulated on 'pulling off' such a difficult play with a large cast - well done!

R.W.