

# Hairspray Musical: 'we were reluctant'



'Corny Collins' played by Ciara Whelan performing with the 'Girls Ensemble'.

by Kate Donoghue

STUDENTS of St Joseph's College in Lucan took on the hit musical 'Hairspray' for the first time ever last week and the show was sold out for all four nights.

'Hairspray' is a social commentary on American society in the 1960s. Set in 1962 in Baltimore, Maryland, teenager Tracy Turnblad, played by Megan Bell, has a dream of dancing on The Corny Collins Show.

When Tracy wins a role on the show, she becomes an overnight celebrity, and launches a campaign for racial integration.

After some difficulties, Tracy succeeds in her mission to integrate the show. Throughout the performance, the actors dealt capably with the theme of racial segregation.

"We were reluctant at the very beginning to put the show on years ago, but the girls wanted it this year so we said let's go for it," said producer Geraldine Butler.

"They were very good. You can see that we have a lot of integration anyway in the school and they were really getting into the idea of what it was like back then."

The school's 27th annual musical was put on by an all-female cast and crew of 148 transition year students. The girls took on the added challenge of playing the male roles with great energy and the story wasn't affected at all.

"It was a very professional, very well produced, streamlined production," said parent Mary Robinson, "there were no missed cues or mics not working or anything like that. I was just blown away by the talent."

It was directed by Jimmy and Carol O'Byrne from the Song and Dance Company who have been directing St Joseph's College's musicals for over 20 years.

The producers of the show were Geraldine Butler, Catherine Bligh and Peter Maguire.

"It all went to plan and we're delighted with it, the girls are brilliant," said Catherine Bligh.

The school hall held an audience of 290 each night. Lighting was provided by Liam Fitzgerald and sound was by All Around Sound.



'Tracy Turnblad' played by Megan Bell.



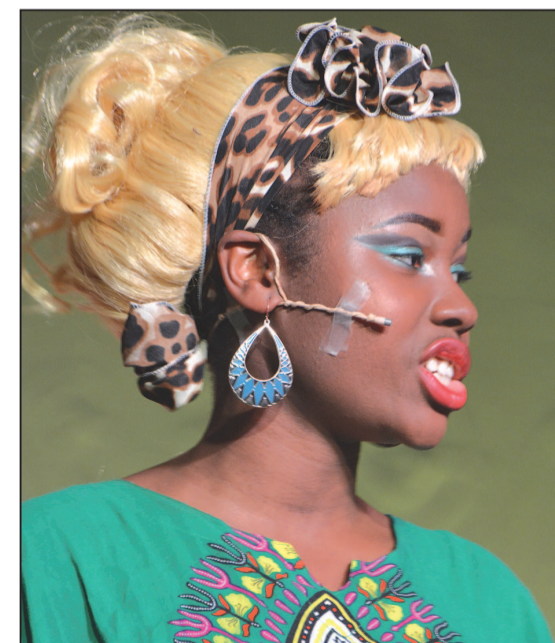
'Velma Von Tussle' played by Aoife Dardis and 'Amber Von Tussle' played by Chloe Ormond. Pics: Garry Bermingham



Chloe Ormond performing as 'Amber Von Tussle' in the musical 'Hairspray'.



'Corny Collins' played by Ciara Whelan and 'Link Larkin' played by Mia Forbes.



'Motormouth Maybelle' played by Virginie Ngunu.