

Would they cut the mustard in gangsterland?

'SOME LIKE IT HOT', performed by Newbury Nomads, at the Corn Exchange, on Thursday, October 5, Friday, October 6 and Saturday, October 7

Stuart Honey as Jerry and Daniel Maskell as Joe combined together beautifully to make the most of their parts. Interestingly, although they played well throughout, their finest moments were when their characters were in disguise.

Mr Honey shone when in drag as Daphne: teasing, winsome and funny, and clearly delighted at the success of his impersonation when he attracted the attention of millionaire Sir Osgood Fielding (David Slade). Mr Maskell excelled particularly when pretending to be a millionaire himself, displaying just the right amount of aloofness to convince and attract Sugar (Eleanor Richards) while remaining genial enough for her to fish for him.

Sugar was also played with confidence and skill, especially during her 'little girl lost' scenes. Perhaps a touch more girlish glee and excitement when she thought she had at last managed to catch a millionaire?

Unfortunately, a few members of the chorus looked distinctly worried at times, usually when adding some sort of routine to their singing. Some had frowns of concentration when they should have seemed happy; others, clearly told to smile at all costs, had a kind of rictus grin. There are two solutions: either rehearse sufficiently for the chorus to be confident enough to look genuinely happy, or simplify the routine. No personal criticism intended or deserved: they gave their best and did well. But by the performance they shouldn't look as if they still unsure.

Some other, smaller, quibbles: Why wasn't 'Spats' Palazzo sporting a dapper pair of spats? Why did people point in the opposite direction to the sea when indicating the yacht? Why, when fetching Champagne, did Joe appear to go down the side of the yacht, presumably scooping up some seawater instead? These are small points, but they irritated and could so easily have been avoided.

Before the Nomads light flaming torches and gather round my house waving pitchforks, let me emphasise that I did enjoy the production, as did the rest of the audience. Did they cut the mustard? American mustard, yes, certainly, and a long way towards the hotter English variety.

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