

Thursday, August 6, 1981

Performers auditioning for stardom

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

Some 100 hopefuls turned up at the Birmingham Theatre two days last week to audition for openings in the cast of "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?" the pre-Broadway musical hit playing there.

It was a "chorus line" of would-be stars, as each took a turn in the spotlight, to dance, sing and read for parts in the show.

Performers showing real promise

were asked to remain, reading for specific roles and displaying their footwork in a routine demonstrated by the dance captain.

Selections were made Friday, with the chosen few all expected to be filling their roles on stage by the end of this week. Former cast members have either "gone back home or into other shows," according to a theater spokesperson.

AMONG THE new cast members is Donna Walton of Birmingham, who



plays Virginia Lear, the tomboy. She recently returned to the Detroit area to do a demonstration tape for a major record contract.

Marcus Neville, understudy, goes into the lead male role of Eddie Ryan. Angelina Fiorelletti takes over the role of Sister Lee, the crotchety nun. Sister Michael Anthony is now played by Mary Buehrle.

Dave Cowles will be understudy for the roles of Eddie and Louise Schlang.

Author John Powers' humorous books about growing up Catholic in Chi-

cago parochial schools are the basis for the lively production. It's the longest-running attraction the Birmingham Theatre has ever had.

"Patent Leather" originally opened in March and the run has been extended several times, mostly recently through Labor Day. The fourth show on the season's subscription series has been replaced by the continuing show. Series subscribers have been offered tickets for an additional performance, a credit for next season or a refund.

Staff photos by Dick Kelley



Dance routine (above, left) brings out performers' best during auditions. Mary Buehrle (above) sings with feeling.



Performers are apprehensive as they wait for the first cut, while auditioning for roles in the production of "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?" at the Birmingham Theatre.



Buehrle describes her theatrical background to show's producer-director (the ominous black shadow).

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