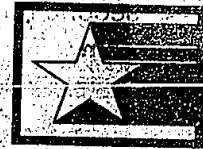


Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



Thursday, June 28, 1984 O&E

(A0-7C)OJC

Rich, Damone make a good pair

By James Windell
special writer

VIC DAMONE DOESN'T quite match the electric personality of drummer Buddy Rich. But that's all right. Together to open the pop/jazz portion of Meadow Brook Music Festival's 21st season they complemented each other very nicely.

Rich's 15-piece big band kicked off the show with the brass personality of its leader and the drummer's remarkable abilities as a musician setting the tone for the orchestra's 10-minute set.

Shouting encouragement to his band, changing the order of the charts and breezing through a short, vigorous drum solo, Rich was just as one expects him to be. The word that best describes that expectation is fiery. His young, fresh band never takes it easy or too casual. Rich would never permit that.

Rich, who suffered a heart attack a little over a year ago, has been prodd-

review

ing some band or another from his position behind the drums ever since 1938. In his own bands and small groups which he had off and on for some 20 years, Rich has set the beat and lit a fire that has made his bands exciting to listen to.

HIS PRESENT band has a strong sax section with five reed players and arrangements that rely on those musicians. However, with the leader's ever-present clickety-click cymbal sound and a biting brass section, tunes like Ellington's "In A Mellotone" and a "Jumping at the Woodside" Count Basie tribute appear new and vital.

Even with his physical problems, Rich has lost nothing as a drummer. A very dramatic "West Side Story Med-

ley" is made all the more significant when he takes his one long solo of the night. Attacking his cymbals, adding snare drums and building to a crescendo punctuated by his magnificent bass drum work, Rich is a real powerhouse.

Retreating from this crescendo, though, he demonstrates to playing his sticks and a single beat before rebuilding the solo with a rapid drum roll. He gets more mileage out of playing his drum sticks against each other than some drummers do out of playing their whole set.

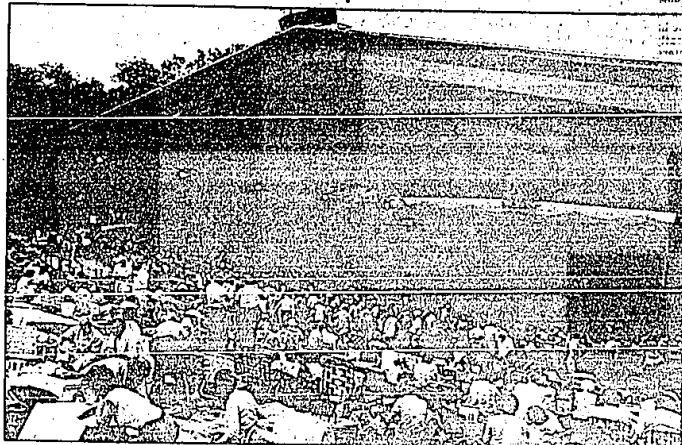
With Buddy Rich taking a rest for the second half of the show, the band backed another Brooklyn-born musician, Vic Damone.

Damone, born Vito Parola in Brooklyn 11 years after Rich, has a much different way of relating to a crowd. Rich's mild invectives were replaced by the smooth vocals and pleasant sales techniques of Damone. He's been winning over audiences with both since his CBS radio show "Saturday Night Serenade" in 1947.

OUT OF THE limelight since he had a TV show about 20 years (called "The Lively Ones"), Vic Damone has retained his smooth delivery and excellent style that is clear and straightforward.

Looking handsome and sounding relaxed, Damone charmed the Meadow Brook audience with a combination of old favorite songs and some updated covers.

With an ability to talk to people in the audience and joke with himself and the crowd, as well as put a certain amount of drama in each song he sang, Damone was a good choice for the opening pop performance this season. Together with Buddy Rich, Vic Damone has set the tone for a summer concert season that should be a boon to pop music lovers.



Baldwin Pavilion and the lawn begin to fill up for the opening concert in the Friday Night Variety Series at Meadow Brook Music Festival on the Oakland University campus near Rochester.



Brassy Buddy Rich and slick Vic Damone have differing styles that balance nicely when both are on the same bill.



Picnicking on the grass before a concert is part of the Meadow Brook charm, enjoyed by Tom and Marilyn McCordle of Troy (clockwise, from left), Dorothy Smalligan of Orchard Lake and Marsha and Neil Webster of Birmingham.

Fabulous Cleo Laine returning to Meadow Brook

It's difficult to remember a time — which wasn't all that long ago — when Cleo Laine wasn't around. She appears in metro Detroit at often as any major talent and always seems to draw capacity crowds.

That's why Meadow Brook Music Festival has booked the flawless singer with the four-octave range for Friday and Saturday night performances this weekend.

The mop-haired 56-year-old singer was virtually an unknown entertainer in the United States until her first tour here in the fall of 1972. By the end of

that tour, which included an appearance at Alice Tully Hall in New York, she was a resounding success in America as she already was in her native England.

Continuing to travel to the United States — now she makes three trips a year — Laine is always accompanied by her musician-husband Johnny Dankworth.

AN EXCELLENT musician, composer and arranger who takes a bit of a backseat to his wife, Dankworth was one of the founding figures of modern British jazz.

Laine's big break came in 1952, after several years of working as a hairdresser, librarian and pawnshop clerk, when she auditioned for Dankworth's

band and was chosen as the lead singer. Six years later, Dankworth and Laine

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