

TEAMWORK AT BURNSIDE

By JOHN HORNER

Last night, at the very moment when some of our leading musical muddleheads, with their feet firmly on the mantelpiece, were loudly demanding that SA's subsidised professional symphony orchestra should devote some of its precious time to playing "pops" for their amusement, Dr. John Black, with his feet firmly on the ground, was leading Adelaide's largest orchestra (55 amateurs strong, at the moment) in a highly creditable symphony concert in the Burnside Town Hall.

[In passing — to me, "pops" indicates the kind of music—Brubeck, Lehrer, "My Fair Lady"—that is so-called "pop" that it doesn't need to be subsidised, as opposed to other music—opera, symphony—which does.]

The Symphony of the evening was the sunny Sixth of Schubert. This, as Dr. Black explained, belongs to a transition period just before Schubert entered on his run of great symphonies.

Though the finale became a little tedious—the loquacious Schubert always had trouble with his finales, Tovey remarked that it was perhaps a blessing that he didn't finish the "Unfinished!" — the work as a whole was an excellent choice for the orchestra, besides carrying on the conductor's policy of performing works not in our regular repertoire.

Another choice just as happy in both of these respects was Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon and Orchestra, with Alan Phillips, Graham Lang, Crisetta Macleod and Keith Manthorpe as soloists.

"Finlandia" by Sibelius gave the brass their big moment, while the Vaughan Williams Fantasia on "Green Sleeves," to our astonishment, revealed the orchestra as the proud possessor of two harps and two harpists, Sian Shaxson and Pamela Newton. Adelaide's orchestral resources are certainly increasing.

The nearest we came to "pops" was in two overtures: Raymond (Thomas) and Light Cavalry (Suppe).

The performances, though not faultless were thoroughly creditable. Dr. Black now has a firm bass line to lean on and a full team in every department, including even a bass tuba.

He is to be congratulated on his energy and enterprise in gathering together a full orchestra "out of the blue" like this, just as much as on his natural ability as a conductor.

The Burnside City Council, too, deserves the thanks of all lovers of orchestral music. Through its official and practical backing, the City of Burnside Symphony Orchestra is helping to build up that reserve of orchestral players that Adelaide's musical progress needs.