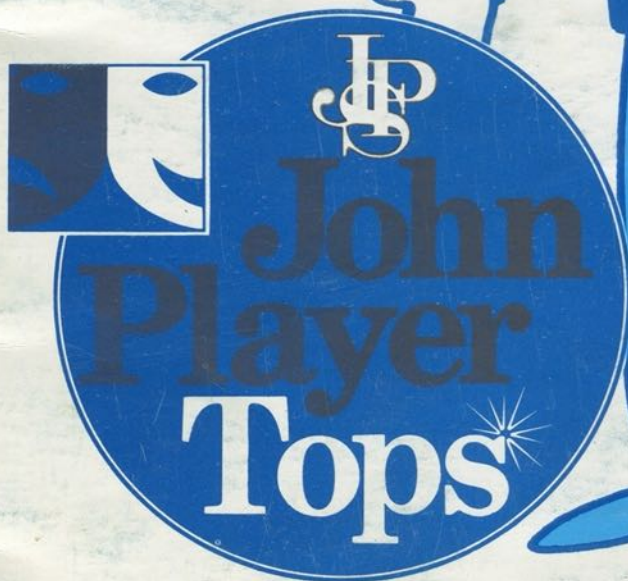


Programme





Since John Player & Sons first became associated with Tops what was a localised competition has been developed into an event of national appeal and importance. The success of the John Player Tops is an example of what can be achieved for the benefit of society by the coming together of commercial enterprise and other interests to make a constructive and positive contribution to community life. Today the John Player Tops is an integral part of the fabric and quality of life throughout the country. In addition to raising substantial sums for numerous charitable and social projects the Tops has made a significant contribution to the goal of a wide community involvement in artistic endeavours. Indeed it is the aspect of community involvement that is the prime strength of Tops. Not only are the talents of each individual recognised and developed but a spirit of co-operation and team work is also generated for both participants and patrons alike. Sponsors John Player are proud to be associated with this great competition and to have played a significant role in developing it to its pre-eminent place in the community. But, like the Tops shows themselves, the success of the competition is the result of team work involving an extensive cast, including organising committees, participants, patrons, theatre managements, local and national newspapers, RTE and a host of other back-stage workers. All have helped with the staging of the competition and have contributed generously and positively to its evolution over the years. We thank all concerned for their encouragement and assistance to date and look forward to working with old and new friends for many more years to sustain and enhance this valuable community activity.



Sunday 31st May 1987
Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

Adjudicators: Brendan Balfé
Billie Barry
Fran Dempsey
Maurie Taylor
Olivia Tracey

Host/Presenter: Des Keogh

Special Guest Act: Janet Brown

Tonights final is the nineteenth in the history of the competition and the twelfth to be televised live by R.T.E. The Gaiety Theatre has been the venue for all but one of the national finals and there is no doubt that over the years this magnificent theatre has added much to the success and lustre of the occasion. Throughout its history the Gaiety has made a tremendous contribution to the social and cultural life of Dublin, and indeed of the country. Some of the greatest artists in the world have performed in this noble venue, and of course it has hosted numerous amateur events. It is a tribute to the professionalism and artistic integrity of all associated with the theatre that both amateurs

and professionals have always been treated here with equal deference and attention. From the very outset the amateur groups involved in Tops were made to feel welcome and given every assistance and encouragement. Long before the advent of television coverage the John Player Tops national final was a gala occasion in this theatre and the groups involved were given kindly and constructive help so that they could give of their very best. This concern and interest is as evident as ever today in the Gaiety and we record our deep appreciation of the role which the management and staff play, and have played, in the success and enjoyment of the national final. We are especially grateful to the General Manager Aileen Connor, and we thank her and all of her colleagues for their efficient and courteous co-operation. A very special word of thanks to the backstage crew and in particular to George McFall (Stage Manager) and to Sean Burke (Chief Electrician)—both of whom have been involved since the first final in 1969 and who have made a very special contribution to Tops.

Television presentation produced and directed by Bil Keating.



OLIVIA TRACEY

Olivia probably first came to national prominence when she won the Miss Ireland contest in 1984 and went on to represent Ireland in the Miss World contest in London, where she was placed amongst the top seven. Since then she has competed in the Miss Universe in Florida, where she reached sixth place, and has become widely known here through various appearances in television commercials and as hostess on Murphy's Micro Quiz-M as well as a period as a continuity announcer in RTE and as a guest on a variety of shows, including Newstime, Davis at Large, the Late Late Show and Good Afternoon. She has had a distinguished career as a model and her work has brought her to Germany, the Middle East and on a coast-to-coast tour of the United States.

A graduate of U.C.D. with a B.A. H.Dip in English and French, Olivia brings to her role as an adjudicator a depth of experience which makes her well qualified for the task. Her career to date has brought her through the world of fashion and modelling as well as into the competition scene so she will have a particular understanding of the pressures on tonight's contestants, the marvels of rapid costume changes, and an eye for the style and colour which are so much part of any Tops show.



BILLIE BARRY

Billie Barry's experience stems from years of performing and choreographing in Stage Shows throughout Ireland and Crosschannel. She has appeared in many films and was assistant choreographer for the popular film "The Flight of the Doves".

In 1964 Billie formed her own Stage School and has had remarkable results. Two of her pupils became West End Stars in 1978 when they were selected from thousands of children to share the part of "Annie" at the Victoria Palace London, and again at the Gaiety where the entire cast of orphans in the Show were pupils of the Billie Barry School. Her students have been appearing in the Gaiety Pantomimes for the past 15 years with Maureen Potter and Brendan Grace. They have also appeared in many Olympia Productions with "Twink", Brendan Grace, the late Jack Cruise and most recently Bussy Malone.

The school made its Television debut on a Children's programme called "Seoirse Agus Bartley" and since then they have appeared in most of R.T.E.'s major light entertainment productions including many appearances on the "Late Late Show" and guest spots on the "Tony Kenny" Show, the "Live Mike", "The Derek Davis" Show, "Music for Fun", "Anything Goes", "Trom Agus Eadrom" and several Christmas Specials. Most recently they were seen on "Encore" and several "Live at the Gaiety" Shows with Brendan Grace.

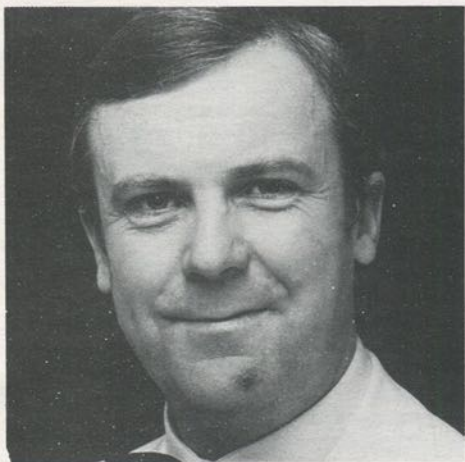


MAURIE TAYLOR

Maurie Taylor started his professional career in 1956 working at the Arts, the Ulster Group Theatre and on radio and television in the North.

In 1963 he moved to London where he appeared in many stage and television plays and in several of the popular television series of the day such as "Emergency Ward 10". In 1967 his career took a new turn spending the next four years working for Granada and Thames Television and the BBC's Nationwide and Tomorrow's World – initially as an interviewer and presenter and then in researching, directing and producing programmes.

In 1971 he returned to Ireland to play one of the partners in the RTE television series "Partners in Practice". An offer of a stage role followed, and he was back to his first love – theatre. Since then he has worked continually on stage, TV and radio. His most recent stage appearances have been at the Gaiety Theatre with prominent roles in "Death of a Salesman", "Philadelphia Here I Come" and "Brighton Beach Memoirs". He is perhaps best known in his role as Des Finlay in the RTE radio series "Harbour Hotel" and as the host of the T.V. quiz programme "Rapid Roulette". He first became involved with the John Player Tops in 1980 when he adjudicated in Dublin. Since then he has adjudicated in many regional centres and at national stages. He was an adjudicator in the 1983 final.



FRAN DEMPSEY

Dublin born Fran began his career as a professional musician, playing piano and guitar with several groups around his native city. He got his first taste of the Theatre when he was cast as understudy to the title role in Noel Pearsons 1973 production of "Jesus Christ Superstar". Having played Jesus on several occasions during this production he moved to the Abbey Theatre where he played one of the lead roles in James McKennas "The Scatterin'", directed by the late Alan Simpson. During the following number of years Fran played major roles in several Noel Pearson productions including "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat" and "Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris".

Fran has also made further appearances with the Abbey Theatre in such notable productions as "Drama at Inish" by Lennox Robinson, "The Hostage", for which he was Musical Director, and "Mary Makebelieve" the highly acclaimed musical directed by Domy Reiter Soffer, which made its debut at the Dublin Theatre Festival in 1982. In that same year Fran

started with Maureen Potter in the Summer Show at the Gaiety and joined her again the following year to play the "Widow Twanky" in the smash hit pantomime "Aladdin".

Fran has been appearing on RTE Television since the late seventies and although his work has included many 'straight' drama parts, he is probably best known for his many comic roles in the highly successful "Live Mike" series. To the young at heart he is known and loved for his portrayal of "Fortycoats" in the series of the same name, a series which is without a doubt the most popular childrens television series ever made by RTE. Fran is working at the moment, in the capacity of producer no less, on a project which will see a situation comedy series written by Raymond Allen, of "Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em" fame, on our screens for Autumn 1988.



BRENDAN BALFE

Brendan Balfe, a presenter/producer with RTE, joined Radio Eireann in 1964, the year he left school. He was Ireland's youngest announcer and, indeed, claims he still is.

Our hero left the staff of R.E. in 1969 to concentrate on freelance work, presenting "Roundabout" on BBC Radio 2 and "Ireland's Top Ten", "Pop Call", "Saturday Spin", "Morning Call", and "Music on the Move", for the Home Station. He also produced over 15 sponsored radio programmes per week, one of which led him to record Ireland's first comedy album, "Balfe, Bothered and Bewildered" which sold very well among his immediate family.

To the world of radio comedy, he brought a fresh and innovative approach - he worked cheap. He won three International Radio Awards for "The Adventures of Three Blind Mice", "We Remember Ted", and "The Irish in America". He also devised and wrote two comedy series "Balfe's Broadcasting Company" and "The Jaundiced Eye". Apart from his record programmes, Brendan

made three major documentary series, "A History of Pop", "Sounds of the Century" and most recently, "The Spice of Life" a series on Irish Variety.

On television, he played Uncle Sam on the award-winning "Greening of America", presented "Password" and his own panel game "Off the Beat". He worked as programme associate and writer on "The Johnny Logan Special", "The Twink Special" and "Joy to the World". He was Script Editor and writer for Twink's comedy series, inventing and writing "Bernie and Rose-Violet" and the "Pirate D.J." characters.

Brendan's first stage appearance was in a late-night revue in Jonathan's Restaurant with Rosaleen Linehan and Frank Kelly, culminating in his own one-man show, "Balfe at Large" in The Tailor's Hall. His first Theatre experience was in "Music all the Way" with Tony Kenny, followed by "Playin' Porter", the Noel Pearson production, both at the Gaiety. The Eblana was next, when he wrote and co-starred with Des Smyth in "Sing a Little Bing".

Brendan has just finished a 16-week stint as programme associate on RTE's "Sunday Night at the Gaiety" and has produced on "Rock Frolics" at the Braemor Rooms, where "Royal Finale", his 25th anniversary tribute to the Theatre Royal opens on Tuesday 2nd June.

Mr. Balfe is married with two children, two budgies and a cat.

TONIGHTS ARRANGEMENTS

Live television transmission commences at 8 p.m. Please refrain from moving about the theatre and from taking flash photographs or tape recordings of the performance while the programme is "on air."

There will be a twenty minute interval between the two shows. Please return to your seat at least five minutes before the second show commences.

ADJUDICATION

Tonight's Final is being adjudicated by five adjudicators who act independently of each other. They adjudicate the performance according to the following marking system which is applied at all stages of the John Player Tops: COSTUMES AND SETS (10); VARIETY (20); PRODUCTION (20); ENTERTAINMENT VALUE (50).

Thus each adjudicator has a maximum of 100 marks to allocate and the group which gains the most marks out of the total possible 500 marks is the winner.

When the second show concludes remain seated for the televised performance by the guest artist and for the adjudication and presentation of prizes.

The live transmission will conclude with the presentation of prizes but please remain seated for the brief stage ceremony which will follow immediately.

In the event of an equality of marks the team placed first by a majority of the adjudicators shall be adjudged to be the winner. Should the teams be level under this system (e.g. two wins each and one draw each) the team with the highest total marks under Entertainment Value shall win. Should there be an equality of marks under Entertainment Value then the result shall be decided on the basis of the number of wins under each category.

It is important to note that the shows are being judged as seen on stage and not as a television presentation.

Use this form to record the scores: **CORK TEACHERS AND STUDENTS**

Adjudicator	Costumes and Sets	Variety	Production	Entertainment Value	Total
Brendan Balfe					
Billie Barry					
Fran Dempsey					
Maurie Taylor					
Olivia Tracey					
GRAND TOTAL					

WATERFORD CRYSTAL

Adjudicator	Costumes and Sets	Variety	Production	Entertainment Value	Total
Brendan Balfe					
Billie Barry					
Fran Dempsey					
Maurie Taylor					
Olivia Tracey					
GRAND TOTAL					

CORK TEACHERS & STUDENTS PRESENT

"STAGE POWER"

ACT ONE

- Sc. 1 Gala Night
- Sc. 2 Magic
- Sc. 3 "Stage Power"
- Sc. 4 Hotel St. Lucifer

INTERVAL – MOP UP

ACT TWO

- Sc. 1 Phantom of the Opera
- Sc. 2 Beneath the Stage
- Sc. 3 High Court of the Universe
- Sc. 4 Stairway to Paradise
- Sc. 5 Stars in Heaven
- Sc. 6 Peace and Harmony

After the Show

GUEST ARTISTS – Charlie McCarthy & Gerard Lehane

Devised & Directed by: Kevin Sanquest
Choreography/Costume Design: Carmel Sanquest
Musical Director/Chorus Mistress: Ronnie O'Shaughnessy
Stage Manager: Orison Carlisle
Sets: Frank Sanquest
Comedy Scripts: Pat Murphy, Paddy O'Brien, Paul Dennehy
Group Leader: Sean Coleman
Costumes: Triona Kirwin
Costume Hire: Morleys, Monicas
Lighting Design: Dan Cronin
Stage Technicians: Sean Coleman, Martin Hegarty, Humphrey O'Sullivan, Tadgh Breen, Frank O'Sullivan, Anthony O'Sullivan, Tony Seymour, David O'Leary, Mark Sanquest, Donal Carroll
Set Construction: Sean Coleman, Orison Carlisle, Humphrey O'Sullivan, Anthony O'Sullivan, Martin Hegarty, Donal Carroll
Committee: Denise Higgins (Treasurer), Philip Lenihan (PRO), Harriet Hyde, Noel Dunne, Donal Carroll, Dermot Ryan, Donal O'Donovan, Michael Farrell
CAST: FEMALE – Audrey O'Sullivan, Karen Lang, Margaret Lynch, Harriet Hyde, Barbara Hyde, Maureen O'Callaghan, Pauline O'Neill, Ann Cooke, Susan Allen, Mary O'Leary, Claire Daly, Elizabeth Dinan, Denise Higgins, Miriam Seymour, Noreen Dolan, Jennifer Roche, Veronica Byrne, Ann

Mehigan, Geraldine McCarthy, Goretti Barry, Miriam Barry, Maire McCarthy, Siobhan Twohig, Mary Rose Twohig, Rachel Ryan, Catherine Baldwin, Marcella O'Sullivan, Leinore Cotter, Janet Seacy, Emily Lowry, Carroll Keoghan, Shirley O'Driscoll, Shirley Matthews, Edwina Hickey, Fionnola O'Mahony, Helen Heslip, Ann Catherine Abonneau, Linda Drummond, Rachel Meaney, Mary McSweeney, Karen Byrne, Sarah Ryan, Ailish Halliday, Karen Murphy, Hilary Rice, Lorraine Manley, Joy Lehane, Alison Lehane

MALE – Noel Dunne, Sean Coleman, Joe McCarthy, Liam Moynihan, Tony Leahy, Barry O'Keefe, Tony O'Leary, Dermot Ryan, Kieran Murphy, Owen O'Sullivan, Humphrey O'Sullivan, Pat Broderick, Donal O'Donovan, Philip Lenihan, Brendan Dunlea, Paddy O'Brien, Paul Dennehy, Martin Hegarty, Orison Carlisle, Tadgh Dolan, Philip Walsh, Anthony O'Reilly, Brendan Hourican

The group would like to thank all who supported our various fund raising events, Cork teachers, and our faithful supporters – the people of Cork.

WATERFORD CRYSTAL PRESENT

"BOND AID"

Ah there you are.

Grappling for a bed – with C. Halpin, D. Sutton, L. Walsh, B. Power, S. Egan

Energy spending "Big Deal" – L. Molumby, G. Hewitt

Never too far apart – with Toby Hickey and Terry Grant

The raucous sound of Rip de Calico + chorus

Orders from M15 – with T. Grant, R. Collins, B. Walsh, D. Sutton, C. Halpin, L. Walsh

On stage with the darlings of "Le Cage" featuring Gary Power

Sombre times with music from "Les Miserable"

Enter Bula and the Bond Bros.

Voluptuously seductive "Razzle Dazzle" featuring C. Crowley

Ending in sight with Toby Hickey and Martina Flynn

Nothing but elegance and style featuring L. Molumby

Produced and Devised by: Michael Grant

Choreography by: Geraldine Molumby

Musical Director & Conductor: Linda Stewart

Stage Director: Noel Kane

Set Construction: Brendan O'Rourke

Set Design: Terry Brennan

Group Leader: Dando Kelly

Lighting: Aiden McGrath

CAST:

Comedy Scripts by: Conor Halpin and Comedy Team

Guest Artists: Liam Molumby and Toby Hickey

Orchestra: Bernie Flanagan, George Brett, Michael Comerford, Eamonn Murphy, John Carey, Michael Doody, Donnacha O'Meara, Brendan Doyle, Niall O'Brien

Pit Singers: Tony Grant, Joan Grant, Michael Roe, Greg Scanlon, Paul Dillon, Ruth O'Keefe, Viv Keane

Stage Managers: T. Carey, J. McCarthy

Lighting: A. McGrath and B. Sharpe

Stage Crew: T. Whelan, B. Walsh, C. Brophy, P. O'Brien, J. O'Meara, E. Brett, J. McCarthy Junior, P. O'Brien, D. Butler, T. Roche

Set Painting & Design: T. Brennan

Mech. Sets: G. Power

Special Effects: J. O'Keefe

Spots: T. Heylin, G. Coughlin

Electricians: B. Maher, P. Breslin, J. O'Dea

Wardrobe: B. McCann, C. Nolan, P. Tebay, M. Whelan, A. Kelly, J. Kelly, H. McCormick, N. Kavanagh, M. Manahan, B. Casey, A. Murphy, A. Power, N. Cullen, M. Cooley, M. Heylin, R. Fanning

Make-up: N. Cullen and P. McDonald

LADIES: C. O'Driscoll, M. O'Driscoll, G. Hewitt, L. Hutchinson, R. Brown, A. Gailbert, T. Kennedy, S. Millea, C. Crowley, E. O'Brien, G. Rea, L. Ryan, S. Hayes, K. Dewberry, C. McGrath, C. O'Connor, D. O'Sullivan, A. Hourigan, A. Glendon, S. Flynn, A. Knox, R. Clarke, L. Gough, B. Walsh, A. Power, C. Wymberry, S. O'Brien, M. Flynn, Annette Grant. **Ballad Group Rip the Calico:** B. Dealeney, F. O'Connor, M. Jacob, P. Doyle. **GENTS:** D. Sutton, T. Grant, C. Halpin, P. McEvoy, P. Power, J. Power, John Power, A. Collins, B. Collins, T. Ryan, P. Greene, J. O'Driscoll, A. Walsh, J. Flynn, P. Greene, F. Browne, L. Molumby, J. O'Neill, G. O'Brien.

Sincere thanks to Crystal Management.

Waterford Crystal wish to thank all their sponsors.

CORK TEACHERS & STUDENTS GROUP '87

Cork Teachers & Students Group has reached the national final of John Player Tops this year for the first time. This voluntary group has been in existence for the past 4 years as Cork Teachers: this year they have been joined by the students, a union which has proved extremely successful. The group contains a fine blend of youth and experience with performers from 5 years of age to 40. The fact that the group has reached this stage of the competition is a tribute to their hard work and resilience.

Rehearsals began last September under the guidance of a fine production team led by Kevin Sanquest who has had a long and successful association with Tops. The combined talents of Kevin, his wife Carmel (choreography), musical director Ronnie O'Shaughnessy and stage manager Orison Carlisle have ensured a show of style and creativity.

A dedicated committee under the leadership of Sean Coleman set about the task of raising the necessary funds for the show. The enthusiasm of the cast and committee and their response to the various activities which were organised saw fund-raising targets met at each stage of the competition. A significant aspect of the groups success has been the great sense of cohesion and co-operation which has been the hallmark of their efforts to date.

The group has received support from various organisations and institutions most notably, Cork City Branches I.N.T.O., Cork Trustee Savings Bank, Bank of Ireland, and Cork County Board G.A.A. who have

facilitated the group for rehearsals and the storage of sets, etc. Financial support aside, the group has received a great deal of moral support and encouragement from the teachers of Cork who have rallied round the group from the initial stages of the competition.

The culmination of a tremendous years work by this group will come with their Gaiety performance tonight when the teachers and their students hope that together they can come top of the class.

WATERFORD CRYSTAL

By the middle of the 18th century, Waterford was a thriving commercial centre. The earliest mention of a glass-house occurs in 1729, but it was short lived, for within eleven years it had closed, and the history of Waterford Crystal really begins in 1783 when George and William Penrose opened a glass factory in the city at a cost of £10,000. The name of Waterford soon became synonymous with the finest cut crystal and it entered the export market on a grand scale. By the end of the 18th century, William Penrose had died, a new company had taken over the business and flint glass made in Ireland and exported became liable to duty. Within four years the company had paid duty amounting to £12,000 and this burden coupled with high wages made it impossible for the company to continue. Production ceased in 1851. The name Waterford became legendary and pieces of Waterford Crystal were eagerly sought by collectors world-wide.

In 1947 a small factory was installed at Waterford but little progress was made. Then in 1950 the renowned late Joseph McGrath took over. Thus it happened that in 1951, exactly a hundred years after the old factory closed, production began at a new factory. Initially the key craftsmen were brought in from abroad and under their tuition Irish apprentices learnt the trade so that today virtually all the employees are Irish. In 1967 a new factory was built but it was still not large enough for what had become the biggest manufacturing unit of its type in the world. Over the years additional factories have been

built and today Waterford Crystal are the largest manufacturers of crystal glassware in the world. But quality has not been sacrificed for output and each piece is carefully created and crafted using techniques similar to those perfected by Waterford's 18th century glassmakers.

The company employs in the region of 3,000 people and plays a unique role in the social and commercial life of Waterford City. Some 100,000 visitors from all over the world visit the factory each year, and the recently built showrooms are an attraction in themselves. During the past year the company has taken over the Wedgewood Group, a move calculated to ensure that Waterford continues in the future to be a dominant force in world markets.

Waterford Crystal has a long association with Tops, going back to 1962. Indeed no other group has had such a constant and long association with the event and it is a tribute to the company that it has supported the competition so faithfully at local level. Crystal has won locally on nine or ten occasions and has featured in national stages frequently. However, it is sometimes forgotten that the Crystal Tops group has been defeated at local level as often as it has won and surely that is the real test of the true Tops spirit – participating irrespective of the result. Naturally hopes are high that the premier award will be going back to Waterford this year – for the first time since 1977. Whatever the outcome, one thing is certain, the name of "Waterford" will be enhanced tonight by the Waterford Crystal group as it has been by the superb products of the company all over the world.

TONIGHTS FINAL

Tonights final is yet another all-Munster affair, thus reflecting the dominant position which the province has held in the John Player Tops, since its inception in Waterford some twenty three years ago. However, the occasion is unusual in that it is only the third Cork-Waterford clash in the nineteen years history of the final and is the first meeting between representatives of these two cities since 1976.

This is a first-time national final appearance for Cork Teachers and Students whereas Waterford Crystal have appeared in two previous finals, winning against Limerick Insurances in 1971, prior to the advent of television to the occasion, and taking the runners-up spot against Verbatim Limited, Limerick, last year. Indeed the absence of a Limerick group from tonight's final is noteworthy as the previous six finals featured Limerick-based groups.

In terms of national final wins Waterford has achieved 5 out of 8 final appearances, whereas Cork has taken 3 national titles from 7 finals. Cork Teachers and Students are the fifth different group to represent Lee-side in the final and Waterford has had 4 different representatives at this stage. Cork's last national title was achieved by Cork Banks in 1983 but Waterford has not taken the title since 1977, when the renowned A.C.E.C. (Ireland) Limited team took its 4th national final, a feat which has yet to be equalled – or even approached.

However, all these statistics are past history and it is tonight's encounter which matters most to both finalists. Certainly, the stage is set for an intriguing encounter and there is no doubt that the real winners will be the theatre audience and television viewers, who are assured of a feast of

exciting and creative entertainment. The two finalists have emerged from an initial entry of some 80 shows, which were staged in sixteen different centres throughout the country. A striking feature of this year's John Player Tops nationally was the improvement in standards in traditionally weak centres and the emergence of a very strong challenge from community groups and the like. Indeed the national stages this year were more open and evenly contested than ever before and four of the national quarter-finalists were from groups other than industrial firms. These latter had tended to dominate Tops but this year there was a marked change and not because overall standards had declined but because they had evened out. Such a development is very encouraging because it indicates that the competition has improved standards generally and that skills and talents have been developed through participation. One of the most noteworthy aspects of this year's national competition was the emergence of two community groups from neighbouring parishes in County Offaly into the national stages. These were groups from St. Brigid's Credit Union, Clara, and from Ballycumber and surely it is only a matter of time before other parts of the country and community groups emulate their achievements. That really is what the John Player Tops is all about – encouraging and enabling people to achieve greater heights from within their own resources.

Tonights final is the climax to and the pinnacle of the John Player Tops and our finalists Cork Teachers and Students and Waterford Crystal Ltd. must be congratulated on reaching this level. Their route here was not easy – it required commitment, creativity and

talent, and their greatest reward will be the appreciation of their skills by those fortunate enough to see their performances. However all the groups which participated in the John Player Tops have done something positive for themselves and for the community and the other groups, some 78 in all, which took part this year deserve our thanks and respect for their willingness to have a go. Without them there would be no Tops, no national final, and clearly all of us would be the poorer without their contribution to the social and theatrical life of the country.

TOPS AND TELEVISION

Since 1976 RTE has brought the John Player Tops Final into the homes of television viewers throughout the country. The annual success of the televised final is attribute to the skill and care of the RTE personnel charged with the task of translating a theatrical event to the small screen as well as to the standards achieved by the finalists themselves. Indeed the success of the national final as a television programme is a confirmation of the viewing publics desire for indigenous material and of the place which Tops has achieved in the life of the nation.

There is no doubt, however, that television coverage has helped to raise standards in Tops by motivating groups to attain greater heights when presenting their shows to the nation. However the professionalism of the RTE people involved has also played a significant part. Their striving all along the line to make the final that bit better, that more special, has rubbed off on all associated with the event and there is a great sense of everybody working together postively and constructively to achieve perfection.

Televising the final is not just a matter of pointing the cameras and shooting the action. Whilst RTE does not have a direct input into the content of the shows it certainly influences the public perception of them and no effort is spared to show the finalists at their best. In addition to televising the final RTE records six half-hour shows made up of Tops acts from all over the country. These are recorded on the Wednesday and Thursday prior to the final and involve some thirty six different acts and in the region of 700/800 people. Clearly there is a great deal of organisation and planning involved, apart from the actual on-the-ground televising. Bil Keating is the man responsible for co-ordinating the numerous activities and this he does with skill, calmness, efficiency, and not a little fortitude. He is fortunate in having the support of various colleagues, who contribute personally with equal dedication and thoroughness. Only those directly involved with Tops and Tip Tops appreciate fully the effort and skill which goes into creating and securing the television programmes and on behalf of everybody associated with Tops we say a sincere thank you to all the RTE personnel involved for their professionalism and their commitment. Serving the nation for 25 years is no idle boast.

Our host tonight is Des Keogh who brings to the occasion a particular understanding of Tops as well as his own distinctive skills and personality.

Once again Larry Gogan will be presenting the Tip Tops to viewers and bringing to the series that special blend of professionalism and humanity which had made him enduringly popular.

NATIONAL FINALS

YEAR

WINNERS

- 1969 Harry Allen Ltd., Drogheda.
1970 A.C.E.C. (Ireland) Ltd., Waterford.
1971 Waterford Glass Ltd.
1972 Limerick Insurances.
1973 Limerick Insurances.
1974 A.C.E.C. (Ireland) Ltd., Waterford.
1975 Sunbeam Ltd., Cork
1976 A.C.E.C. (Ireland) Ltd., Waterford.
1977 A.C.E.C. (Ireland) Ltd., Waterford.
1978 Carrigaline Pottery Co. Ltd.
1979 Technicon (Ireland) Ltd., Dublin.
1980 Irish Distillers Ltd., Dublin.
1981 Limerick Insurances.
1982 W. & R. Jacob & Co. Ltd., Dublin.
1983 Cork Banks and Finance.
1984 Wang Laboratories, Limerick.
1985 Analog Devices B.V., Limerick.
1986 Verbatim Ltd., Limerick.

RUNNERS-UP

- Hearts Delight, Waterford.
C.I.E. Hotels, Killarney.
Limerick Insurances.
Sunbeam Ltd., Cork.
Sunbeam Ltd., Cork.
Cork Examiner Ltd.
Lever Bros. (Ireland) Ltd., Dublin
Cork Examiner Ltd.
Ferenka Variety Group, Limerick.
Aer Lingus, Dublin.
Limerick Insurances.
Waterford Banks and Finance.
St. Joseph's Youth Club, Strabane.
Limerick Post Office.
Analog Devices B.V., Limerick.
Allied Irish Banks, Dublin.
Digital Equipment International Ltd., Galway.
Waterford Crystal Ltd.

RESULTS 1987

	AREA WINNERS	RUNNERS UP
Athlone	St. Brigid's Credit Union, Clara*	L & M Ericsson Ltd.
Carlow	Ballon Variety Group	Redcross Macra
Castlebar	Castlebar Public Services	Holl-i-Stars
Cork	Cork Teachers & Students*	Golden Vale Co-op Creameries
Dublin	Telecom Eireann*	Quinnsworth Ltd., Dublin
Dundalk	Coalisland	Bellurgan
Galway	Digital Equipment International Ltd*	Kilcoona
Limerick	Wang Laboratories*	Southill
Longford	Kilbeg	Stonepark
Monaghan	Carrickmacross	Glaslough
New Ross	Newbawn	Cushinstown
Shinrone	Ballycumber*	Shinrone
Sligo	Carroroe*	Abbott (I) Ltd.
Thurles	Tipperary	Bansha
Waterford	Waterford Crystal Ltd.*	Nokia Ltd.
Wexford	Wexford Youth Group	Bree Macra

National Adjudicator: Jim Bartley

*Denotes National Quarter-Finalists.

NATIONAL SEMI-FINALISTS

Cork Teachers and Students
St. Brigid's Credit Union, Clara
Telecom Eireann, Dublin
Waterford Crystal Ltd.

Quarter-final adjudicators: Michael Twomey, P.J. Croal
Semi-final adjudicators: Fergus Carolan, Joe Dowling, Des Keogh

ENJOY YOURSELF!

As the John Player Tops is a competition it is only natural that patrons should tend to adjudicate the shows. This is healthy in that it encourages people to be analytical and to appreciate the numerous elements which go to make up a show. However adjudication should be objective and that is not always easy for patrons as invariably they have some association with one show or another!

The real purpose of Tops is to encourage people to get together in a highly satisfying and creative activity for their own enjoyment and that of others. It is only the competitive element which requires comparisons between shows. But each show is an achievement and a success in its own right and those involved merit our appreciation and acclaim for what they have accomplished irrespective of the heights scaled by others. It is right that groups should strive towards high standards and that they should be appropriately congratulated on attaining them. But those who achieve lesser standards should not be dismissed. When all is said and done those who participate in Tops are part-timers, often with no previous theatrical experience, and they deserve encouragement and appreciation for their commitment and effort. So by all means adjudicate but do so objectively and with an understanding of the essence of Tops. And enjoy yourself — that is the main purpose of being here tonight!

Name of Group	Entertainment Value (50 Marks)	Production (20 Marks)	Variety (20 Marks)	Costumes and Sets (10 Marks)	Total
(1)					
(2)					



John Player & Sons