SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

L’il Abner best musical on campus

By DAN ALBRIGHT
Thresher Staff Writer

The Elizabeth Baldwin Literary Society can’t lose, because it has more girls named Shirley Revis and Lili Milani than any other group at Rice University.

All you need to break up a TRB is a girl who is (1) beautiful, and (2) willing to be the butt of dirty jokes. Somehow the EBLS got two of them. Or, since this is Rice University, I should say both of them.

As a piece of comedy, ‘L’il Abner’ is not too prepossessing. Fortunately, Rice students seem to have an unquenchable urge to laugh at jokes they have heard before, or ought to have heard before, so nothing really went wrong. The audience laughed most at the brand-new, modern-type political humor (“Yes, sir, Mr. President, your majesty”) and at a painted cardboard “machine” that kept falling over, to the embarrassment of the stage crew.

None of the parts requires any acting or singing ability except of the lowest kind. The choice of this musical was therefore an almost perfect decision. The actors had a lot of fun clowning it up, and it was often fun to watch them, especially when they were beautiful girls.

Back to ‘L’il Abner.’ The Dogpatchers were all well costumed according to the comic strip, although none of them captured the true Dogpatch essence except the Scruggs brothers, played by a bevy of Rice jocks. L’il Abner himself was portrayed by Randy Riddell, who seemed properly muscular and uncomprehending, a regular Nietzschean Superman. The audience oohed whenever he showed his muscles.

Fresh As A Daisy

Shirley Revis played Daisy Mae with an innocent (well, almost innocent) vivacity which made her characterization far more companionable than Al Capp’s.

Charles Hubbard, John Long, Bill Groves, and especially, Roy Varner performed excellently as Earthquake McGoon, Mayor Dawgmeat, Pappy Yokum, and Marryin’ Sam respectively. Melanie Wells, when she forgot her mannerisms, was sometimes funny as Mammy Yokum but she spent most of her energy trying to seem two feet shorter and forty years older than was possible for her.

Pompous Jack S.

Yeah Terry O’Rourke as Senator Jack S. Phogbound. He was delightfully pompous and political, and there ain’t no Jack S. like an EBLS Jack S.

Somebody got a real actor to play General Bullmoose, which turned out to be such a good idea that other dramatic groups on campus might profit by considering it. Bullmoose’s girlfriend, or something, was played by the inimitable Lili Milani with an immobile, persistent, never-say-die seductivity. The name of the character was Appasionata Von Climax and that’s all that can be said.