

Drama Club picks a winner

Wimborne Drama Club picked a winner this year when it chose the bang-up-to-date Francis Durbridge thriller 'The Gentle Hook' and put it on at the Allendale Centre the last three days of last week.

It was only three years ago that this play was showing in the West End, and Wimborne is the first amateur company to put it on in this area.

The play is set in the present and the somewhat complex plot includes murder, blackmail and art forgery. To portray it successfully a good quick pace must be maintained and Wimborne's competent players tackled it with no major problems and provided just the right amount of excitement and suspense to keep the audience guessing.

As is usual, the Wimborne plays are produced by Thelma Dryden, and once again her deft handling showed she knew what was important and how to get the best from her cast.

Old hands

Among the players there were the old hands who seem to be on stage for every performance at Wimborne, but this year the casting was better than ever with the result that the players appeared to be actually enjoying the roles they were tackling.

The club did, however, have trouble casting a person in the smallest role in the play, a literally walk-on-and-die bit, and in the end Roger Grenville got the role of Venner, who came on to be stabbed to death without uttering a word. Two previous actors had found the part too much for them.

Raymonde Grenville took the role of the central character Stacey Harrison and played it without a visible flaw, and David Green as her estranged husband Philip Harrison gave his usual enthusiastic interpretation. It is to his credit that he stepped into the part at a comparatively late stage and didn't slip up once.

Debut

Arthur and Muriel Brooks took the part of Brad Morris and Madge Harrison, and fitted in well with the composition of the production, and there was no faulting the work of Eric Wright and Michael Waring as Gerald Waddington and Alan Kyle.

Simon Jackson, making his debut with the Wimborne club, had the role of Lennox and only slipped once when he needed a prompt. Otherwise his performance as the perfunctory police inspector was exactly right.

Stage management was by John Anthony and Roy Bruin; lighting and photographs, David Sherwill; sound effects, Jane Sherwill; properties, Wendy Bruin; prompt, Jean Lewis, and Caroline Hickmott was production assistant and continuity. The furnishings were, as usual, provided by Tappers of Wimborne. L.R.