



Young Paul Willett was the guest soloist last week with Banbury Symphony Orchestra and his horn playing delighted concertgoers.

B/45/47

## TEENAGER PAUL LEAVES NO DOUBT

After the small audiences of recent years it was good to see a full house last week at Banbury Symphony Orchestra's opening concert of the season.

The orchestra under their new conductor, Philip Shaw, and leader Stephen Bingham, rose splendidly to the occasion. And with one or two minor exceptions thrilled the audience with the enthusiasm and quality of their playing of the well balanced and delightful programme.

William Walton's Crown Imperial, written for the Coronation of George VI, opened the programme. Mention must be made of the particularly fine playing from the large but discreet brass section!

Sixteen-year-old Paul Willett's playing of Mozart's Horn Concerto K417 was such that it left no one in any doubt that we were listening to a professional soloist of tomorrow. His fluid, poised and faultless playing was perfectly supported by the orchestra's sensitive accompaniment.

Although everyone is familiar with recordings of

Grieg's Perr Gynt Suite, perhaps one of the reasons that it is not often played live is the difficulty of some of the writing, as the orchestra discovered. Our vision of "Morning" was rather marred by the insecure woodwind opening. Some ragged phrasing in the strings tended to detract from the seductive nature of Anitra's Dance! and "In the Hall of the Mountain King" the music came to an exciting if imprecise finish.

After a well-deserved interval, the orchestra returned to play Corak's Symphony No. 8, G Major, Opus 88. Like so many of his works this beautiful and well known symphony seems to evoke sounds of nature, and breathes throughout the air of Bohemia. The orchestra successfully captured the contrasts, sustained the audience's interest throughout its four movements and brought the work to a thrilling climax.

With enjoyable programmes of such a high standard as this the demand for tickets for future concerts should be very great. — A.G.C.