

# Brushing up on Hairspray

Students gave up holidays to prepare their production, **Lawrence Machado** reports

*YOU Can't Stop the Beat* at Rouse Hill Anglican College for the next fortnight.

And with *The New Girl in Town*, there is nothing stopping the school from staging its most successful musical with an upbeat production of *Hairspray*.

The school has been buzzing for several weeks with the production team ramping up the rehearsals.

According to one of the teachers/organisers, Ben McPharlin, the talent has been so overwhelming they have two main casts of 25 to produce the show about teenager Tracy Turnblad's obsession with dancing and a yearning to be famous.

"*Hairspray* is a fast-paced and fun show, it is also technically very challenging," McPharlin said.

"Given the quality of the cast and musicians, we felt we needed to match that with the technical support we provide.

"Our student crew is very passionate and gave up a week of their school holidays to bump in and rehearse."

Experienced singer and actor Victoria Shahho and Tamsyn Willey both play Tracy.

Dance captain Cameron McCredie, a regular in amateur musical theatre, takes on the role of Corny Collins while the other main



Rouse Hill Anglican College students in rehearsal.

cast members include Beatrice Reynolds and Ella Joliffe (Amber), Sacha Bear (Penny) and Annika Joliffe, who takes on a variety of roles.

A 22-piece band made up of students, parents, teachers and professional musicians provide the main music for the many splendid songs, including *Good Morning Baltimore*, *I Can Hear The Bells*, *Welcome to the 60s*, *Run And Tell* and

the showstopping *You Can't Stop The Beat*.

"The set looks fairly simple at first glance ... it is not until the show is under way the audience will realise that the set is another performer in the show," McPharlin said.

"There are five revolving sections that are all remotely controlled by our backstage crew. Everything that happens both on the stage and behind the scenes

is done by students of the college."

Students Thomas French (lighting), Jay Hulm (audio), and Matthew Allen and John Boyd (mechanists) have been part of the co-curricular technical production since they were in Year 8 before joining the VET entertainment class in Year 11.

"These are going to be the best performances we've ever done," McPharlin said.

## College musical

» **What:** *Hairspray* musical staged by Rouse Hill Anglican College

» **When:** April 28-29; May 4-6

» **Tickets:** \$20 for adults, \$15 concession, \$10 for students under 18

» **Details:** Call 8824 5844