



James Thom/The Daily Press

THE ESSENTIALS thrilled Timmins audiences twice Saturday at the Sylvia Gravel Theatre at O'Gorman High School. The afternoon set featured the band performing older material a cappella while the evening performance included materials from 50 years of rock and roll. Proceeds from the concerts will benefit the O'Gorman High School Drama Club.

Essentials a cappella talent mixed with stage presence

By Robert Thompson
TIMMINS/The Daily Press

This was my third time seeing this talented group of fellows. They are as synchronized as ever and, at this performance, showed a wonderful warmth and camaraderie onstage.

My imagination on this day placed them on a river boat entertaining folks as the craft lazily floated down stream.

Perhaps that was because this performance was in the appropriately intimate Sylvia Gravel Theatre.

Before going this time, I did some research on a capella groups on the Internet.

I was surprised to find over 350 artists who practice this unaccompanied style of singing.

I dug into a review by the people at <www.singers.com> and here's what they had to say about our lads; "From that hotbed of a capella music to the North, Canada, comes a young, high energy quartet who are devoting their harmonious labors to the art of the doo-wop, particularly the early '60s style... enjoy those oldies anew as the harmonies are tight and rich, the bass is solid and the tunes are all from an

era of great schmaltz and great vocalization."

I didn't know Canada was a "hotbed of a capella," but it made me appreciate the competition The Essentials must have been up against even to get noticed in the first place.

They are now finishing their fourth CD and if the 2 p.m. matinee performance was any indication, they have a long and profitable career ahead of them.

Their interpretation of songs like; Help Me Rhonda, For the Longest Time, So Happy Together, Just My Imagination, In the Still of the Night, Lean On Me, The Lion Sleeps Tonight added a new twist to the original artists' stylings.

The four crooners were having fun with some of their older repertoire, but they did put some of their own creations into the program.

Really, what made the performance so very entertaining, aside from their unbelievably pure harmonies, was their joy on stage.

The audience got into the mood easily and clapped along with the rhythms.

A great show.