Stadium Opens 29th Season

Rodzinski Begins Summer Season With Rubinstein as Soloist.

By IRVING KOLODIN.

Everything was about as usual at the opening of the Philharmonic's annual summer series in the Lewisohn Stadium last night, save the presence of a new Mayor to throw out the intermission remarks. Following the cultural footsteps of his predecessor, Mayor William F. O'Dwyer appeared to give his blessings to the orchestra, Conductor Artur Rodzinski and Piano Soloist Artur Rubinstein. There were, additionally, some 16,000 unofficial well-wishers on hand.

If there was any suspicion that Mayor O'Dwyer was present simply as chief executive of the city, it was banished by his first words. Turning a Stadium-wise eye to the overcast sky, he remarked "I'd better be brief." There were cheers for that promise, and he added: "After twenty years of sitting out front, it's a novelty to be on the stage." He continued in praise of the Stadium enterprise as part of New York's cultural life, asserted that more people, in and out of the city, should know about it, and ended with a tribute to Sam A. Lewisohn (who had introduced him) and, of course, to Mrs. Charles Guggenheimer, long-time chairman of the Stadium organization.

Stadium openings are now a tradition of city life in the summer, but it seemed apparent that a good share of the large crowd was attracted by Rubinstein, and the prospect of hearing him play the B flat concerto of Brahms in his inimitable way. His approach to the task was defined by his winter concert uniform of white tie and tails, and his accomplishment was eminently of indoor quality. Thoughtful and impulsive, aggressive and reflective in proper sequence, his performance deferred not at all to the vast arena. Rodzinski and the orchestra responded with a playing of the score which was generally of Philharmonic excellence, though an occasional blurring by a solo player suggested that the lax habits of the "Pops" series in Carnegie are not easily shaken.

A MATTER OF OVERHEAD.

One wonders, incidentally, how long soloists of Rubinstein's stature will continue to accept engagements at the Stadium, considering the incessant distraction of planes overhead. He was visibly perturbed at several points, and a halt of several minutes before the slow movement did not prevent its quiet from being disrupted at three or four points. There was a time when an occasional plane was part of the Stadium atmosphere, but the night's heavy traffic out of LaGuardia Field sent a full dozen planes roaring by in the forty-odd minutes of the concerto. Perhaps, in the capacity either of civic leader or music lover, Mayor O'Dwyer can Do Something About It.

The other performances of the evening—Beethoven's "Leonore No. 3" overture and the fifth symphony of Tchaikovsky—did not suggest that the new arrangement of things at the Stadium (with its promise of more rehearsals) has had a chance to be effective as yet. Both were played in mechanical fashion, with no evidence of rehearsal or profitable forethought. Tonight the orchestra will be directed by George Szell in a Tchaikovsky-Wagner program.