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### Deepings Raft Race : 8 August 1999



A record 112 entries made this year's Deepings Raft Race the most successful ever. It is claimed that the race is now the largest event of its kind in Europe.

Two teams of **Blue Belles** from Maxey, with distinctive bright blue tee-shirts sponsored jointly by Adrian Cook of the **Blue Bell Pub** and Neil Marsland's **Trade Transmissions**, braved the rain along with their fellow competitors from various Pubs, Clubs, Work teams. There were also teams from the Armed Services & the Deepings Voluntary Fire Service Team, resplendent in their yellow helmets and laddered raft.



**Maxey Blue Belles.** Back row (left-right): Val Ball, Theresa Marshall, Suzie Lamb, Sue Bond & Pat Summers. Front row (left-right): Pippa Hutchison, Rhae Elliott, Vanessa Crowson & Kay Jones. Peeping over the back are Master Raftbuilder Keith Elliott with grandson Cameron Marshall. Photograph © John Pearson



The £7,000 profit from the race will go towards buying computers for the primary schools throughout the Deepings. The Blue Belles excelled themselves in their fund raising pulling in over £800, split between computers for schools and the villages nominated charity for this year, **Macmillan Cancer Relief**. This fund now stands at around £4,500 with 4 months of the year still remaining.

Event organiser Mike Shattock was very pleased with the events popularity. "It was a fantastic day. There were about 600 rafters and thousands more under umbrellas cheering us on!"

There were awards for rafts in various categories on the day, including one for everyone who managed to make it around the arduous one and a half mile course.

The winners of the main race were the team from **Classic Fireplaces** who are now claiming

they can keep the trophy, World Cup style, after securing their third win in the competition.

The **Bourne Boys** tied with the **Raging Rafters**, both with a time of 32 min 16 secs. in the Fun Race.

The Pub Race was won by the **Bell Boyz** (no relation), and the ladies race by the **St Nicholas Pirates**.

Best decorated raft went to **Shark Attack**.

Congratulations to Maxey's two all-female teams who put up strong performances. Both were cheered on by many supporters from the village. The Blue Belles 'A' Team (Pat Summers, Lamb, Pippa Hutchison, Vanessa Crowson & Kay Jones) finished sixth in the Pub Race, while the 'B' Team (Rhae Elliott, Val ball, Theresa Marshall & Sue Bond) took ninth spot in the Ladies Race.

Designed and built by Keith Elliott from planks and tractor tyre inner tubes, both rafts stood up well in the demanding conditions - and survived several head-on crashes with wayward fellow competitors. Their beautifully crafted oars were made by Harvey & Sue Bond.

The teams would like to thank: Keith Elliott (Master Raftbuilder), Harvey & Sue Bond (Oars), Adrian Cook (Blue Bell Pub & Neil Marsland (Trade Transmissions) for tee-shirt sponsorship, Steve Bailey (for buoyancy aids & safety helmets) and Tony Crowson (practice facilities).





The Blue Belles 'A' Team took sixth place in the Pub Team Race. Photograph © John Pearson



The Blue Belles 'B' team prepares to dock before negotiating the weir bypass.

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