



Rye & District Lions Annual Raft Race

After last year's wet day, the sun came out for Rye & District Lions Club Raft Race & Fete, with an estimated crowd of 4-5,000 spectators cheering on a record entry of sixteen rafts.

Although it is early days, the Lions estimate that the event raised around 8,000, all of which will go to help local, national and international charities over the next year.

Of the sixteen rafts taking to the Rother, fifteen completed the course of three laps between the road and rail bridges. The "Comet Beauties" raft, crewed by Cinque Ports Ladies Rugby Club, despite their best efforts, gave a good impression of a submerging submarine and had to withdraw before reaching the start line.

The race was started by the firing of a "maroon" and both banks of the Rother between the two bridges were filled with cheering spectators and this year many more had ventured earlier onto the field to watch the rafts being launched, dodging "stray" water and flour bombs from the crews. Many of the crews ended well plastered with flour and water from each other and from the many spectators crowded onto the road bridge.



After the race, the spectators flocked back onto the Salts to enjoy the Lions Fete, with many stall holders saying that they had their busiest day ever. The crowd were entertained with live music from Richie McGowan, with many spectators singing along to his music. Winners of five classes were presented with engraved silver trophies by Rye mayor, Sam Souster and all competitors were given certificates to mark the event.



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