

A successful day? Well it really depends on your definition of success!

We are pleased to report in this year's raft race, the TBF crew deemed that the outcome was very successful and was one of their best attempts to date. Although they weren't mentioned in the top 10 rafts, nor in the best dressed, or in raising the most money ...in fact they didn't seem to be in the top 60 rafts so maybe this definition of success should really be investigated.

The day started off in the usual fashion for the crew – arrive early (they were the fifth crew to arrive) and then wander off and nearly miss the start.

In previous years, the TBF crew have stated that the design of the raft, or the waves in the sea, were to blame for their less successful attempts – this year however there was a new problem. As they arrived early, this meant that they were at the very top right hand side of the beach. However the buoy which marked the course, kept being moved further to the left, so once they were in the water they were effectively in a traffic jam with the other rafts queuing up to get to the buoy. However, not a crew to give up easily, they came up with the ingenious idea of going round the other side of the buoy - now some might view this as cheating but nevertheless the TBF crew steamed ahead. Unfortunately they were thwarted by a lifeboat member in a Kayak who insisted they go round the right way. The situation quickly mounted in a scene similar to that in a Wild West movie, where there is a standoff between two opponents. However the TBF crew decided to play by the rules and headed back to the buoy.

By this point some crews had finished and a lot more were moving towards the harbour, so as winning (or even finishing in a decent place) was clearly out the window, the crew decided to resort to plan B, and it must be said that this plan certainly had the element of surprise. They began coming alongside other crews and to make things more interesting, would 'help' the other crew off their raft and once the opposition were in the water, the TBF raft went steaming off to find their next victims... I mean opponents. By the time they reached the harbour walls, none of the crew were rowing and instead were simply drifting towards the finish line, as their energy was focused entirely on sabotage. There were times when there were 6 of them on their raft, and there were times when there was only 1 of them on it. There were even times when they were on someone else's raft!

So once again the crew didn't win, and once again they were overtaken by crews of girls. But this year that didn't matter as they weren't in it to win – they were there to have fun. There were still many positive things to come out of the day including £1066.50 raised by the crew for the lifeboats which went towards the total of £28,000. So while it wasn't the trophy that the crew came home with (just an ASDA T shirt and the start of a sun tan) there was a sense of satisfaction of doing their bit for charity and helping making the day memorable for other crews as well...