

# Despite Setbacks He Had Good Time

DEEP RIVER, Conn. (UPI) — Frank Burton was burned by a cannon, marooned in a boat, ticketed by the Coast Guard and he missed out on the beer. But he says he had a good time.

Burton was the organizer of the third annual Connecticut River Raft Race.

The prize was a keg of beer, but onlookers couldn't wait and tapped the keg early.

The race, a charity event to raise money for the Newington Children's Hospital and Valley Shore Big Brothers, was supposed to start with a cannon shot at noon Saturday.

The shot was late, but the race started anyway. Burton ruled it a false start and rounded up the rafts.

He shouldn't have. The cannon went off too close to him and caused a nasty burn on his shoulder.

The rafts in the five-mile race from Deep River to Essex had to be completely homemade and wind or paddle powered.

There were decks resting on inner tubes, barrels, styro-foam and wood. Sails were constructed of everything from old parachutes to taped

plastic bags. One had a treadmill which revolved when four people walked on it.

Musicians played drums and horns as hundreds watched from shore.

Morningstar won, followed by Snuffle-Upagus and River Queen.

Morningstar, with a dragon's head and blinking light, was propelled by a bicycle-powered paddlewheel, oars, and a sail.

The extra power proved more than a match for the other 50 or so rafts, including Cirrhosis of the River, De-crepid II, and Tanstaaf, the initials for "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch."

Burton, who was left behind when the motor in his official pace boat conked out, was issued a citation by the Coast Guard for failure to apply for a regatta permit.

"We know it's a charity thing and we didn't want to stop it, but we want to make him aware that it could have been safer and better organized if we had been informed," said Petty Officer James Price.

Burton termed the charges "ridiculous and idiotic" and said he would fight them in court. He faces a possible \$500 fine.

Many of the rafters wore team T-shirts, including a stunning blonde wearing the shirt for Howard's Hustlers.

Asked what her rafting duties were, she said, "I'm supposed to serve as a distraction."