



Lyme Entry Sloshes Home For River Raft Race Win

By CLAUDIA VAN NES

DEEP RIVER — A handmade vessel, constructed around two wooden pontoons was madly rowed to victory by eight young men Saturday in a wild, fun-filled, record-setting 47 minutes at the fifth annual Connecticut River Raft Race.

The winner, named "Rubber Lips" by its Lyme owners, beat out other crafts of all descriptions in the chaotic race, grown into a major shoreline summer happening.

The winners were well into their first-place prize, a keg of beer, by the time many of the slower rafts finally beached themselves at Nott Island, the finish point for the five-mile race which began upstream in Deep River.

Eccentric rafts made of every imaginable material and propelled through the water by paddlewheels, bicycles, oars and wildly painted sails crowded the river as the words, stroke, stroke, stroke filled the muggy, still air.

One "Booze Cruise," sported three complicated looking paddlewheels while a raft named "Lady Finger" featured eight women paddlers and appeared to be waging a private competition with "Precious Cargo", a contraption made of 55-gallon oil drums welded into a hull.