



**14<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

## **A Barrel of Rafts**

24 Air Cadets from 134 (Bedford) Squadron made quite a splash when they participated in the annual inter flight raft building competition held at Priory Lakes, Bedford.

Raft racing is one of the more popular activities undertaken by the Cadets and tests teamwork, pioneering skills, physical fitness and determination. Working in two flights, Vulcan and Victor, the Cadets toiled long and hard in their efforts to construct sturdy 'ocean going' rafts using oil drums and pine poles.

Between June and September each year the Squadron splits into two flights that compete against each other throughout this period in a number of competitive activities which include sport, drill and leadership tasks.

Safety cover for the competition was provided by Civilian Instructor Steven Croft, who is himself a member of The Priory Marina Sailing Club and qualified rescue boat operator.

The competition got off to a great start with both teams building their rafts in the allocated time and launching them within minutes of each other.

Whilst not quite the 'Boat Race' both teams acquitted themselves well. For some, unable to remain afloat, they were able to put their Royal Air Force Swimming Proficiency certificates to good use swimming behind the rafts and adding some extra propulsion.

Cadet Natalie Panovic, 14 years, said "I have only been with the squadron for a couple of months but can honestly say I never had so much fun".

Having completed their raft building the cadets transferred into some canoes and selected their best rowers for a timed race. Teamwork shone through with both flights fighting hard to secure first place. In the end Vulcan flight won through and gained some well deserved points for the all important inter flight competition.

Civilian Instructor Steven Croft, who ran the evening said, "This was an excellent test of leadership and teamwork. It was great to see everyone getting involved with no one afraid to get wet".

Bedford Squadron is currently recruiting new cadets and staff members, if you are interested please contact [www.134.org.uk](http://www.134.org.uk) and get in touch with us.