



Photos courtesy of David Brett
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Bales, Sweat, and Beers at Oxenhope Straw Race

If you do nothing else in July, be in Oxenhope on Sunday 5th to witness, or even take part in, the Oxenhope Straw Race. This epitome of British eccentricity, a unique festival of fancy dress, physical prowess and ... er ... beer drinking, will once again grace the roads of Oxenhope on that day, and its 400 participants will shed sweat and tears (but hopefully not blood) to complete the course, entertain the crowds with costumes and capers and, most importantly, raise a lot of money for charity.

For those who don't know the form, racers assemble at the Waggon and Horses to ready themselves for the midday start. At their allotted time, the teams of 2 down a pint and then sprint, run, jog, walk or even stagger down the mile-long drag to the Bay Horse.

Here, the welcoming and enthusiastic crowd cheer them on as they down another pint before collecting their straw bale and carrying it the 1.5 miles up the other side of the valley to the Dog and Gun, stopping off on the way for even more beer at the Social Club, the Lamb and the Shoulder of Mutton.

There are medals for all finishers, plus plenty of prizes up for grabs (9 fastest teams categories, 4 fancy dress categories and one for the highest sponsorship). So there's something for everyone.

The really serious athletes aim for the course record (under 15 minutes for the male team). For the rest, the main prize is the fancy dress. Past years have seen superheroes, cavemen, pirates, the Village People, the casts of The Lord Of The Rings, Star Wars and Indiana Jones, the Jamaican

bobsleigh team, mobile cocktail bars, barbecues and karaokes, dames, doctors and Draculas, and a pageant of other weird and wonderful characters and contraptions parade through Oxenhope. Who knows what we'll see this year!

There is of course a serious side to the race. Every year, around £10,000 is raised in sponsorship, which has amounted to over £300,000 over the years. Every penny is distributed to local charities. So it is very much a community event.

For full details of the race and the social events around it, including entry and sponsor forms, visit the website at www.strawrace.co.uk. And if the race itself is too daunting for you, then just go and enjoy the spectacle on the day. It's quite a carnival!

Hodgsons
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Oxenhope Fisheries
01535 645993

Summer Opening Times

Tues. 4:30-8:00pm

Wed. & Thurs. 4:30-8:30pm

Fri. 11:30am-1:30pm & 4:30pm-9:00pm

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