

A big day to remember

Wnners of YEP contest to tie knot in style

BY NEIL HUDSON

A LEEDS couple couldn't believe their luck after they won the Yorkshire Evening Post's Win Your Wedding competition.

Matthew Webb and Melanie Hartley, both 27, beat off dozens of other entrants to clinch the amazing £15,000 prize, which has been offered by Thorpe Park Hotel & Spa.

The prize includes all the elements of a typical wedding day, with breakfast for 50 guests, an evening party for 100, dresses and rings, flowers, cars, photography, all in the contemporary setting of the hotel and spa.

Leeds-born Melanie, a trainee solicitor, said she only entered the competition after being pestered by her mother, Julie.

She said: "We've always had the YEP in our house and it was my mum who said I should enter the competition but I just thought it would be one of those things we would never win. Now we've won, I can't believe it."

"When we found out we'd won we had a couple of glasses of wine and a take-away to celebrate but it was a bit strange because I have a big exam coming up this week, so after learning we'd won and being overjoyed I had to go and revise for my exam, which felt a bit surreal."

"I found out first and when Matthew came to pick me up that day in the car, he knew I'd had a call from the YEP and he was just watching to see what my reaction was. When I told him we'd won, he was overwhelmed. He just said, 'Oh my God' and gave me a massive hug."

Melanie, who was born in Leeds and went to Pudsey Grange



CHEERS: Melanie Hartley and Matthew Webb celebrate their big win

PICTURE: STEVE RIDING



School, has been training to be a solicitor since she was 18.

She said: "It has been a long hard, expensive slog but hopefully I'll qualify next March. This means so much to us, it takes the pressure off us. We had wanted to get married before now but we couldn't af-

ford to do it how we wanted. This is a dream come true."

Melanie and Matthew, a mechanical engineer originally from Aberdeen, met in a bar next to Mission in Leeds six years ago. Melanie recalled the moment: "I was out for my mother's 40th birthday and we hadn't even meant to go in there but it was my brother who started talking to Matthew and I saw them and just felt like I knew him."

"We got talking, he asked me out and it went from there."

Melanie added: "After we found out on Monday, I spent the evening making about a million phone calls."

Young band get a taste of the big stage

YOUNG indie rockers from a Leeds school are preparing to strut their stuff at one of the city's biggest concert venues.

Allerton Grange High School's Glassbody band will be playing at the O2 Academy Leeds next Monday evening.

Their appearance at the high-profile venue is part of this year's Association of Music and Enterprise Awards.

The band has been challenged to raise money for the Pump Aid charity by playing gigs.

Glassbody's musical efforts are being augmented by a school business team who have been selling T-shirts and CDs.

Perils of private fostering

WAKEFIELD Council is raising awareness of the risks to children of private fostering. As a part of National Private Fostering Week the Council wants to reduce the number of children in private fostering. Private fostering is an arrangement which sees someone who is not a close relative caring for another person's child for 28 days or more. For more details, visit www.somebodyelseschild.org.uk and to discuss the subject call Wakefield Council on 0845 850 6506

Hitting the Roman road for charity

ESTATE agents will walk in the footsteps of Roman soldiers when they raise money for disadvantaged children next month.

Staff at Harrogate office of Strutt and Parker will walk the 84 miles of Hadrian's Wall in relay to raise money for the Wooden Spoon, the firm's chosen charity for 2011.

The charity, linked to the UK's rugby community, aims to harness the spirit of the sport to help disadvantaged children and young people.

Donate at www.justgiving.com/struttandparkernorthern or send a cheque made payable to Wooden Spoon to Gill Thompson, Strutt & Parker, 59 Newgate Street, Morpeth, NE61 1AY.

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