

Winning a Dream

It began with buying the odd paper here or there and soon became an obsession! The Oxford Mail ran its *Win Your Wedding* Competition at the start of April and, in the hopes of winning our dream, my fiancée Laura and I entered, not knowing if we had any sort of chance.



Up Against 40 Couples

Stage 1 of the competition began with us writing about why we wanted to win the wedding and sending this off with a photograph. This was printed in the paper with a full list of all the entrants; the previous year around 30 couples had taken part, this year we were up against 40 couples. It was not looking too promising.

For the next week we badgered family and friends, asking them to vote for us, hoping to reach the final ten. As the week came to an end we had done all we could to get as many votes as possible, and it was not until we received an email confirmation that we could breathe a sigh of relief - we had made it.

The calm did not last long; the final competition loomed and with family, friends and colleagues behind us we renewed our campaign with a dedicated Facebook page, posters, flyers and coupon collection boxes in five local stores and purchases of the paper for the coupons we needed to gather in the votes. The final day of voting approached. I

delivered a large bundle of coupons, which the receptionist thought “looks more like a joint of beef”.

We Won!

All we could do was wait. We were not sure when we would hear, only that the result would be

printed in the paper on the Saturday. On Wednesday afternoon, when a blocked number called me I ignored the call as I was at work. Checking my emails later I found it had been the Oxford Mail asking me to call them. I called back to find out that WE HAD WON.

After calling close family, I was still in shock and could not wait to see Laura and celebrate. But we were under strict instructions from the Oxford Mail not to broadcast the outcome until Saturday. We visited Eynsham Hall for a photo shoot and interview with the Oxford Mail; we were able to tour the grounds and the rooms where the wedding will be held. We cannot believe we will be holding our wedding in somewhere so grand.

Thank YOU for Making it Happen!

We could not have done it without the help of family, the support of everyone who voted for us, the local shops and the Jowett family who delivered all the flyers. Thank you. We have been overwhelmed. The wedding is booked for Saturday 19th April 2014. There is still a lot to do - then let the celebrations begin!

Matt Hemming