



**Time for a bath**

This foot race contestant takes time out from the event to relax in one of the five mud holes prepared especially for Sunday's marathon. (Photo by Pam Frederick)

# Mud Day

*A fun way to puddle away a spring afternoon*

By Sherry Matthews

Weather forecasters had predicted showers and rain clouds hovered over Hoke County most of Sunday morning, but the sun peeped through as over 4,000 crowded onto the banks surrounding the Raeford Sand and Gravel quarry for the first 4 X 4 Mud Marathon.

The crowd blanketed the slopes with lounge chairs, coolers, binoculars and food baskets as they prepared to watch approximately 30 trucks plow through the muddy terrain of the quarry arena.

"We had a good turn out," Marathon host Mike McNeill said.

Contestants from as far away as Florida and Indianapolis and as near as Red Springs and Fayetteville entered their trucks in the seven-category race that netted a total \$1,500 purse to the winners.

In addition, some 20 men and women, clad in everything from blue jeans to their skivvies, trudged through the mud holes in a foot race. The winners of that event garnered \$50 each for the privilege.

"It was a ball," one spectator noted after spending near-

ly four hours among the mud-splattered people-packed hills.

Because of the enthusiasm and sheer fun that the day brought, McNeill said that a second mud marathon had been "tentatively" scheduled for June 24.

"Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves," he said.

The winners, the spectators and even the losers left the muddy terrain Sunday a little dirtier than when they arrived but apparently pleased with the day's events.

Winners in the mud marathon were; Class A first place Terry Hilebrad from California and second place Jerald Bundy of Florida; Class AA first place Simon More of Williamston and second place David Raine of Fayetteville; Class B first place William Ellis of Fayetteville and second place Randal Ross of Indiana; Class BB first place Junior Hammonds of Red Springs and second place Wayne Smith of Elizabethtown; Class C first place Earl Holland of Smithfield and second place Steve Green of Garner; Class CC first place Earl Holland of Smithfield and second place Larry Green of Garner.

Ronnie Green of Smithfield, driving a 1964 Ford pickup, was the overall winner in the unlimited and Grand Championship class.



**Over the top**

This 1964 Ford pickup pulls it up and over the fifth and final mud hurdle during Sunday's 4X4 mud marathon. The "Tough Stuff" vehicle was the overall winner in both the unlimited and Grand Championship Classes. (Photo by Pam Frederick)



**Racing for the hill**

Contestants in the men's foot race climb, slish, run and stumble towards the final hill during Sunday's mud marathon that attracted visitors from across the state. (Photo by Pam Frederick)



**Not just playing around**

Although these fellows enjoyed their Sunday afternoon romp through the mud, they did take time to try and salvage shirts, glasses and shoes that somehow got lost in the muddy waters. (Photo by Pam Frederick)