

Hope wins Stoop



Robert Hope (No 1) breaks away from Ian Holmes (2) in the race to the finish line.



Alistair Brownlee (left) pushes himself to the finish after falling on the descent.

Sam Wood (1) and Oscar Bonney (12) climb out of the quarry in the junior race (below).



ROBERT HOPE won the Oxenhope Stoop fell race for the second year — to step up his personal battle with English fell racing champion, Ian Holmes.

Holmes has dominated the event, but was pushed into second place last year with Hope winning by 11 seconds. He was determined to get revenge this time, and led for most of the route. Hope was ahead when they turned for home at the standing stone, but it was difficult to pick a good route off Oxenhope Moor as they raced past other runners still on their way up.

Holmes held a 10-yard lead, but Hope slowly clawed his way back and as they reached the moorside cafe they were virtually neck and neck.

With about 300 yards to the tape Hope made his break and sprinted up the final climb to win by four seconds.

Hope, of the Pudsey and Bramley club finished in 28mins 51 secs — which was the second slowest winning time in the history of the race and gave an indication of the punishing conditions. Holmes finished in 28:55.

"It was one of the best races in the history of the event with Hope having to give everything to pull off the win. He was totally exhausted and almost collapsed over the winning line.

"Holmes was devastated, and I'm sure he will be even more determined to win back the title next year," said organiser Dave Woodhead.

One of the top performances of the day came from 15-year-old Bingley Harrier, Alistair Brownlee, who was given special permission to run in the Open Age event.

Despite falling heavily on the descent he made it to the finish at Penistone Hill in sixth place, taking the Under-18 title in a time of 31mins 48secs.

"It was a very gritty performance and Alistair is definitely a runner to watch for the future," Woodhead said.

Local runner Colin Moses also turned in a memorable run — despite finishing down in 37th place. His fell running shoe came apart on the race to the top of the moor. He stopped to pick up the sole and completed the race in his sock, with the top of his training shoe flapping round his ankle.

Irish international, Tricia Sloan of Salford, won the women's race in a time of 36:59 in 43rd position overall. She

By JOHN HEALD

was chased home by former women's winner Lisa Lacon (Holmfirth) in 37:53.

A total of 272 runners completed the senior race and there were plenty of runners in the junior races.

The Auld Lang Syne race takes place on New Year's Eve, starting at 11.30am, with a bottle of beer for all finishers.

Results

Men: 1 Robert Hope (P&B) 28:51; 2 Ian Holmes (Bingley) 28:55; 3 George Ehrhardt (Todmorden) 31:02; 4 Ted Mason (Wharfedale) 31:21; 5 Steve Oldfield V-40 (Bradford-Airedale) 31:34; 6 Alistair Brownlee U-18 (Bingley) 31:48; 7 Charles Miller (Harrogate) 32:04; 8 Jason Helmsley (P&B) 32:19; 10 Andy Clarke (Calder) 32:22.

25 John Wootton (Wharfedale) 34:20; 28 Graham Bird (Bingley) 34:51; 29 Johnny Butler (K&C) 35:06; 32 Damien Scholes (K&C) 35:35; 37 Colin Moses (Bingley) 36:16; 49 Paul Crabtree (L&C) 37:17; 54 Ian Ferguson (Bingley) 37:31.

Women: 1 Tricia Sloan (Salford) 36:59; 2 Lisa Lacon (Holmfirth) 37:53; 3 Liz Day (Ripon) 38:47; 4 Sally Malir V-35 (Ilkley) 41:13; 5 Caroline Pollard (V-40) 41:50; 7 Jame Smith (Todmorden) 42:19.

10 Jaqui Foster (K&C) 43:22; 11 Christine Preston (K&C) 43:51; 16 Debbie Spurr (K&C) 45:34; 17 Rachel Staples (K&C) 46:12.

■ Silsden's New Year's Day fun run will give everyone a chance to work off some of the excess Christmas Pudding.

Once again the run is being organised by teacher Paul Buckley and it will be run over a three mile course which includes 500ft of climbing. The race starts from The Green, Bradley Road, Silsden, at 11.15. Entry is from 10.30am and costs £2.

There will be a certificate and T-shirt for all finishers and small, wrapped spot prizes will be welcome. The presentation takes place at the Sunnybank Social Club from noon.