

Holmes reclaims fell title



IAN HOLMES made it 'business as usual' as he reclaimed the Auld Lang Syne fell race title on New Year's Eve.

The Bingley Harriers athlete had won the race on 10 previous occasions and beat English champion Simon Bailey and a host of other internationals, including the man who beat him last year, Andi Jones.

A new course, had been introduced for the 12th running because of the race's popularity and 442 athletes turned out despite driving rain and gale force winds.

Holmes took command after the Stanbury Moor summit and showed unbeatable speed on the return journey over muddy paths and fields. It was his second outing as an Over-40 athlete having won the Vet's prize at the Stoop race.

He also showed he is in top

form and is aiming to win the English Fell Running title as a veteran.

Chevin Chase winner Alistair Brownlee won the Under-18s event and was sixth overall and together with Andy Peace in ninth place helped Bingley lift the men's team title.

Twenty two-year-old Natalie White, now running for Bingley, won the ladies race to add to her 'Hot Toddy' victory in Boxing Day. Amy Green (K&C) was second lady with Jo Smith (Calder) in third place.

Ten years after Sarah Rowell won the ladies title she had to settle for sixth place, but was first female veteran.

■ Pictures show (top) Ian Holmes leading the field home and (right) Alistair Brownlee 'wears' the course as he returns to win the Under-18 title.



Smith goes close to record

A TOTAL of 52 runners revelled in New Year's Day sunshine to complete the hilly 3-mile course of Silsden's annual fun run.

The field included hot-shot athletes at the front to 4-year-old Logan Hargreaves, who has already taken part in the event twice, via 'Old Timer' Tony Minikin - and everyone had a super time.

Several runners had survived the previous day's Auld Lang Syne fell race in freezing conditions and described it as more like a reconstruction of

Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.

At the sharp end of the fun run Will Smith of Keighley and Craven AC became only the second runner to break the 16 minute barrier, and the fastest runner for 13 years in 15:47, but he was still 22 seconds outside Dave Throup's 1991 record time of 15:25.

Other top 10 finishers were: 2 Stewart Macdonald (Binely) 16:44, 3 Graham Pearce (Ilkley AC) first local runner 17:42, 4 Damian Scholes (K&C) 17:49; 5 Shaun Wilkinson

(K&C) first Vet 40 18:10; 6 Russ Fairhurst (K&C) 18:37, 7 Mark Clarkson (K&C) 18:50; 8 Charlie Marshall K&C) 19:16 - who set his best ever time over the course on his 49th birthday.

9 Mike Baldwin (Ilkley) 19:55, 10 Tamara Hird (First lady and first local lady) 20:06.

Under-17: winner Anthony Rowling (Silsden) 22:27. Under-14s: 1 Tom Sessford (K&C) 11th overall 20:12. 1st girl: Vicky Howell (Silsden) 34:02.

Under-12: 1 Thomas

Woodland 29:25. 1st girl: Joanna Rowling (Silsden) 40:35.

Despite suffering cramp on the descent of Bradley Road Peter Metcalfe from Hellifield completed his 22nd consecutive running of the event.

Every runner left the presentation at the Sunnybank Social Club with a timed certificate, character mug, pack of sports socks and a present from Santa's sack.

The profit of about £80 will go towards buying a new strip for Keighley RUFC Colts.