

Holmes stoops to conquer

On a day which was to see several fine performances and numerous records, Ian Holmes and Lucy Wright produced outstanding runs to set new course records in the sixth running of this popular race.

Holmes, who was able to clinch his fifth successive victory in this established festive event, sliced 14 seconds off his own three year old course record - a record which was set, incidentally, on a frozen and therefore much faster course than today, which was soggy with knee deep mud in places.

Just after the half mile point, and with the benefit of a strong tail wind, Holmes moved away from Calder Valley's Karl Smith and by the summit had opened up a lead of roughly 400 metres over Bolton's rapidly improving Darren Flatley.

The double Ben Nevis winner admitted to finding the going tough on the lonely homeward descent as he had to battle hard against the strong head winds in order to clinch the record he was clearly chasing from the gun. He finally came home almost two minutes clear after a

splendid solo performance.

Lucy Wright was also able to join the record breaking act as she followed up her course record at Rivoct Edge three weeks earlier with an even better run to smash Carol Greenwood's respected three-year-old mark of 32:50 by 83 seconds. An astonishing improvement.

The delighted Leeds runner said: "It wasn't my intention before the race to go for the record, even though I knew what the record was and who it belonged to. Even so, I knew I was fit enough to challenge it and so it's obviously a great feeling to beat Carol's time as her records are always something special."

The quality of the field was such that in 1992, when Holmes set the previous mark of 26:50, just seven runners dipped inside the 30 minute mark. Whereas this time, on a course which was less conducive to fast running, 11 bettered this time - a further indication of the Bingley man's sparkling performance.

As well as the record turnout of 182 finishers, sixth place finisher John Butler took 64 seconds off Pete Lyons' 1992 M40 mark, Don Ashton broke the M50 record, and John Newby the M60 mark.

Stoop Fell Race, 6M, 1000ft

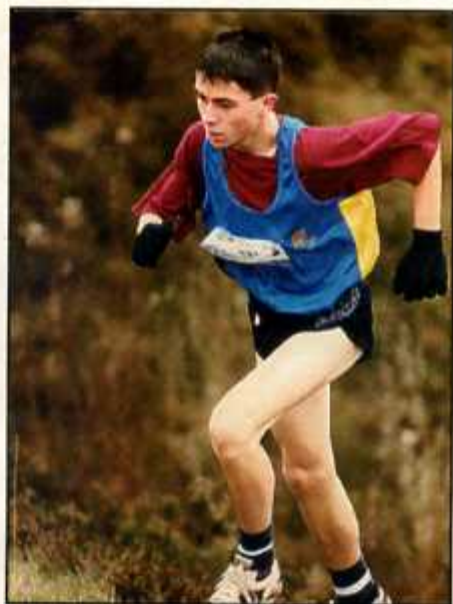
December 17 Penistone Country Park, W. Yorks,
GARETH WEBB reports



■ The winner of the ladies' race, Lucy Wright of Leeds City. Photo: Trevor Smith.



■ The 2nd man, Darren Flatley of Bolton. Photo: Trevor Smith.



■ The winner of the U16 event, Ben Crosley of Hulme Grammar School, Oldham. Photo: Trevor Smith.



■ The 4th man, Ken Smith of Calder Valley. Photo: Trevor Smith.

RESULTS

Men (5M, 800ft): 1. I. Holmes (Bing) 26:36 (rec); 2. D. Flatley (Bol) 28:33; 3. M. Hill (Bol) 28:43; 4. K. Smith (Cald V) 28:48; 5. I. Ferguson (Bing) 28:54; 6. J. Butler (Keigh RR, M40) 28:56 (rec); 7. M. Horrocks (Cald V) 29:02; 8. G. Schofield (Horw) 29:06; 9. M. Pickering (Ilk, M40) 29:26; 10. P. McWade (C le M, M40) 29:47; 11. P. Davies (P&B) 29:59; 12. J. Brook (Bing) 30:12; 13. J. Bitterling (GER) 30:23; 14. D. Woodhead (Horw) 30:42; 15. J. Cordingley (Todm) 30:45; 16. C. Caldwell (Bol) 30:50; 17. N. Holding (Drwen) 30:52; 18. D. Beels (Roch, M40) 31:06; 19. G. Taylor (Darwen) 31:14; 20. A. Life (C le M) 31:20; U18: 1. A. Burnett (Leeds) 31:41; 2. S. Haigh (Ilk) 32:45; 3. S. Briggs (Bing) 35:13. M50: 1. D. Ashton (N Vets) 33:05 (rec); 2. R. Jacques (C le M) 34:14; 3. G. Howard (Ilk) 35:23. M60: J. Newby (Todm) 42:05 (rec). M70: R. Appleby (Bing) 47:59. **Team:** 1. Bingley 18; 2. Bolton 21; 3. Clayton-le-Moors 52; 4. Horwich 58.

Women: 1. L. Wright (Leeds) 31:27 (rec); 2. W. Barns (Barns) 35:54; 3. J. Shutter (P&B) 37:19; 4. K. Thompson (C le M, W40) 38:27; 5. C. Roberts (Cald V, W35) 38:56; 6. M. Jagan (EPOC, W40) 39:05; 7. B. McWade (C le M, U16) 39:07 (rec); 8. J. Tompkins (Leeds Un) 40:24; 9. C. Dewhurst (C le M) 40:49; 10. J. Howard (Fellam, W40) 41:13; U18: 2. E. Urmston (Unatt) 48:26; 3. N. Dawson (Unatt) 61:01.

Junior Races

Boys U16 (2M) 1. B. Crosley (Hulme GS) 10:55; 2. A. Austin (Roch) 11:16; 3. G. Pearce (Ilk) 12:12. U14 (1M) 1. C. Swire (C le M) 5:40; 2. I. Harvey (Hal) 5:50; 3. J. Fuller (Keigh RR) 6:02.

Girls: U14 (1M) 1. A. Jagan (EPOC) 7:06; 2. J. Austin (Unatt) 7:57; 3. F. Jagan (EPOC) 8:15.