

TWO HUNDRED ATHLETES FOR MANX FESTIVAL

THE 32nd Isle of Man Easter athletics festival, once again promoted by Manx Harriers and with more than £4,000 in cash prizes on offer for the first time, has attracted an entry of 200 visiting athletes.

The exciting weekend action gets underway on Good Friday at 6.45pm with the 5.3 mile race walk, starting and finishing at the TT Grandstand, which will be followed by the 5.3m run at 7pm.

The action moves to Peel on Easter Saturday with the men's Peel Hill race starting at 2.15pm from Weatherglass Corner. The ladies start at 3.05pm.

The festival draws to a close on Sunday with the Douglas promenade events, starting at the Sea Terminal at 10.15am with a ladies race.

There is also a 5km walk, starting at 10.20am, while a men's 4 x 5km relay starts at 11.15am.

Manx Harriers have confirmed that some top names in athletics are among the 200 entry.

Last year's Festival winner John Heap makes a return while Peter Banks of Blackburn was the recent winner of the Manx Airlines Half Marathon on the Island.

1993 Ladies winner Lucy Wright is making a welcome return and another leading name is Dion McNeilly, a member of the Irish world cross-country medal winning team.

Last year's top local athlete, Graham Clarke, is sadly unable to defend his title because of injury.

● For the first time, prize money is to be won with a total of over £4,000 available.

● Free buses leave the War Memorial, Douglas at 1pm on Saturday, returning from Peel at 4.30pm, for the hill races.

● Race headquarters is the TT Grandstand (2-7pm Friday, 10am-11.30am Saturday, 9am-10am Sunday at the relay start Douglas promenade).

● The prize presentation for the weekend takes place on Sunday at Summerland followed by the now infamous 'Beer Drinking Contest. Tickets from race HQ.



A quintet of locals keeping close company during the early stages of Saturday's hill race at Peel. (Left to right) Ian Crawford, Bernard Cannan, Robert Webb, Kevin Groom and Phil Crowe (44) (Photo: John Watterson)



Melanie Brown and visiting runner Sue Britten have no time to admire the view of Peel and the western hills during Saturday's second leg of the Easter Athletics Festival. Mel was the best local lady over the three days, finishing 16th overall in a field dominated by British international Lucy Elliot. Full results inside today (Photo: John Watterson)



Paul Clarke (the Manx version) is pictured leading a string of runners up Peel Hill during Saturday's second leg of the Easter Athletics Festival (JW)

BRITISH international Lucy Elliot was the star of the Easter Athletics Festival, winning all three Ladies events at a canter to comfortably beat last year's champion Lucy Wright.

The Shaftsbury Barnet runner commenced her hat-trick of wins in Friday evening's round the houses race in Douglas, where she completed the 5.3 mile course in a time of 29 minutes 55 seconds, good enough for a top 40 placing in the Men's race won by Irish international Deon McNeilly in 26.07.

The first local across the line was Chris Quine in seventh spot, followed closely by his Manx Harriers team-mates Gianni Epifani (9th) and Andy Fox (10th). The best of the locals in the Ladies race was Linda Kelly in 19th position (37.52).

With McNeilly deciding not to contest the remaining two legs of the Festival, it was left

to Leeds University's Mark Colpus and recent Manx Airlines half marathon winner Peter Banks of Blackburn to fight it out for the overall honours.

Second on Good Friday, Colpus won the Peel Hill Race the following afternoon in a time of 22.42, some 15 seconds quicker than his rival in-second spot. Epifani led the local contingent home in third spot with a time of 23.09.

Lucy Elliot was pushed hard by namesake Lucy Wright in the Ladies event, but despite a great descent by the latter girl it was Elliot who crossed the line first at the end of the shorter three mile course in 18 mins 40 secs. Mel Brown was the best of the locals in 14th spot.

Once again another classy performance from Elliot in Sunday's concluding leg of the Festival deservedly earned her the overall title, completing the 5km 'sprint' across Douglas promenade in a time of 18.03, over half a minute in front of Wright.

Ramsey's Mandy Radcliffe, home from Stafford University for the Easter break, was easily the best local performer in eighth spot with a time of 20.27.

Manx Harriers A team won the Men's 4x4 relay to pip Leeds University for the overall title. But the latter (Doss AC) squad had the consolation at least of claiming the best individual, Mark Colpus battling through to win the award. The best local in the Men's section overall was Gianni Epifani.

● Full results in this weekend's edition of the *Manx Independent*.

GOOD FRIDAY WALKING RACE

RESULTS

Men: 1, Steve Partington (M. Harriers) 37 minutes; 2, Steve Brennan (MH) 38.48; 3, Steve Taylor (MH) 39.15; 4, John Cannell (MH) 46.16; 5, Brian Brough (MH) 54.26; 6, Ralph Martin (MH) 56.20; 7, Simon Cox (MH) 57.31; 8, Les Brown (MH) 59.36.

Ladies: 1, Karen Kneale (MH) 45.57; 2, Elizabeth Corran (MH) 47.30; 3, Ruth Sadler (MH) 47.30; 4, Sue Partington (MH) 49.36.

EASTER SUNDAY (Douglas Prom)

Men: 1, S. Partington 21m 42s; 2, S. Brennan 22.13; 3, S. Taylor 23.41; 4, Allan Callow 25.18; 5, S. Cox 28.12; 6, L. Brown 29.44; 7, B. Brough 31.06; 8, R. Martin 32.45 (all Manx Harriers).

Ladies: 1, K. Kneale 26.15s; 2, E. Corran 28.12; 3, Ruth Sadler 32.59; 4, Sue Partington 35.44 (all Manx Harriers).



Lucy Elliot has just a few yards in hand on namesake Lucy Wright at the end of Saturday's Peel Hill Race (JW)

Manx marathon runners

THE Isle of Man Veteran Athletes Club has organised a group of runners to visit London for the marathon on April 17.

The veteran athletes are Terry Bates, Phil Motley, Simon Cox, Maureen Cox, Colin

Bowen, Stan Hall, Peter Cooper and Brian Brough.

A senior runner in the London marathon is Paul Curphey who is not a veteran but says that, after several months of marathon training, he sometimes feels like one!

Festival snippets

● THE first leg of the Easter Athletics Festival, the 5.3 mile road race around Douglas on Good Friday evening, was delayed five minutes due to the late arrival of the Steam Packet boat from Heysham carrying the majority of the athletes.

● NO you weren't seeing double in the official results sheets, there were two Paul Clarke's entered.

Our own Paul Clarke of Manx Harriers was 12th in Friday's road race, some six places in front of Birmingham University's Paul Clarke.

But the visiting runner got his own back on Saturday at Peel, where he piped the Manx postie to 12th place by just two seconds!

● FORMER Manx Grand Prix winner Steve Moynihan had to pull out of Sunday's finale to the Easter Festival after straining an ankle ligament whilst out for a sedate ride on his mountain bike after Saturday's hill race at Peel.

● MANX Harriers A team's success in the Men's team competition was its first ever.

● FESTIVAL Administrator Joan Powell was sun-bathing in Innsbruck, just over 24 hours before the first event of the weekend got underway in Douglas on Friday evening. By the end of the Festival she was nursing a cold, a result of standing out in the good old Manx weather all weekend she says, and NOT post-Austrian flu!

● MEN'S winner Mark Colpus, of Leeds University's Doss AC, picked up more than £400 in prize money over the weekend.

● THE Festival organisers wish to express their thanks to the Department of Tourism for their support; also the St John Ambulance; Raynet; the club officials who acted as recorders and marshals; and to Lynda Higgins and Graham Kinrade for the excellent results service.

Gianni Epifani was the best overall local performer in the Easter Athletics Festival, pictured here on his way to third place in the Peel Hill Race (JW)

FULL EASTER ATHLETICS RESULTS ROUND-UP



GOOD FRIDAY ROAD RACE (5.3 miles). Senior Men: 1, Deon McNeilly (Willowfield Th) 26 mins 07 secs; 2, Mark Colpus (Leeds Univ) 26.19; 3, Peter Banks (Blackburn Harriers) 26.53; 4, John Heap (L'pool Univ) 26.59; 5, Robin Hudson (Leeds Univ) 27.24; Lol Coogan (L'pool Univ) 27.29; 7, Chris Quine (Manx H) 27.45; 8, Kevin Murphy (L'pool Univ) 27.50; 9, Gianni Epifani (Manx H) 27.56; 10, Andy Fox (Manx H) 27.58. Other locals: 12, Paul Clarke (Manx H) 28.25; 26, Paul Curphey (Manx H) 29.18; 28, Mick Hannay (Manx H) 29.47; 29, Jim Anderson (Manx H) 29.34.

30, Steve Kelly (Northern) 29.41; 31, Kevin Albinson (Manx H) 29.47; 33, Phil Jackson (Manx H) 29.50; 33, Murray Lambden (Manx H) 29.50; 41, Richard Radcliffe (Northern) 30.29; 42, Phil Motley (Western) 30.30; 52, Juan Wright (Manx H) 31.30; 54, Bernard Cannan (Northern) 31.31; 55, Ian Watson (Northern) 31.34; 57, Robert Webb (Manx H) 31.41; 59, Peter Cooper (IoM Veterans) 31.53; 60, Terry Bates (IoM Vets) 32.03; 62, Phil Crowe (Northern) 32.10; 64, Mark Bridson (Northern) 31.12; 65, Stan Hall (Manx H) 32.13; 70, Allan Hannay (Manx H) 32.44; 71, Brian Goldsmith (Manx H) 32.47; 72, Kevin Groom (Manx H) 33.12; 76, Steve Moynihan (Southern) 33.27; 77, John Crellin (Manx H) 33.39; 78, Paul Grainger (Manx H) 33.48; 80, Tony Conway (Northern) 33.55; 85, Martin Bell (IoM Vets) 34.21; 87, 87, Donal Gilman (Western) 34.24; 90, Thomas Vernon (Greenwich Triathlon) 34.36.

94, John Wright (Manx H) 35.00; 99, Alan Pilling (IoM Vets) 35.20; 100, Geoff Ennett (Western) 35.26; 103, Tony Duke (Manx H) 35.42; 105, Steve Shimmin (Manx H) 35.56; 107, Dave Gell (Northern) 36.44; 110, Anton Robertson (Manx H) 36.53; 112, John Marchment (Western) 37.35; 115, Trevor Coleman (Northern) 39.04; 125, Charlie Quirk (IoM Vets) 44.01.

● 129 finishers.

Team points: 1, Leeds University (Doss AC) A 18 pts; 2, Liverpool Univ A 23; 3, Manx Harriers A 26; 4, Liverpool Univ B 53; 5, Manx Harriers B 90; 6, Manchester Univ A 121; 8, Northern AC A 125; 13, Manx Harriers C 149; 14, Manx Harriers Vets A 153; 15, Isle of Man Veterans AC A 205; 16, Northern AC B 233; 17, Manx Harriers D 302.

Ladies (5.3 miles): 1, Lucy Elliot (Shaftsbury Barnet) 29.55; 2, Lucy Wright (Leeds Univ) 30.31; 3, Jessica Turnbull (Bury AC) 32.03; 4, Freida Brown (Shafts B) 33.07; 5, Angela Brand-Barker (ERYRI) 33.23; 6, Laura Woffenden (Leeds U) 33.24. Locals: Sonja Terblanche 35.35; 16, Alex Gillies 36.53; 19, Linda Kelly (Manx H) 37.52; 21, Melanie Brown (Manx H) 38.25.

● 39 finishers.

Ladies team points: 1, Shaftsbury Barnet Harriers 13 pts; 2, Leeds University (Doss AC) A 15; 3, Leeds University (Doss AC) B 48; 4, Grantham AC 50; 5, Liverpool University 59; 6, Manchester University A 67.

EASTER SATURDAY (PEEL HILL RACE). Senior Men (4 miles): 1, M. Colpus 22m 42s; 2, P. Banks 22.57; 3, G. Epifani 23.09; 4, Andrew Williams 23.33; 5, J. Heap 23.36; 6, R. Keeney 23.40; 7, G. Raven 23.43; 8, A. Fox 23.44; 9, C. Quine 23.53; 10, D. Gibbons 23.58. Other locals: 13, P. Clarke 24.06; 23, M. Hannay 25.04; 26, P. Jackson 25.41; 27, J. Anderson 25.49; 29, S. Kelly 26.02; 31, J. Wright 26.12; 37, B. Cannan 26.56; 39, R. Webb 27.06; 42, K. Albinson 27.21; 43, I. Watson 27.25; 45, P. Crowe 27.26; 46, G. Kirby 27.35; 47, B. Goldsmith 27.38; 49, P. Cooper 27.51; 50, M. Bridson 27.59; 51, T. Bates 28.03; 52, S. Hall 28.08; 53, K. Groom 28.11; 55, J. Crellin 28.30; 57, S. Moynihan 28.45; D. Gilman 29.11; 68, Greg Hoskisson, 29.59; 69, M. Bell 30.04; 70, G. Ennett 30.16; 72, J. Wright 30.36; 73, A. Pilling 30.37; 75, J. Murphy 30.50; 81, T. Duke 32.04; 82, S. Shimmin 32.21; 86, Trevor Coleman 33.52.

● 103 finishers.

Team points: 1, Manx Harriers A 20 pts; 2, Leeds University (Doss AC) A 31; 3, Liverpool Univ A 42; 4, Liverpool Univ B 58; 5, Cheshire Harriers A 73; 6, Birmingham Univ A 76; 7, Manx H B 76; 8, Northern A 109; 10, Manx Harriers Vets A 133; 14, Manx Harriers C 153; 15, Isle of Man Veterans AC A 169; 17, Northern AC B 181; 19, Manx Harriers D 235.

Ladies (3 miles): 1, L. Elliot 18.40; 2, L. Wright 18.51; 3, J. Turnbull 19.07; 4, Brand-Barker 20.16; 5, F. Brown 20.25; 6, L. Woffenden 20.46. Locals: 14, Melanie Brown 23.24; 24, Jackie Kennaugh 26.05; 33, Niamh O'Donoghue 29.25.

● 36 finishers.

Ladies team points: 1, Leeds University (Doss AC) A 16 pts; 2, Shaftsbury Barnet Harriers 18; 3, Liverpool University 41.

EASTER SUNDAY (Ladies 5 km road race): 1, L. Elliot 18.03; 2, L. Wright 18.44; 3, J. Turnbull 19.13; 4, F. Brown 19.43; 5, A. Brand-Barker 19.57; 6, I. Peaty 20.01. Locals: Amanda Radcliffe 20.27; M. Brown 22.37; 19, L. Kelly 22.37; 31, J. Kennaugh 24.05; 36, Nicola Kennaugh 26.54.

● 38 finishers.

Mens Relay (4 x 5km): 1, Manx Harriers A team (Chris Quine 16 mins 17 secs, Gianni Epifani 16.27, Paul Clarke 17.01, Andy Fox 16.33) = 1 hr 06 mins 18 secs; 2, Liverpool University A team (Lol Coogan 16.20, John Heap 16.23, Robin Heap 16.58, Simon Thomas 17.12) = 1.06.53; 3, Leeds University A team (Mark Colpus 15.44, Nick Mannion 16.30, Robin Hudson 16.42, Paul Spencer 18.05) = 1.07.01; **First Veterans team:** Manx Harriers Vets.

Mens teams overall: 1, Manx Harriers A 5 points; 2, Leeds University A 6; 3, Liverpool University A 7; 4, Liverpool University B 15; 5, Birmingham University A 18; 6, Manx Harriers B 19; 7, East Cheshire H 21; 8, Northern AC A 24; 9, Stockport Harriers 31; 10, Liverpool University C 35; 11, Manchester University A 36; 12, Manx H Vets A 38; 13, Manx H C 39; 14 (tie) East Cheshire Vets and IoM Vets A 47; 16, Newcastle University A 54; 17, Capenhurst University RC 62; 18, Leeds University C 70.

Overall winners. Men: Mark Colpus (Leeds University A team). Best Local: Gianni Epifani (Manx Harriers). Best Veteran: Alan Carroll (East Cheshire Harriers). Best Youth: Andrew Williams (E. Cheshire Harriers). Best Junior: Gary Raven (E. Cheshire Harriers).

Ladies: 1, Lucy Elliot (Shaftsbury Barnet Harriers). Best Local: Melanie Brown (Manx Harriers) 16th. Best Veteran: Irene Peaty (Shaftsbury Barnet H) 7th. 1st Team: Shaftsbury Barnet Harriers.

EASTER Saturday's Manx Mountain Marathon, sponsored by Okells Ales, promises to be one of the fiercest contested races in its 25 year history.

Three former Elite Champions are entered with last year's winner, Andy Hauser of Leeds leading the field, although injury problems over the winter have put a question mark on his fitness.

Newly turned veteran Brent Brindle would dearly love to add to his four previous wins while his Horwich teammate and 1992 champion John Nickson is determined to erase the painful memory of last year when a nasty ankle injury forced his retirement in the early stages.

Shane Green of Yorkshire makes his third appearance in the Manx and he undoubtedly has the talent to go one better than his runner up place of last year.

Manx star Tony Rowley must have a very good chance of a top six placing and also starts favourite for the coveted Snaefell Trophy for the best local finisher although he will have to watch out for Derbyshire based John Kewley who had such a fine win in last year's Karrimore Two Day race.

Scottish ladies champion Helen Diamantides makes her debut and given reasonable weather conditions will almost certainly demolish the ladies course record, no doubt getting the better of most of her male opponents in the process.

The Standard Class is always very competitive with no obvious favourite. Local runners have always gained good results in this section and this year could well see David Young of Laxey and Dave Corrin of Onchan challenging strongly.

● Walkers will depart from Ramsey at 7.30am while the runners start at 9.15am.

After the lung busting ascent of North Barrule and Clagh Ouyr, the leading walkers reach the Black Hut on the TT course at around 8.50 followed within an hour by the runners.

The Bungalow is reached in another 40 minutes or so after successfully negotiating Snaefell.

Beinn-y-Phott and Carraghyn are the next two peaks, reaching Injebreck by around 10.15.

By now the leading runners are usually making their way through the field of walkers and after the four peaks towards Greeba Mountain usually arrive first at St John's (18 miles into the event) at about 11.35.

Runners approach the Round Table at about 12.40 and down to the Sloc for around 1pm. The back breaking climb of Bradda from Fleshwick follows before the finish at Bradda Glen, Port Erin at about 1.45.