

Karrissa steals the Easter show

NATIONAL Fell Running champion Karrissa Hawitt was the star of the Manx Harriers organised Easter Athletics Festival, winning all three women's events at a canter.

The 17-year-old Warrington AC runner simply dominated the proceedings with a most impressive display of running, on tarmac as much as off-road.

Her time of 32 minutes 25 seconds for the opening 5.3-mile road race around Douglas and Onchan on Good Friday evening was over two minutes faster than her nearest rival and placed her

29th in a total field of 113 finishers.

She paced herself well in the following day's Peel Hill race, biding her time before moving to the front to complete a back-to-back success in the event.

The newly crowned junior national cross country champion showed no signs of fatigue on Sunday morning when she again won the 5km road race around Pulrose and the NSC, finishing 57s clear of nearest rival, newcomer Tanya Taylor of Peterborough.

Hawitt's winning times for the Friday and Sunday events were substantially quicker than the corresponding times

set by 2002 champion Ruth Schofield, whilst she lopped 1m 12s off her own previous winning time for the Peel hill event.

In the absence of Jackie Ashman, the relatively unknown Lynne McAvoy of the Isle of Man Veteran Athletes' Club took the local honours, finishing an impressive ninth on Good Friday, 10th on Saturday and 12th on Sunday for ninth overall.

Lynne was beaten by Island Half Marathon champion Diane Lawrence in the latter two events, but as she did not contest the opening road race the consistent McAvoy took the overall award.

The men's title went to Lee Hurst of Altrincham AC. He finished strongly to win the Friday road race in a time of 27.19 and the Peel hill race in 21.52, but was narrowly denied a clean sweep in the 5k relay by Manchester University's Richard Ward.

The top local finisher was Gianni Epifani of the organising club in eighth place overall. Paul Clarke was the first home on Good Friday in eighth spot, two ahead of Epifani, but the latter man fought back to take up the home-reserved number 8 slot at Peel.

Making his only appearance of the Festival, 17-year-old student Keith Gerrard was the fastest local in Sunday's 5k relay, filling - guess what? - eighth place, but 10th was enough for Epifani to hold back Clarke and leading veteran Andy Fox for the local honours.

★ **DARREN Gray** was due to compete for the Manx Harriers A team, but he ended up in a hospital bed about the time he would have toed the line at the start of the Good Friday road race.

The Foxdale flier was hurt in a motorcycle accident at the bottom of the Ballahutchin, Union Mills.

He spent the weekend in Noble's but is now out and about again making a good recovery from his injuries.



The start of the men's 4x5km relay at the NSC on Sunday morning with up-and-coming local star Keith Gerrard (A61) mixing it with the best of the visiting runners, including Festival winner Lee Hurst (A63) (JM 4034127-19)



Local runner Diane Lawrence leads Women's Athletics Festival winner Karrissa Hawitt of Warrington in the early stages of the Peel Hill race. (Inset) Best local overall, Lynne McAvoy (John Watterson)



Best placed local Gianni Epifani (JW)

Overall Festival Positions

Men 1, Lee Hurst (Altrincham & Dist AC) total points four; 2, Tim Crossland (Leeds Uni) eight; 3, Owen Green (Manchester Uni) 10; 4, David Norman (Altrincham) 12; 5, Richard Ward (Manchester Uni) 13; 6, Nick Leigh (Altrincham) 18. **Locals:** 8, Gianni Epifani (Manx Harriers A) 28; 11, Andy Fox (Manx Harriers A) 34; 12, Paul Clarke (MH A) 36; 22, Steve Partington (MH) 75; 31, Paul Trees (IoM Veterans AC) 134; 45, Kevin Martin (Northern AC) 177; 48, Vernon Thomas (Greenwich) 189.

* 50 runners completed the series.

Women 1, Karrissa Hawitt (Warrington AC) total points three; 2, Tanya Taylor (Stamford Harriers) seven; 3, Tess Walker (Manchester Uni) eight; 4, Jean Shotter (Holmfirth) 15; 5, Jackie Newton (Stockport Harriers) 16; 6, Ellen Patrick (Warrington AC) 19. **Local:** 9, Lynne McAvoy (IoM Veterans AC) 31. * 23 runners completed the series.

Final overall team positions **Men 1**, Altrincham total four points; 2, Manchester University A five; 3, Manx Harriers A nine; 4, Leeds University Doss A 12; 5, Cheltenham 19; 6, Manchester University B 19; 7, Leeds University Doss B 22; 8, Leeds University Doss C 29. **Women 1**, Leeds University Doss A total four points; 2, Manchester University Alehouse seven; 3, Cheltenham 10; 4, Leeds University Doss B 13.

Lee and Karrissa stride to Easter Festival victories

Festival winner Lee Hurst



LEE Hurst of Altrincham & District AC and Karrissa Hawitt of Warrington AC won the men's and women's titles in the Manx Harriers-organised Easter Athletics Festival over the weekend, writes John Watterson.

Hawitt won all three women's events, but while Hurst took the honours in the round-the-houses road race on Good Friday and the Peel hill event the following afternoon he lost out on a hat-trick when he was narrowly pipped to the best time in the men's 5km road relay on Sunday by Richard Ward of Manchester University.

The leading local overall was Manx Harriers' Gianni Epifani in eighth place, while Lynne McAvooy of the Isle of Man Veteran Athletes' Club was the only local woman to complete all three events.

Indeed Hurst made a very steady start to the three-day Festival and was outgunned in the early stages of Friday evening's 5.3-mile event around the streets of Douglas and Onchan by the Manchester Uni pairing of Ward and Owen Green.

It was only in the latter stages, after making a storming ascent of Summerhill, that Hurst shot into the reckoning and he fair sprinted the final half-mile along Glencrutchery Road to cross the finish line in front of the TT Grandstand in a winning time of 27 minutes 19 seconds.

Runner-up, some 12s behind, was Tim Crossland of Leeds University, followed by David Norman of Altrincham and the Manchester duo of Green and Ward.

Paul Clarke was the best of the locals in

eighth spot with a time of 28.57, some 11s up on team-mate Epifani, with Andy Fox the first veteran in 11th.

Karrissa Hawitt was unofficially placed 29th out of a total field of 113 finishers in 32.25 - over two minutes clear of her nearest rival in the women's class, Tanya Taylor of Stamford Harriers. Lynne McAvooy was the best of the locals, just beating fellow Veterans AC runner Maggie Watkins into ninth place.

Both Hurst and Hawitt continued to stamp their authorities on the Festival with further successes the following afternoon in Peel.

Hurst led the men's event throughout to clock a very rapid 21m 52s for the short but tough event, including a double ascent to Corrin's Folly, returning to the finish outside the House of Manannan some 26s ahead of Owen Green with Tim Crossland a close third.

Epifani was the best of the locals in eighth place, with Fox just outdoing Northern AC's Richard Jamieson for 10th on the final descent.

Karrissa Hawitt was the comfortable winner of the women's race over a slightly shorter distance (with just the one ascent to the peak), beating Tess Walker by 1m 37s - the latter swapping places with Tanya Taylor from the previous night.

Recent half-marathon winner Diane Lawrence was the first of the locals in sixth place, having led the initial charge up the hill.

With the men's race on the Sunday based around a 4x5km relay it was difficult to assess which runner had actually produced the quickest time until the final results were compiled some while later, but in the event it was Richard Ward of Manchester University A who produced a rapid-fire time of 15m 13s for two laps of a one-and-a-half mile loop of Groves Road, Pulrose Bridge and Peel Road to deny Lee Hurst a full-house of wins by just



(Above) Karrissa Hawitt scored a clean-sweep of three wins in the women's section of the Easter Athletics Festival (John Maddrell 4034127-1)

(Left) Richard Jamieson leads Andy Fox on the descent of Peel Hill. Fox outran him in the end to finish 10th and eventually retain the overall veteran's title (JW)

three seconds.

Tim Crossland did just enough to finish runner-up overall with the third quickest time of the race.

Quickest local was schoolboy Keith Gerrard in his only outing of the weekend in a most impressive eighth quickest 16.06, helping Manx Harriers A to third in the team relay behind Manchester Uni and Altrincham AC



Karrissa Master Stories

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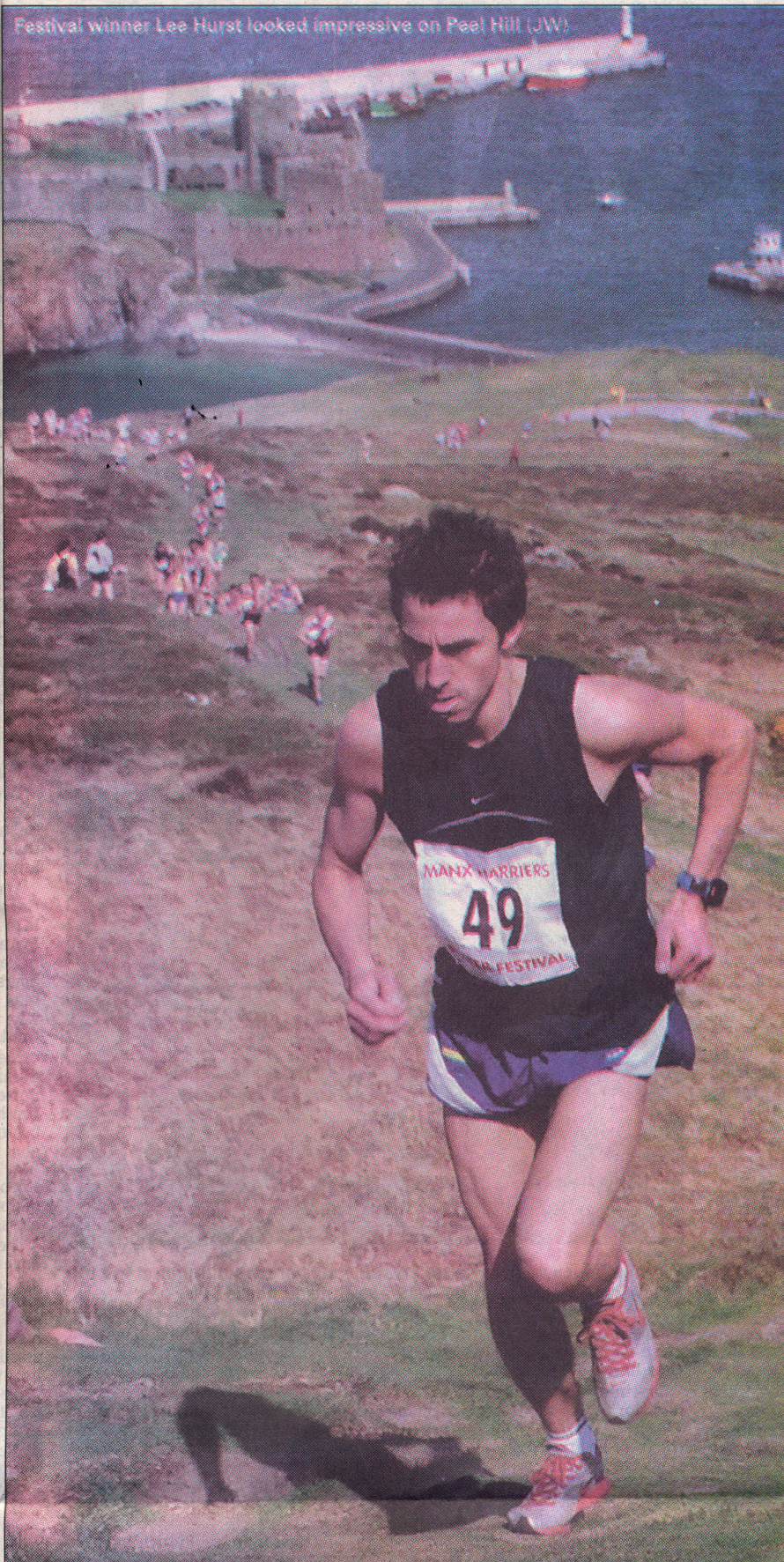
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Festival winner Lee Hurst looked impressive on Peel Hill (JW)

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(Left) Richard Jamieson leads Andy Fox on the descent of Peel Hill. Fox outran him in the end to finish 10th and eventually retain the overall veteran's title (JW)

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Football fixtures

Monday, April 21	
Kick-off 2.30pm	
At the Bowl	
Bank of Bermuda FA Cup final	
Ayre v St George's	
Tuesday, April 22	
Kick-off 6.15pm	
Marsh Division Two	
Doug & Dist v Ramsey	
Police v Onchan	
Foxdale v St John's	
Gymns v U'Mills	
OSA Combination One	
Peel v Marown	
St Mary's v Old Boys	
Marsh Combination Two	
U'Mills v Onchan	
Wednesday, April 23	
Kick-off 6pm	
Manxnet Hospital Cup	
Prelim round replay	
St Mary's v Laxey	
Kick-off 6.15pm	
OSA Division One	
Castletown v Marown	
Colby v Pulrose	
OSA Combination One	
Pulrose v Colby	
HSBC Women's League	
Division Two	
Peel v Gymns	
Thursday, April 24	
Kick-off 6.15pm	
Kirby Estates Cowell Cup	
Group A	
Old Boys v Ramsey	
Peel v Braddan	
U'Mills v Castletown	
Group B	
Onchan v St George's	
Colby v Ayre	
Laxey v Rushen	
Saturday, April 26	
Kick-off 2pm	
IoM Bank Junior Cup	
Prelim round replay	
D'Royal v Colby	
Castletown v St John's	
Kick-off 2.30pm	
IoM Bank Junior Cup	
First Round	
U'Mills v Pulrose	
Police v Laxey	
Braddan v St George's	
Ramsey v Old Boys	
Peel v Rushen	
Gymns v Marown	
St Mary's v Corinthians	
Marsh Division Two	
Jurby v RYCOB	
Marsh Combination Two	
Onchan v Michael	
Malew v Doug & Dist	
Sunday, April 27	
Kick-off 10.30am	
Cu-Plas Callow	
14/16 Division A	
Old Boys v Rushen	
St George's v Peel	
Corinthians v Onchan	
14/16 Division B	
Ramsey v Castletown	
Kick-off 12.30pm	
HSBC Women's League	
Division One	
U'Mills v D'Royal	
Kick-off 2.30pm	
At the Bowl	
Women's FA Cup final	
Peel v Rushen	
Kick-off 5.30pm	
Manxnet Hospital Cup	
Prelim round replay	
Colby v Ayre	
Kick-off 6pm	
Manxnet Hospital Cup	
First round	
Ramsey v Gymns	
Michael v Peel	
St John's v Corinthians	
Malew v Rushen	
D'Royal v Braddan	
U'Mills v Ronaldsway	
Laxey or St Mary's	
v St George's	
Monday, April 28	
Kick-off 6.15pm	