

January 8th 2009

ALL 5 WRESTLING ACADEMIES ARE BACK IN ACTION AFTER THE CHRISTMAS BREAK
(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

All five wrestling academies are back in action after a Christmas break.



One young man was especially keen to get back in action. Craig Naylor, who lives in Wasdale and studies at Newton Rigg, attended his original academy, Waberthwaite on Tuesday evening to limber up for the New Year. On Wednesday he travelled by train from his home area to Carlisle Wrestling Club, which he attends regularly when in residence at the Penrith campus. After a good training session the Carlisle coach, Andrew Carlile, took him to the station for the long journey back to West Cumberland where his long-suffering mother would receive a midnight call to collect him from the station and return him into the high hills of home.

On Thursday his keenness continues for he is due to coach a wrestling session after school at the West Lakes Academy, Egremont, where boy champion Paul Murray is a pupil. Craig Naylor is reaping the rewards for his dedication, for he won the prestigious best-wrestler award at the Academy Shield Competition and has recently gained the CWWA Basic Coaching Certificate. His ambitions do not stop there for he has put himself forward for the 62kg spot in the English team for the European Championships in Glasgow in April, and hopes to attend a training camp in Brittany in February.

David Parsons, the Milnthorpe Academy coach, is looking forward to the Breton Backhold Championships on February 26th. His small academy has taken wrestlers regularly across the Channel and three of his wrestlers hope to travel. He is bringing out a newsletter to encourage his wrestlers and to increase numbers at the younger end. An ideal number for him is about a dozen a session, and he needs some new wrestlers at the younger and lighter end.

Kendal Academy, which meets every Friday in the South Lakes Leisure Centre, is having an exceptionally good year for young wrestlers, but that has only stirred John Wilson, the club coach to do even better next winter. Nearly thirty youngsters turn out for the two-hour training session, but they are all under the age of sixteen. He hopes to change the night to midweek so that wrestling is no longer competing with a young man's social life. The two hours would then be divided into two sessions: the first hour would be for the younger end, and the second hour for bigger lads and men.

Although he does most of the coaching, he receives valuable support from Joseph Robson and Chris Bland on the mats and from Peter and Nora Hayhurst for organisation. In the coming weeks he will be coaching two Young Farmers Clubs at a shared venue to bring them up to scratch for the YFC Field Day in the Summer

In Northumberland, Rothbury Academy is maintaining its excellent momentum each Wednesday evening at the Middle School despite their coach, Darren Whitfield, suffering from niggling injury, and the other coach, Jason Davidson, commuting nearly two hundred miles each day to work, so that he is usually late and exhausted when he arrives for the weekly training session. The Rothbury lads are keen to repeat their trip to the Breton Backhold Championships, and a travel grant, secured from Lottery funding should help them on their way.

Carlisle Wrestling Club did itself and its coaches proud in winning the Academy Shield in great style last November, and the youngsters were there this week putting in the effort with their three coaches, Andrew Carlile, Alan Jones and Tom Harrington. Next week brings competition rather than training when the second Points Night is held for juniors.

The Wednesday training was briefly halted to pay tribute to George Wall who was buried that day. He had been a stalwart of the club for many years bringing his son Lee along as a spelk of a lad to his beloved hound-trails and wrestling, and supporting him year by year until he was a champion wrestler and crowd-pleaser. Until his first stroke, he was always there to organise presentation evenings for the club and hospitality for foreign wrestlers.

Dates:

Wednesday, 14th January, Currock House Gym, Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night

Wednesday, 21st January, Senior Points Night

January 18th 2009

ADAPTATION OF 'MAID OF BUTTERMERE' AT KESWICK'S THEATRE BY THE LAKE

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

Keswick's Theatre by the Lake will stage an adaptation of Lord Melvyn Bragg's novel 'Maid of Buttermere' in March and April, and a call has gone out for a young man with an interest in Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling. Thirty-eight locals aged 10 to 70 have already been recruited as extras in the cast, but there is a shortage of young men in the 18 to 25 year group, contemporaries of the heroine, Mary Robinson. No indication was given of how the wrestler would be used, or why at least two are not required, for it is difficult to wrestle on your own.

An earlier adaptation of a Bragg novel, 'The Hired Man' was also staged at the Theatre by the Lake, and I was asked to choreograph some wrestling for the two main protagonists. The task was particularly interesting as both actors suffered from bad backs even before the wrestling started. Any young men who would like to audition should contact Lyn Clarke at the theatre on 017687 72282.

Carlisle Wrestling Club's Junior Points Night at Currock house was fairly dramatic, with literally a nasty twist at the end. Several wrestlers were in contention for the old battered and tarnished trophy awarded to the wrestler judged to have given the best performance. The winner was Joe Coates of Gilsland who is a natural wrestler, able to hipe and twist. Not unexpectedly, he won the Under 12 Years for he is big, but not huge for his age. His best moment was when he hanked Mark Fisher to win a close bout in the Under 15 Years. He reached the final, but could make nothing of the champion at that age, Joe Thompson.

Joe then went on to win the Under 18s, too, buttocking the main man, Jack Ewart, in the semi final. Sadly, in some more relaxed bouts after the competition was over, Joe injured his ankle so badly that an ambulance was called.

Another winner, was Katy Brown, who took the Girls first prize. She is becoming a good wrestler, able to match the lads in training, so I was delighted to hear that she wants to take part in the Women's European Championships in East Kilbride in April. Never before have we had a female wrestler in the female championships. Is there anyone else who wants to join her?

Next week's wrestling at Currock House should have an interesting edge as there may be a contingent of Northumbrians taking part before attending a meeting about the European Championships. Anyone wishing to take part should make an effort to attend.

Another winner was Craig Naylor who again dominated the 10 stones. In the first round he took the fall of the night when he outside-hipped Paul Murray and then finished him with a cross-buttock. Then he neatly kicked out Jack Brown's hank, before tackling his big sister, Katy, in the final. He hopes to go international with his skills by attending the training week in Brittany in February. Our wrestlers are also keen to take part in the Breton Backhold Championships on the 22 nd February. Ten from Rothbury, six from Milnthorpe, and a growing number from Carlisle are likely to participate.

Last week, Craig Naylor was coaching wrestling at the Egremont Academy. Soon they may not be the only school actively promoting wrestling, for Antony Lewins, a PE teacher at William Howard School, Brampton, was an interested spectator at the Points Night. He has arranged with Alan Jones to promote wrestling as an after school activity after the half-term holiday

Results:

Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night

7st 1, M Gibson; 2, T Gibson.

8 ½ st 1, P Murray; 2, J Brown; 3, J Coates; 4, D Gibson.

10st 1, C Naylor; 2, K Brown; 3, T Gibson; 4, J Brown.

Girls 1, K Brown; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson.

Under 12 Years 1, J Coates; 2, M Gibson; 3, P Potts; 4, T Gibson.

Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Coates; 3, P Potts; 4, B Wilde.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, M Fisher; 3, J Ewart; 4, P Murray.

Date:

Wednesday, 21 st January 8.45pm Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points Night followed by meeting for wrestlers wishing to participate in the European Championships.

January 22nd 2009

CARLISLE WRESTLING CLUB AND A POINTS NIGHT WITH A DIFFERENCE

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Carlisle Wrestling Club had a Points Night with a difference this week, when a mini-bus load of wrestlers travelled over from Rothbury Academy in Northumberland to compete. They are a big and beefy lot the Northumbrians so all except Jacob Wragg had to wait for the All Weights before they could take hold.



Wragg is a neat and clever wrestler, but he was up against it in the 11½ stones. Carlisle had three champions in the group. One of the best bouts of the night was when Wragg and Craig Naylor went hammer and tongs in a sustained bout before Naylor put in the last twist.

Best of all, though was 11st Champion Richard Dixon who was in great form. A spectacular buttock flattened Andrew Carlile, his main opposition in the round-robin event, where each wrestler meets every other wrestler in the group. In the 13 stones Dixon continued his immaculate progress, felling all the others, John Harrington included.

The All Weights round-robin was one of the biggest I have organised at the club since the seventies. With three wrestlers weighing in at over 16 stones, it was no place for the faint-hearted. Jack Ewart of Westward thrived in the intense atmosphere, as he took exciting falls against the likes of John Harrington, Nathan Birdsall, and James Oliver as well as keeping the lightweights in place. In the end, he and Joe Harrington of Kirkbampton were equal with seven falls to their names, so had to wrestle off for Second place.

So, who won? Rothbury coach, Jason Davidson, wrestled cannily throughout, taking his time, but striking hard when he saw a chance. By far the oldest wrestler in the field, he went through the night unbeaten.

The Rothbury contingent had an extra reason to be in Carlisle, for when the action finished, the mats were cleared and replaced by a circle of chairs, for a meeting about the European Championships of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling. As a result of that meeting, Darren Whitfield and Jason Davidson will be coaching the Rothbury lads in the Gouren style, as will Andrew Carlile and Alan Jones at the Carlisle club. Every fortnight, on a Sunday, all the wrestlers will join together for a plenary training session. The first of these will be at Rothbury at 2pm on Sunday 8th February. Anyone wishing to take part will be welcome. Transport will be shared from Carlisle.

A stalwart of wrestling in West Cumbria has died aged 84 years. David Smith was one of those who both wrestled and organised. In the old academy days he was secretary for the Gosforth Academy, and 'for donkey's years' he has been secretary of Wasdale Head Show.

Results:

Carlisle Wrestling Club Points Night

11½st 1, R Dixon ; 2, A Carlile; 3, C Naylor; 4, J Wragg.

13st 1, R Dixon ; 2, John Harrington; 3, A Carlile; 4, C Naylor.

All Weights 1, J Davidson; 2, Joe Harrington; 3, A Ord; 4, N Birdsall

January 28th 2009

100 YEARS AGO, WRESTLERS CAME FROM TWO MAIN GROUPS: PITMEN AND FARM WORKERS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

A hundred years ago, wrestlers came from two main groups: pitmen and farm workers. The colliers of West Cumberland, Weardale in County Durham, and the Northumberland coalfield were as hard as the rock they hewed, with powerful shoulders from the use of pick and shovel in confined spaces. The farm workers were also well exercised in their daily work, handling sheep and using hayfork, muck-hack and shovel on a regular basis.



The end of the deep mines meant the end of the miners, so obviously that ready supply of wrestling talent has been long defunct. Fortunately, the rural connection continues, and that is made clear each year, when both the Northern and Southern Federations of Young Farmers' Clubs in Cumbria have wrestling as an important section of their Field Days.

At each Field Day, recognised wrestlers who have spent years acquiring their skills usually dominate the competitions, but there is always a cohort of novice wrestlers, who push them all the way, and sometimes produce shock results.



The wrestling academies at Carlisle and Kendal have had wrestling sessions with Young Farmers' Clubs in the past weeks: last Friday Raughtonhead YFC were put through their paces in the gym at Currock House by the Carlisle coaches, Tom Harrington and Alan Jones. In the south of the county John Wilson, the Kendal coach, took the academy's wrestling mats to Grayrigg village hall for a training session for Grayrigg YFC and Crook YFC. He said that there were some right handy young men and they had a night of non-stop wrestling.

These sessions have several benefits. They provide a YFC with a lively activity night; help the club to pick out the wrestling talent for the Field Day competitions; and hone the wrestling skills of the participants. From the academies' perspective, such sessions are ideal for finding new wrestling talent and gaining new members.

Unknown fully-fledged wrestlers no longer stream down from the Pennines and Lakeland valleys to compete at the likes of Grasmere. The future health of our local wrestling lies in the hands of our wrestling academies, and a symbiotic link with Young Farmers Clubs is no bad thing.

Date:

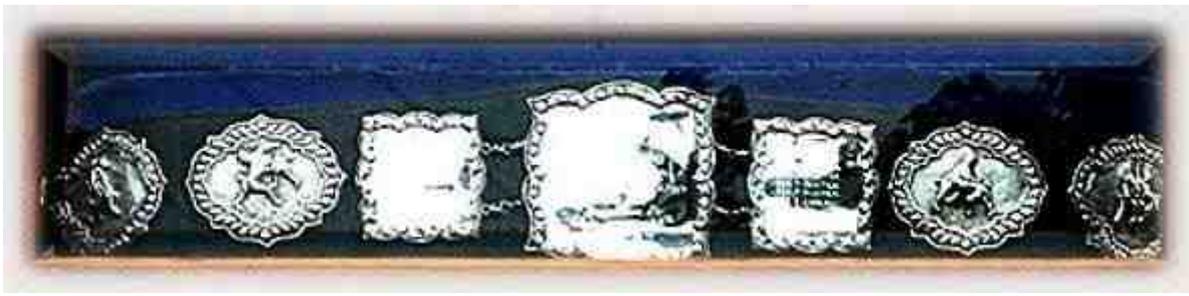
Wednesday, 11th February Carlisle Wrestling Club Third Junior Points Night.

February 4th 2009

SUCCESS FOR THE CARLISLE WRESTLING CLUB TEAM AT THE ACADEMY SHIELD

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

The success of the Carlisle Wrestling Club team at the Academy Shield was a testament to the coaching skills of the three Carlisle coaches, who each come from a different generation of wrestlers: Tom Harrington MBE in his sixties, Alan Jones in his Forties, and the baby and current 10½ st Champion, Andrew Carlile, still in his twenties. Each, individually, is an excellent coach of the techniques and subtleties of the local wrestling style, and they work so well and naturally together.



Of the three, Alan Jones is the one who takes on most of the responsibilities, collecting subs, organising special nights for Young Farmers, locking up after the wrestlers leave. He actively keeps fit at classes in Brampton, and even aged forty-seven he still competes at a few summer events. In 2007 he rolled back the years to win the 14th Championship at Allendale Show, his thirty-eighth championship in a career spanning thirty years. Obviously, he has gained a lot out of wrestling, and was single-minded and self-focused in his pursuit of wrestling success. Now he is repaying that debt in a big way.

He has taken on his shoulders four different ways of supporting the sport he loves: each Wednesday he will continue to coach wrestlers at the Carlisle Wrestling Club sessions in the Gym at Currock House; he will be one of the main coaches for wrestlers preparing for the IFCW European Championships at Sunday sessions; on an ad hoc basis he will train Young Farmers to compete in their Field Day; and from Tuesday 24th February, he will be coaching young wrestlers each week at 7pm at William Howard School.

Such dedication and flair must be commended and supported. If anyone could offer help at the William Howard sessions each Tuesday, Alan would be pleased, not to say relieved.

The first training session for the **European Championships** will take place on Sunday at Currock House. Originally, the Carlisle wrestlers were going to travel over to Rothbury, the Northumbrian town where floods, ice, gas and electricity cuts are regarded as normal life, but the school was unavailable. Instead, Andrew Carlile, Alan Jones, a crash mat and a pile of Gouren jackets await from 2pm to 4pm in the Currock House Gym.

Other Dates:

Wednesday, 11th February 7.45pm Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night in the Gym, Currock House.

Wednesday, 18th February, 9pm Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points, Currock House.

February 19th 2009

TI AR GOUREN, THE HOUSE OF WRESTLING, BRITTANY, FRANCE

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



Two of our young wrestlers are in the midst of an intensive international course of traditional wrestling at Ti ar Gouren, The House of Wrestling, hidden in the rural heart of Brittany. I know this because, as I type this, cup of coffee at hand, I can see them and twenty-five other wrestlers thrashing around on the mats at the other side of the reception area. The wrestlers are Craig Naylor of Wasdale and James Oliver of Jedburgh. Craig is currently on a sports course at Newton Rigg, Penrith. Amongst all the footballers and rugby players he is unique as the only student with Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling as his major sport. Each Wednesday during term time, he catches the train to Carlisle to attend the wrestling club there, to take on board the coaching wisdom of the three champion coaches, Andrew Carlile, Tom Harrington and Alan Jones.

Already, he has gained his Basic Coaching Certificate, and he has ambitions to take his career in wrestling much further, both in the ring and on the training mats.



James Oliver is bilingual: he speaks Scots with a Northumbrian accent, which reflects his first wrestling experience training at Rothbury Academy before moving over the Carter Bar to a farm near Jedburgh. Despite being miles from any wrestling club he shows his keenness and commitment by travelling widely to events during the Summer season and in Winter turns up at both Rothbury and Carlisle for training. He is a big lad and uses his physique in the winter when he is a forward for Jed Forest Rugby Club. Aged eighteen he earns his living as a farm-worker.

Ti ar Gouren is a purpose-built sports hall for Breton wrestling. Situated in the middle of Brittany Peninsular it is near nowhere, but accessible from all areas of the region. In the hall, wrestling mats are permanently in place. A newly built accommodation block provides beds for around thirty participants. An office serves as a permanent administration centre for Gouren in addition to their main office at Landerneau. If only we had the same in Cumbria , our wrestling would be well served.

The international course has a firm base of Gouren wrestling each morning. The rest of the time is divided between other traditional wrestling styles, visits, and discussion sessions. The course was open to all members of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling, but in the end the only contingents to add to the Bretons are from England , Scotland and Tunisia .

The end of the course coincides with the Breton Backhold Championships at Guipavas near Brest on Saturday, where a large contingent of our wrestlers, from Rothbury, Carlisle , Kendal and Milnthorpe will be competing.

February 25th 2009

BRITTANY BACKHOLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AT GUIPAVAS, FRANCE

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



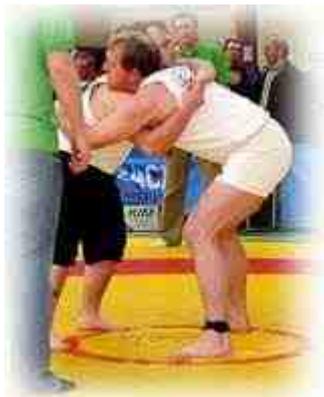
Our two wrestlers who spent a week in a training camp in Central Brittany last week, were joined by twenty other wrestlers from the North of England who travelled to take part in the Brittany Backhold Championships at Guipavas,



near Brest . They joined wrestlers from Cantabria in Spain, Friesland in the Netherlands, Scotland and Tunisia, as well as a host of wrestlers from all over Brittany to make a total of 138 competitors. The numbers were so great, that even with three mats in action simultaneously, the wrestling went on so long that the open competitions which usually conclude the programme were cancelled.

No fewer than ten of our wrestlers came home with championship medals. Our wrestlers are used to wrestling a wide range of weights and ages of wrestlers, but the Breton system with many age and weight categories mean that all bouts are well matched. This, of course, is a desirable, but often the wrestlers had few opponents. The most spectacular instance of this was when James

Hayhurst was the only wrestler in his section. He had travelled a long way to have a walkover, so the organisers matched him with a good Breton lad from an older age group. Hayhurst lost the first fall but woke up to wrestle at his best, taking three tightly fought bouts in row.



The biggest and best performance came from a Northumbrian wrestler who won the All Weights Championship in 1992, but has wrestled only rarely in the last ten years. Duncan Crazy Horse Hutton returned to international recognition when he won the biggest and heaviest group of all, the Senior Open Weight. With ten wrestlers in contention, there



were two pools of five where everyone wrestled everyone else, best of five falls. The top two from each pool then went forward to the cross-ties, or semi-final, at which point Jason Davidson was eliminated by John Hirsch of Dundee with the leg-up buttock.

This meant that Hirsch and Hutton met in the final where Hutton prevailed mainly with the back-heel. At the repas, the big meal after the event, Duncan Hutton was forced to stand in the midst of all the tables and people, for it was his fortieth birthday, while Happy Birthday or its equivalent was sung in English, Breton, French, Friesian, Spanish, and Tunisian.

In the Under 21 Open Weight, four of our wrestlers took all the places, with Andrew Ord felling Ross Wilkinson in the final. Another all English final was in the open weight Under 15 Years, when Jimmy Hall of Milnthorpe Academy felled William Hayhurst.

Meanwhile, at home, the new wrestling class at William Howard School , Brampton , got off to a good start with some promising performances from the teenagers who came to sample our local traditional wrestling. The class meets each Tuesday from 7 to 8pm, with Alan Jones as coach.

Results:

Brittany Backhold Championships

Girl winners: 56kg, C Hodgson; 62kg, H Hodgson.

Male Winners: Under 13 Years 52+kg, J Hayhurst. Under 15 Years 56kg, B Brocklebank. 68+kg, J Hall. Under 17 Years 54kg, P Murray . 74kg, D Crane. 74+kg, J Hale. Under 21 Years, 81+kg, A Ord. Seniors: 81kg F Hirsch. 90+kg, D Hutton.

Carlisle Wrestling Club Points Night

11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, A Carlile.

13st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon ; 3, A Carlile.

All Weights 1, R Dixon ; 2, A Carlile; 3, John Harrington; 4, J Ewart.

March 6th 2009

WITH LIGHTER NIGHTS, SOMETHING STIRS IN THE WORLD OF CWWA WRESTLING
(**CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page**)

The lighter nights mean that things are stirring in the world of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling. The indoor season at Carlisle Wrestling Club is reaching its climax with Junior and Senior Points Nights in the next fortnight. Team selection for the

European Championships of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling is imminent. And next Friday, 13th March is the Annual General Meeting of the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association

Already the Carlisle wrestlers have had three opportunities since November to amass points towards the annual trophies, and some categories remain on a knife-edge. The system rewards skill, but persistence and consistency are important factors too. Closest of all is the 8½ stones where both Paul Murray and Jack Brown are struggling with the weight and have gained ten points each. All the Junior sections will be settled on Wednesday 11th March, and the Senior Points will follow a week later.

The team for the International will mainly be selected from the wrestlers from two academies, Rothbury and Carlisle, with the addition of Joe Robson from Kendal who has also been attending the training sessions. An unexpected extra is the availability of David Atkinson who is an experienced international, but has been away from the sport for some time, living as he does in the Bristol area. Another imponderable is whether Richard Fox will wish to be considered for selection. He too, has been an absentee over the winter months, shearing sheep in New Zealand, but has returned this week. In general the Carlisle wrestlers are strong at the lighter end of the categories, whilst the Rothbury wrestlers, in general, are hefty and lofty. Carlisle coach Alan Jones continues to hammer home the message that a high level of fitness is essential for all members of the team whatever their height or weight.

The Annual General Meeting gathers together representatives of affiliated events and academies from throughout the North as well as personal members. Most items on the agenda are routine, but one item for discussion is prompted by a strange bout last year when a wrestler, whilst still retaining hold, reached and grabbed hold of his opponent below the thighs, to fell him with a sort of rugby tackle, twice.

There will also be a vote on a proposal that each affiliated club be allowed to put forward a representative as a member of the Governing Board and that representative can be an active member. The motive behind this proposal is to involve younger people in the running of our traditional sport.



Meanwhile, a reminder of our heritage arrived by email from Guy Jaouen, a Breton friend who stayed with me last week. In his possession is a Carlisle wrestling belt, red leather with gold lettering, dated 1855. In that year the All Weight wrestling at the old Carlisle Race Course at the Swifts attracted 130 wrestlers *'including many of the best men of the day'*. The final was contested between Thomas Longmire and a wrestler returned from retirement,

William Robley. *'Up to that time he had not deemed it necessary to strip into wrestling costume, but impressed with the magnitude of the work before him he now appeared in tights, which displayed to great advantage his brawny and well knit frame. His efforts went unrewarded, as he was 'sent reeling beneath the powerful back-heel of his antagonist.'*

Dates:

Wednesday, 11th March at 7.45pm, Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night

Wednesday, 18th March, Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points Night.

March 11th 2009

CARLISLE WRESTLING CLUB'S FINAL JUNIOR POINTS NIGHT

(**CLICK** on thumbnail to see a larger picture - **CLICK** anywhere **EXCEPT** on the larger image to return to this page)

Carlisle Wrestling Club's final Junior Points Night resolved a series of close run races for the much-prized individual trophies. We even had two wrestlers in serious contention even though hors de combat through injury. Joe Thompson had dominated the Under 15 Years until he broke his ankle. In the end Jack Brown overtook his total by a single point to put his name on the trophy.

The other injured wrestler fared better. Joe Coates of Gilsland had won three Under 12 Years categories with panache, but was absent on the last night with a damaged hand. Philip Potts' excellent win on the last night brought him within a point of Coates, but that was not enough to change the destiny of the trophy.

The converse happened in the girls' section, for Katie Brown was the dominant wrestler this year, but she missed one November session and that meant that Dawn Gibson won the trophy by a single point.



Closest of all was the 8½ stones where two wrestlers, Paul Murray and Jack Brown, were on ten points. The tension lasted the whole way for the two of them found themselves pitted against each other in the final. Murray scored first as he fought to gain hold. Brown resisted and then was twisted sharply back over. The second hold followed the same pattern but Murray pushed too hard for hold and Brown stepped right across him and cross-buttocked. In the decider the same battle for hold took place, but this time Murray repeated the ploy which won the first fall and changed direction to twist Brown back over once more.



Jack Brown may have lost that skirmish, but later he fought back in the 10 stones and the Under 15 Years to be awarded the trophy for the best performance of the night

Early in the proceedings, the Miller brothers, Kieron and David, added their usual touch of class in the lighter weights. Throughout the various weights and ages, they were always there, poised to catch out the unwary with their silky skills. In the end they both ended up with trophies for the winter season.

Last and heaviest was Jack Ewart of Westward. He has been a regular at the club for many years, and has blossomed lately with a range of effective chips. His win on the night ensured that the Under 18 Years trophy was securely his.

Joe Thompson would have been a contender in two of the categories, but a broken ankle put paid to that. Thus it was great to see him last week walking around at the club with his plaster removed. We wish him well.



On Sunday at Carlisle Racecourse you can meet the champions of various sports. Our own Tom Harrington MBE will be there to represent our sport. He has an amazing record of achievement, but he has also given so much back as coach and referee.

Results:

Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night

6st 1, K Miller; 2, H Stoddart; 3, J Gibson.

7st 1, D Miller; 2, O Burbury; 3, K Miller; 4, M Gibson.

8½ st 1, P Murray ; 2, J Brown; 3, D Miller; 4, K Miller.

10st 1, J Brown; 2, P Murray ; 3, K Miller; 4, C Naylor.

Girls 1, K Brown; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson.

March 19th 2009

NEW OFFICIALS APPOINTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CWWA

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

After its Annual General Meeting the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association has a new President (Alan Coulthard) a new Life Member (Jimmy Pringle) and a new Governing Board Member (Vernon Cummings). Alan Coulthard had a stellar wrestling career winning championships over a decade, starting with the 12 stones in 1957 and culminating with the All Weights in 1966. Really, though he was a lightweight, holding titles at 10 ½ and 11st in the late fifties, wrestling from Laversadale near Irthington. As a Board member he was part of the team which formulated the coaching system and raised funds to organise international events for the Wrestling Association. Jimmy Pringle almost single-handedly kept wrestling more than afloat in Northumberland in the lean years when there was no academy to cultivate new wrestlers. He was a staunch and forthright member of the Governing Board for many years, and richly deserves the honour bestowed. Now that Rothbury has a thriving academy, it is appropriate that Vernon Cummings was elected to the Governing Board to keep the wrestling flag flying in Northumberland. Potentially, five new Governing Board Members were also enabled by the meeting, which allows each academy to be represented on the committee. This means that active wrestlers could play a full part in the deliberations of the Governing Board of the CWWA.



Carlisle Wrestling Club's final Points Night of the winter season welcomed back Richard Fox after months away in New Zealand . He has obviously eaten well for he did not even try to weigh in at 13 stones. Instead, he came out fresh and powerful in the All Weights. He lost a fall to Joseph Robson in the round-robin , but John Harrington took a fall out of Robson, and, in turn, Richard Fox felled Harrington, so three wrestlers ended up in a wrestle-off. Fox then raised his game and felled the other two to win on the night.

One wrestler stood head and shoulders above the rest over the four Points Nights. Richard Dixon is tall and powerful, yet still weighs in at 11st. His winter form on the mats has been a continuation of his rise and rise through the wrestling ranks in the past year. He went home with all three Senior Trophies for most points gained. Any fan of pie and peas suppers, village halls and wrestling needs to be at Waberthwaite on Saturday 28 th March for their Open Night.

Results:

Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points Night

11½ st 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon ; 3, C Naylor; 4, W Storey.

13st 1, R Dixon ; 2, John Harrington; 3, A Carlile; 4, C Naylor.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, J Robson; 3, John Harrington; 4, R Dixon

Points Trophy Winners 2008-9

11½ st, R Dixon ; 13st, R Dixon ; All Weights, R Dixon .

Date:

Saturday, 28th March, Waberthwaite Academy Open Night 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

March 25th 2009

ADAPTATION OF 'THE MAID OF BUTTERMERE' PUTS WRESTLING CENTRE STAGE IN KESWICK

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Wrestling is centre stage every night in Keswick these days, literally. Melvyn Bragg's novel 'The Maid of Buttermere' adapted for the stage by Lisa Evans, has a scene of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling. I have been aware of this for some time as enquiries were made for wrestlers to come forward as part of the amateur support for the professional core of actors. As far as I know, none did, but wrestling nevertheless is still part of the action.

Next contact, by telephone then email, came from Kate Waters, also known as 'Kombat Kate', who had the task of choreographing the action. She has a background of Judo, but was faced with the problem of finding the right touch in bringing our traditional wrestling to its home area: *'I have managed to find out about the hold & the rules, but I am struggling to find any live footage, which will obviously help me. Do you have anything I may have a look at before I come up to Keswick at the end of this month? As I explained on the phone, I want to respect the sport & be as authentic as possible, but at the same time I have to make it look theatrical & tell the story. I also have to make it safe, so the actors feel comfortable performing it 8 times a week.'*

The wrestling rules are notoriously lacking in describing what happens in a bout. They concentrate on providing the limits for the action: what not to do, rather than how to do it. Also lacking is some easily accessible film of wrestling, but I gave her some pointers. I also suggested that a night at Carlisle Wrestling Club would answer all her questions, but based in the South as she is, and with only limited time in Keswick, that was not possible. The need for authenticity is highlighted by a stage direction for the play. A wrestler is thrown *'and counted out'*. Not in Cumbria they're not.

Next contact came from the referee of the staged wrestling. Frank Cosgrove of Caldbeck, a keen amateur actor and producer, and a friend of mine, is one of the group of locals enlisted for the crowd scenes. *'Roger, what do I have to say?'* Nowadays, the answer is easy, for the referee has a form of words to say at the beginning of each bout: *'On your guard..Wrestle!'*, but what would be said in 1802? The best I could come up with was *'Tek hod'* at the beginning and then *'Both hold'* when the two wrestlers got to grips. So, what was the result of all this? Some friends who watch a lot of wrestling attended the first night and approved of the wrestling scene. My wife and I have tickets for next week, so I will be able to see for myself. I may even enjoy the rest of the play.

The European Championships at East Kilbride are only a month away and our team has yet to be finalised. The wrestlers are in heavy training, but circumstances have prevented any wrestle-offs to sort out final selection. For some slots there is only a single suitable wrestler, but for the weights above 74kg there are several options. Richard Fox and David Atkinson will be vying for the 81kg slot, and there will be competition at the heavier end between the likes of Joseph Robson, Jason Davidson, and some of the

young Rothbury wrestlers. The hopes of the team have been given a boost by the news that Richard Younger is in training and keen



to compete.

For some time we thought that there was no genuine big heavyweight at over 100kg (15st 10lb). Younger who plays rugby and fills a doorway in the Bigg Market, Newcastle at a week-end, is massively powerful and skilled with it.

Any wrestling event wishing to stage a championship in 2009, should have a request in writing to the CWWA Secretary, Alf Harrington in the next few days.

Dates:

Saturday, 28th March -Waberthwaite Academy Open Night 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Open Competitions:

April 2nd 2009

WEST CUMBRIANS' OPEN NIGHT

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



Waberthwaite Village Hall is an unlikely place for a rendezvous for all five wrestling academies. There are some long and winding roads to it from Carlisle, Kendal and Milnthorpe, but surely no-one in his right mind would drive all the way from Rothbury in North Northumberland...a cheerfully mad car-load of wrestlers duly arrived from Rothbury at Waberthwaite for the West Cumbrians' Open Night and took the event by storm. There were some big lads in that car, but it was the diminutive Joe Hale who set the pace with wins in the Under 11 Years and in the 7 stones. He may be small, but he has good power/weight ratio, twists off the chest at high speed and has the temperament of a veteran.

The much larger Nathan Birdsall took over for Rothbury in winning the Under 18 Years, felling the powerful, stocky figure of William Hayhurst twice off the right side. The even bigger, and older, Jason Davidson rounded the night off by winning the All Weights.

In the heavyweights Waberthwaite had a real contender in Joe Lowery, and he showed his talents in the first round when he outside-hipped Ross Wilkinson as he tried to inside-click. Wilkinson did better in the second fall with a back-heel, but Lowery clinched it by reverting to type and winning with a buttock. Jason Davidson met Lowery in the second round and the big Northumbrian felled him in straight falls with a right side buttock and a back-heel. This set up the final with lightweight Richard Dixon, who had been the class act in the lighter weights. The first fall of the final was won by skill, not weight advantage. Davidson got Dixon circling and resisting, when with perfect timing kicked both legs from under him and left him with no visible means of support, flat on the ground. The second fall was more conventional. Davidson gained a strong hold and then twisted back over. Richard Dixon may have lost out in the All Weights final, but he had already been successful in the previous two weights. He did lose a surprise fall to local novice Kevin Hartley who caught him napping with a right side cross buttock. Apart from that, Dixon was in a class of his own, buttocking and hiping and twisting with great confidence.

Keswick's Theatre by the Lake is staging Melvyn Bragg's "Maid of Buttermere" at present, and I was delighted to be in the audience last week, for the production is a tour de force. The wrestling scene involves the character, Richard Harrison of Caldbeck who eventually marries Mary after the tragic main action of the play. He has walked thirty miles to compete in the Buttermere wrestling against a local champion. The action was nicely tense and dramatic, capturing the atmosphere of such a bout. As far as the play was concerned it was perfect, but it was a shame they had the wrong hold: left arm under right, instead of t'other way on.

Results:

Waberthwaite Academy Open Night

Girls 1, S Woodend; 2, L Herron; 3, L Hartley.

Under 11 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, R Farrer; 3, S Wilson

Under 13 Years 1, D Fleming; 2, S Farrer; 3, W Atkinson

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, M Atkinson; 3, T Johnston.

Under 18 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, C Naylor.

7st 1, Joe Hale; 2, A Lashley; 3, S Wilson.

9st 1, A Woodend; 2, T Johnston; 3, B Thompson.

11st 1, R Dixon; 2, A Killip; 3, M Knowles.

13st 1, R Dixon; 2, K Hartley; 3, M Knowles

Date:

Sunday 5 th April 2pm - European Championship Selection bouts in the Gym at Currock House, Carlisle

April 8th 2009

THE GOVERNING BOARD HAD PLENTY OF APPLICATIONS FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS THIS YEAR.....

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)



Heavyweight Champion Russell Housby will have to travel into Scotland to defend his world title. Langholm Common Riding, celebrating 250 years, will host the CWWA All Weights Championship.

The Governing Board had plenty of applications for championships this year, a good sign of optimism after the soggy debacle of a summer we had last year. Although there is minimum prize-money set to safeguard the importance of the championships, there is never a bidding war, and the championships are allocated to large and small events equally. Langholm's 250 th anniversary was probably a factor in their successful application for the heavyweight championship.

Ambleside Sports, the day before Langholm is also celebrating an anniversary, a mere two centuries in their case, and they, too, have been awarded a championship, the 14 stones. This juxtaposition of events gives a peculiar problem to the likes of Joseph Robson, who has ambitions to take off a few pounds to regain the 14st Championship which he has held several times in the past. The worst possible scenario for him would be to starve himself for the 14 stones, only to be weighed out, and then left uncompetitive for the All Weights championship, the following day.

Another pairing of championships on successive days occurs in early September when the 15 stones will be wrestled indoors on the mats on a Friday evening at Rothbury Mart and, on the Saturday at Harbottle, just up the Coquet valley, Andrew Carlile will defend his 10 ½ st title. We can only hope that we will not need boating equipment to reach the event this year.

County Durham hosts one championship, the 13 stones at Stanhope Show in mid September. Stanhope struggles to attract wrestlers because it is distant from the wrestling hotspots, and held at a time of year immediately after the glut of events at the end of August and beginning of September when wrestlers can accumulate injuries and travel fatigue.. A championship is a good way to boost the numbers and encourage the Show to keep sponsoring wrestling.

The first championship event is imminent, for the Under 18 Years/10st event will be held on the first day of the new Grass Season, at the Hethersgill Vintage Society rally at Carlisle Airport . The Under 15 Years championship at Beetham, South of Kendal will need some nifty travel arrangements for some of the competitors and officials, for it coincides with Dalston Show, so an early start there will be essential.

CWWA World Championships 2009

All Weights Langholm Common Riding Friday, 31st July
15st Rothbury Mart Friday, 4th September
14st Ambleside Sports Thursday, 30th July
13st Stanhope Show Sunday, 13th September
12st Gosforth Show Saturday, 15th August
11st Forestburngate Sunday, 9th August
10 ½ st Harbottle Show and Sports Saturday, 5th September
Under 18 Years Westmorland County Show Thursday, 10th September
Under 18 Years/10st Hethersgill Vintage Rally Sunday, 3rd May
Under 15 Years Beetham Sports Saturday, 8th August
Under 15 Years/8st Skelton Show Saturday, 4th July

Dates:

24 th and 25 th April IFCW European Championships, East Kilbride

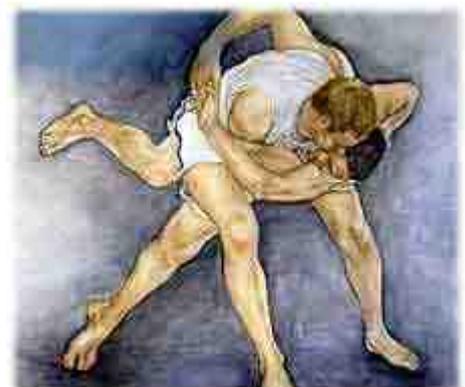
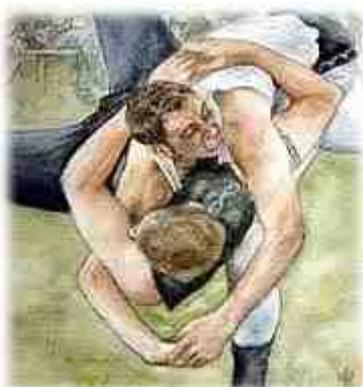
Saturday 25 th April, Milnthorpe Open Night 7.30pm at the **Milnthorpe Junior Football Pavilion**

April 23rd 2009

CUMBERLAND & WESTMORLAND WRESTLING ISN'T JUST A SPORT BUT PART OF LOCAL CULTURE

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling is not just a sport but part of the local culture. As a result, for more than two hundred years the local wrestling was not only reported on the sports pages of contemporary newspapers, but was also a source of inspiration for artists seeking to crystallise a moment of action. Nowadays, a pressed button on a digital camera freezes such a moment, but two hundred years ago Thomas Bewick engraved the end grain of a boxwood block to show two wrestlers competing on an open hillside. Woodblocks were also used in the local press and for frontispieces of wrestling books in the first half of the Nineteenth Century. Wrestling generated trophies, and the engraver's art was applied to silverware. Cartoonists for the London magazines captured the atmosphere at Grasmere Sports or the Easter London Wrestling at Islington. There have been figurines, oil and water-colour paintings and even a proggy mat.



(Images copyright Annabelle Smith)

That long tradition has been continued in some of the art of Annabelle Smith whose work is part of an Exhibition of Art and Sculpture at the Gin Case, Mawbray between Silloth and Allonby. Her three-dimensional work dramatically captures the power and tension of two wrestlers in holds, whilst her paintings pick up on the flow and balletic quality that good wrestlers can give to the tough business of throwing a reluctant opponent down to the ground. The exhibition is open from Saturday, 25 th April until Friday, June 5 th .

The CWWA team for the European Championships has been reduced to five, when Sam Wilkinson withdrew. This means that there is no hope of winning the team trophy but we have a very strong contingent of wrestlers who will be among the main contenders for individual medals in this toughest of competitions.

Anyone who wishes to support the team should be in the East Kilbride Sports Centre on Friday 24 th April. The first bouts will begin at 10.30am until lunch and then the official opening ceremony will take place at 2pm followed by five hours of wrestling. On Saturday 25 th April the wrestling begins at 12.30pm and continues for several hours.

Also on Saturday 25th April, Milnthorpe Open Night 7.30pm at the **Milnthorpe Junior Football Pavilion** U12/U15/U18/13/AW

May 1st 2009

IFCW EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN KILBRIDE

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

No traditional wrestling competition is tougher than the IFCW European Championships. That is what our wrestlers were told in training, and that is what they found in the Wright Sports Centre, East Kilbride. Nine regions with strong wrestling cultures gathered to compete in our backhold style and in Gouren, the jacket style from Brittany .

We were fortunate that four of our five wrestlers were competing in their own style on the first of the two days of action, but Craig Naylor was blown away by the opposition in the lightest group (64kg), Joseph Robson went near with his hipes, but



went out in the pools stage, and Richard Dixon was put through the mincer by Ewen Salaun.

Salaun, who regularly competes at Grasmere, hanked Dixon onto his head in the first hold and went two falls ahead in the best-of-five match. There were falls off the mat and dog falls, but Dixon kept his cool and inexorably recovered lost ground to win. That woke him up, and from there he won his way through the pool section and the cross-ties with hipes and buttocks to meet Robert Clark in the final. He doesn't like to be bossed, said coach Alan Jones, so that was the strategy, and it worked. Clark won one fall with his trusty hank, but otherwise Dixon gave him no chance to settle, neutralising his hank and bossing him with hipes and twists. On the following day Dixon performed well in the Gouren to win a bronze medal and prove himself the best wrestler in his group.



John Harrington had a comparatively easy ride in his first bouts in the 74kg, but the difficulty of the task was made clear when the Leon star wrestler Hector Garcia felled him in the pool stage. This meant that Harrington went into the cross-ties in second place where he met the notoriously awkward Canarian, Avilla Acosta, who is as wide as he is tall. In a tense series of bouts they ended up with two falls each, and Harrington won the day with an all-or-nothing inside-click as soon as the referee said Wrestle!

This win put him through to the final for another go at Hector Garcia, and once more it ended up with a winner-takes-all fifth fall. Again Harrington leapt into instantaneous action from the outset, seized a slight hold, outside-hiped, just, and twisted him down, just, for a famous victory. In the Gouren Harrington had the rare achievement of winning by a lamm, which is a perfect throw that finishes the bout.

On the second day our hopes focused on Richard Fox who had done well in the Gouren on the first day, winning two of his four falls, but not well enough to reach the finals. In the backhold he carried all before him in the pools, with a single exception, John Taylor of Scotland . Fox went through to the cross-ties, won his bout and once more met Taylor , this time in the final. Taylor was in imperious form, and whatever Fox did he had an answer. Not unexpectedly, John Taylor was voted unanimously the best backhold wrestler of the championships.

Then towards the end came an unexpected bonus when Craig Naylor who had finished last in his own style, started winning at Gouren, to the extent that he gained a bronze medal.



The first wrestling of the 2009 Grass Season, and the first championship of the year (Boys Under 18 Years/10st), takes place on Sunday at Carlisle Airport , where Hethersgill Vintage Society will hold their annual rally.

Results:

International Federation of Celtic Wrestling, European Championships, East Kilbride .

Team Results: 1, Canary Islands 97pts; 2, Brittany 91pts; 3, Leon 90pts; 4, Scotland 59pts; 5 Cumbria 59pts; 6, Austria 45pts; 7, Friesland 43pts; 8, Sardinia 20pts; 9, Iceland 18pts.

Individual Cumbrian Results: Backhold Gold medals: Richard Dixon (68kg); John Harrington (74kg) Silver medal: Richard Fox (90kg) Gouren Silver medal: Richard Dixon (68kg); Bronze medal: Craig Naylor (62kg)

Dates:

Sunday, 3 rd May (12.30pm) Hethersgill Vintage Society, Carlisle Airport . U12/U15/U18&10st Ch'ship/U18/12 ½ /AW

Saturday 9 th May NorthCumbria YFC Field Day, Moor House W

May 6th 2009

THE 2009 SEASON OF CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND WRESTLING BEGINS

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

The 2009 season of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling began with a flourish when young wrestlers met at Hethersgill Vintage Society's rally at Carlisle Airport to try to take the Under 18Years/10st Championship away from Adam Ridley of Slaggyford who had held it for the two previous years. Before the draw could be made there was a long public struggle for Matthew Atkinson of Kendal Academy to make the weight. Fortunately for him wrestlers do not have to wear the traditional wrestling strip for boys' championships, so his strip was abandoned and progressively lighter socks and shorts were produced until the weighing platform of the CWWA scales stayed motionless with him aboard and the draw was made.

The holder, Adam Ridley, began cagily against Paul Murray of Arlecdon, but when his nerves had settled he won handsomely with hipes. Against David Miller he twice gained a good hold, lifted and twisted back. A bye took him through to the final, while the thin-socked Matthew Atkinson accounted for Craig Naylor in the semi-final.



The two finalists, Ridley and Atkinson, were well matched in weight and physique, and the first hold brought a spectacular dog-fall when a buttock landed both wrestlers onto the tops of their heads. After that Ridley's craft took over. He easily countered an inside-click by twisting Atkinson on, and for the final fall he took the initiative and took Atkinson out with a series of twists.

The wrestling performance of the day came from Andrew Carlile of Carlisle who contested both the 12 ½ st and All Weights finals



with Richard Dixon of Lessonhall.

Carlile had his new son, Morgan, in a pram at ringside, and was inspired to win both finals by two falls to one. All the bouts were a feast of technique and speed. Carlile particularly relied on swinging hipes and appropriate follow-up action to win the day.

The boys' wrestling was enhanced by the Kendal wrestlers who set the early pace. Sam Wilson, who won the Under 12s, showed he was his father's son by buttocking to win against Thomas Gibson of Southwaite. The final of the Under 15s was a brotherly affair with Matthew Atkinson beating brother William, both from Kendal Academy .

In the open weight Under 18s Jack Ewart was well tested out by Jimmy Hall of King's Meaburn who took the middle fall, but Ewart has been training with the international team in recent months and had the strength and nous to win with big twists.

Before the wrestling started the commentator read out the rules for taking hold, and indicated the message from the recent referees' meeting that wrestlers had to take a slack hold and keep hold before the referee started the bout. Equally, any wrestler who fights for hold is to be warned and could possibly lose a fall if he continues to ignore the referee.

Results:

Hethersgill Vintage Society Rally

Under 12 Years 1, S Wilson; 2, T Gibson; 3, G Wilson

Under 15 Years 1, M Atkinson; 2, W Atkinson; 3, D Miller.

Under 18 Years/10st Championship 1, A Ridley; 2, M Atkinson; 3, C Naylor.

Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, J Hall; 3, A Ridley.

12 ½ st 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon ; 3, W Noimai .

All Weights 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon ; 3, M Atkinson.

Minthorpe Academy Open Night :

Under 14 Years 1, I Hammond; 2, J Hall; 3, S Lashley .

Under 18 Years 1, S Mason; 2, J Hall; 3, W Hayhurst .

Open Competition Results:

Under 12yrs 1, T Gibson; 2, J Lashley; 3, S Wilson .

Under 15yrs 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, J Hayhurst.

Under 18yrs 1, S Mason; 2, J Ewart; 3, J Lashley.

Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson; 3, E Hayhurst .

13 Stone 1, J Lashley; 2, J Bindloss; 3, S Lashley .

All Weights 1, J Ewart; 2, S Mason; 3, M Atkinson.

May 13th 2009

THE RAIN GREW HEAVIER

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Young Farmers, the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling is about to start in the field next to the obstacle course, so I headed into the wind to find a mown ring in an expanse of lush green. A sprinkling of high-speed rain hit my face so I moved the car nearby for a refuge. By the time the paperwork was done and various wrestlers winkled out from cookery demonstrations and dialect competitions, it was time for the waterproof leggings.



The first section, the 9½ stones, was lit up by two regular wrestlers, Paul Murray of Greysouthern YFC and David Miller of Wigton, who took on lads much bigger and taller than themselves, and bamboozled them with science, while their coach at Carlisle Wrestling Club, Alan Jones, looked damply on. Murray made life easy for the judges by executing a gymnastic hand-stand over his fallen victims. The rain grew heavier.

Inevitably, Richard Dixon of Wigton and John Harrington of Caldbeck reached the final of the 11½ stones. It seems unfair on the others to have two world champion, international wrestlers in the lists. There was plenty of power and endeavour from the novice wrestlers, but the two experts picked them off with hipes and other sneaky moves. Dixon then won a hard fought final. The wind revved up a few more notches, and John Harrington hastily retrieved his woolly hat. In the heavyweights the same pattern emerged with champion wrestler Richard Fox of Longtown in fine fettle, swinging and buttocking and back-heeling his opponents in the lashing rain. Then the weather deteriorated. Wrestlers became parcels of hoodies and woolly hats and shepherds leggings.



Helen Housby of Wigton used to tag along to Carlisle Wrestling Club with her brother and cousin, but that was years ago, and she is now double the height she was then. I remember her amazing gymnastic contortions when she wrestled and the way she could swing round the bars set in the ceiling of the Currock House Gym.



From those days she remembered one devastating move, the the opposition to first place in the girls 10 stones. Then the sun came out.

hank, and she cut a swathe through

The women over 10 stones set the weather at nought with bare arms, legs and mid-riffs, and some startlingly good wrestling from Mica Graham of Carlisle. She won the event last year and took up where she left off. Some women wrestlers have reservations about flinging an opponent to the ground, but not Mica Graham. With high-speed reactions, superb balance and a natural twist she was the inevitable winner, though Lyn Murray did manage a fall against her in the final.

Results:

Cumbrian Young Farmers' Northern Field Day

9½st 1, P Murray (Greysouthern); 2, D Miller (Wigton); 3, C Pears Caldbeck.

11½st 1, R Dixon (Wigton); 2, John Harrington (Caldbeck); 3, C Ackerley (Kirklington).

Over 11½st 1, R Fox (Longtown); 2, M Laurie (Kirklington); 3, I Clemetson (Aspatria).

Girls 10st 1, H Housby (Wigton); 2, V Lawson (Kirklington); 3, F Reed (Brampton).

Girls Over 10st 1, M Graham (Carlisle); 2, L Murray (Greysouthern); 3, M Housby (Wigton).

Dates:

Saturday 16 th May 2pm Sedbergh Gala U12/U15/U18/12½/AW

Monday 25 th May 1.30pm Northumberland Show, Corbridge U14/U18/11½/13½/AW

Thursday 28 th May 6pm Killington Sports

May 22nd 2009

CARLISLE WRESTLERS BEAT THE LOCALS AND THE WEATHER AT SEDBERGH TO REACH FOUR FINALS

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)





Carlisle wrestlers beat the locals and the weather at Sedbergh to reach four finals Peter Hayhurst was a relieved man at the end of the wrestling at Sedbergh Gala. He had been concerned about what turnout would be. The event clashed with the County YFC Southern District Field Day and, as if that wasn't enough, the day was punctuated by heavy showers sweeping up the valley. A decent entry of younger wrestlers and a strong entry of heavyweights offset the lack of lightweight competitors. The Kendal Club naturally provided the majority of the wrestlers, though the small band of incomers from Carlisle did compete in four of the day's finals.

Thomas Gibson, of Southwaite, showed how he has developed with a winter of coaching at the Carlisle club. His ability to buttock, and strength to twist back over the knee, had been able to give him the main prize in the under-12s and he then wrestled up to the much more substantial William Hayhurst in the under-15s. Hayhurst had age, weight and experience on his side and there really was no chance of an upset. In the under-18 class it was Hayhurst's turn to take the role of second favourite against Jack Ewart, of Westward. However, he really set about his task and came out on top courtesy of two well-executed buttocks, to give him a double in the youths. In the ladies open event, Tracey Hodgson marked her return by dispatching younger sister Hannah with Megan Gibson, Thomas' sister, keeping the family name in the frame in third place.



The 12 stones event got off to a difficult start when the weighing scales refused to go past six stones no matter who stood on them. The final paired together John Harrington, 12 stone champion, and Graham Brocklebank, 13 stone champion. It was the latter who got his first success this season as he gathered Harrington on to his right hip, patiently went about throwing out the hank, and threw him forward. The all weights had an altogether sterner entry with some substantial competitors in the list. Joe Threlfall.

This weekend's action is at Northumberland Show on Monday and then Thursday it is Killington Sports hidden up the back roads off the M6.



Results

Under-12 : 1, Thomas Gibson; 2, Tom Riley; 3, Sam Wilson.
 Under-15: 1, William Hayhurst; 2, Thomas Gibson; 3, Ben Brocklebank.
 Under-18: 1, William Hayhurst; 2, Jack Ewart; 3, Ben Brocklebank.
 Girls: 1, Tracey Hodgson; 2, Hannah Hodgson; 3, Megan Gibson.
 12 Stones: 1, Graham Brocklebank; 2, John Harrington; 3, Ben Brocklebank.
 All Weights 1, Joseph Robson; 2, Joe Threlfall; 3, Thomas Brocklebank.

Fixtures

Monday May 25, 1.30pm - Northumberland Show, Corbridge - U14, U18, 11 Stones, 13 Stones, All Weights
 Thursday May 28, 6.45pm - Killington Sports - U12, U15, Girls U16, 13 Stones, All Weights

May 28th 2009

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY SHOW AT CORBRIDGE

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

The Northumberland County Show at Corbridge was swamped with sun and people. The wrestling ring is no longer at the edge of the main ring where the main throng is, but a good circle of spectators assembled and stayed to watch some first-rate action between the wrestlers from Rothbury Academy and those from Carlisle Wrestling Club, with Joe Threlfall from Lancashire and various visitors and novices to add to the fun.

Rothbury Academy provided the winners in all the boys' categories (Cade Whitfield, Joe Hale and Jack Hale) to give due warning about what might happen in the next few years. Carlisle wrestlers took all the men's events when John Harrington won at 11 ½ stones and Richard Fox excelled by winning both the 13 ½ st and the All Weights.



Richard Fox had to work hard for his success as he rarely won in straight falls. In the course of the afternoon he was buttocked by Andrew Carlile, outside-hiped by Andrew Ord and John Harrington, twisted over the knee by Joe Threlfall, and he also lost a fall to Jason Davidson. But he always won twice whenever he lost a fall.

His main and safest option is the back heel, and that was a constant theme of his bouts. He even used the left leg hank to control his opponents' right leg and then manoeuvred a position where he could strike decisively with the right leg back-heel, a new strategy to me. He usually attacks, but he is also the master of defence, which was just as well when Joe Threlfall set out to twist him into the ground. Fox gained one fall by stepping ahead of the twist to strike with his own, and then took the deciding fall by jumping hard at Threlfall as he began to hipe. Instead of finding a heavy lift, Threlfall had thirteen stones launched at his upper chest, which overloaded him and sent him onto his back.



In the final of the All Weights, Fox, the 15st Champion, met Andrew Ord of Morpeth, who won the 14st title at the Cumberland Show last year. He had to resort to the buttock to get rid of Ord's long legs for the first fall. Ord then struck with his outside-hipe. A fall then landed outside the marked ring, before Fox knocked Ord of balance with a back-heel, then followed up to chest him down for the decider.

Some of the best wrestling of the day was in the 11½ stones where John Harrington felled young Watchai Noimai in the final in two straight falls.



Before that he had to subdue Andrew Carlile who is in good form and always liable to launch unexpected attacks.

The Hale brothers from Rothbury almost monopolised the boys wrestling, with young Joe winning at both Under 12 and Under 14 Years. Although not a big lad, he has the wrestling skills and enough strength to fell much bigger lads. In the Under 12s final his opponent was a young Turkish lad, Burak Gulmen, now living in Newcastle, whose father used to do the Turkish style with oiled bodies and leather trousers.

Big brother, Jack, was in good hiping form, but his Under 18 final ended in an anti-climax when Bryn Rolley broke hold.

Results:

Northumberland Show, Corbridge

Under 10 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, E Robson ; 3, A Law.

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, B Gulmen; 3, A Tiffen.

Under 14 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, C Whitfield; 3, A Tiffen.

Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, B Ridley; 3, C Ridley.

11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, W Noimai ; 3, A Carlile.

13 ½ st 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, Jack Hale.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, A Ord; 3, J Davidson.

Dates:

Saturday, 13 th June Roman Wall Show

Lowgill Sports

Sunday, 14 th June Morpeth Gala

June 3rd 2009

KILLINGTON SPORTS WORKS ITS MAGIC AGAIN

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)



Lost in the back lanes of South Cumbria , Killington Sports worked its magic again: droves in the fell races; high jinks with egg-throwing and three legged race; hordes charging along a steep hillside in the 800 metres; pillow-fighting till beyond dark..and some quality wrestling.



Richard Fox of Hethersgill continued his early season form by winning the 13 stones in grand style. In the final against Graham Brocklebank of Warton Fox had to be at his very best. Not unexpectedly, his opening gambit was a back-heel, but the end game was a last second twist which won him a close fall. When times are tough, Fox eschews the safer options and goes full out for the buttock, his original and best chip. He had Brocklebank by the ears so the rest of his body had to follow in an arcing throw to the ground.

Fox's momentum kept going in the All Weights when he felled Thomas Brocklebank in the first round. In the second round Jack Ewart of Westward gave him pause for thought when he won the first fall by buttocking as Fox attacked. Normal service was resumed when he won the next two falls with back-heels and an inside-click. Once more he lost the first fall in the semi-final to a buttock from John Harrington of Bewaldeth, and once more he recovered to take the next two falls, finishing with a hipe and twist to go through to the final.

Two Kendal wrestlers, John Wilson and Joseph Robson had been cleaning up on the other side of the draw. Wilson,



who only occasionally competes these days, eliminated the heaviest wrestler, Joe Threlfall of Preston with his trade-mark buttocking, while Robson accounted for Graham Brocklebank. When they met in the semi-final, Robson, was too strong and quick, winning with twists. In the final Robson allowed the lighter Fox no escape, winning the first with a hipe and a finishing twist, and for the second he felled Fox off the hank.

In the junior wrestling Sam Wilson showed that he must listen to his father by winning the under 12s with the occasional buttock. Four-square William Hayhurst was too strong and skilful for the opposition in the Under 15s.



Hannah Hodgson was too experienced for Rowan Boardley in the Under 16 girls. And Jack Ewart showed how quickly he can move for a big lad when he buttocked twice to win the Under 18s.

Results:**Killington Sports**

Under 12 Years: 1, S Wilson; 2, S Fidler ; 3, T Gibson.

Under 15 Years: 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, M Atkinson.

Girls Under 16 Years: 1, H Hodgson; 2, R Boardley; 3, C Hodgson.

Under 18 Years: 1, J Ewart; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, S Mason.

13st: 1, R Fox; 2, G Brocklebank; 3, John Harrington.

All Weights: 1, J Robson; 2, R Fox; 3, John Harrington.

Dates:

Saturday, 13th June Roman Wall Show

Lowgill Sports

Sunday, 14 th June Morpeth Gala

June 10th 2009**TOMMY PRITT OF BOOTLE**

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

A stalwart of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling, Tommy Pritt of Bootle , has died aged 86, immediately after a barn fire had been extinguished on his farm. He was wrestling as a lad before the Second World War, and at the age of fifteen won the Under 18 Years Championship at Egremont Crab Fair. What should have been his best years coincided with the closedown of sports meetings for the duration of the Second World War, but he made his mark in the aftermath when he was a member of the formidable Bootle and Waberthwaite Wrestling Academy during the heyday of the Academy League.

As an individual he won the 11 stones at Grasmere in 1947 and a year later he wrestled up to Dicey Messer in the 12st World Championship at Cardewlees. Henry Hale remembers he was as strong as a bloody hoss and Cyril Bragg recalls him as a formidable wrestler, strong off his chest. Later he was a wrestling judge and a member of the Governing Board. At a time when some of the older members of the wrestling hierarchy were suspicious of our involvement with the Bretons and the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling, Tommy decided to join us in Brittany for an international championship. I got to know him then as a great raconteur, and to admire the spirit of a man who could lose his hip joint entirely due to post-operative infection, yet continue cheerfully walking and working.

He is survived by his wife, Peggy, and three sons. The funeral will be held at Corney Parish Church on Monday 15th at 1pm. (but please check details elsewhere).



Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling is such a traditional sport that most people involved think they know the rules, even if they have never read them. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the section on The Commencement of the Bout. Virtually the whole of the referees' pre-season meeting was exercised by the importance of giving both wrestlers a fair start to the bout. The meeting came to the conclusion that the rules are fine, but that wrestlers need to know them and referees enforce them.

On entering the ring the two wrestlers will shake hands, take a slack hold, and keep hold, with their feet motionless and with chins over shoulders, heads touching and shoulders level. There will be no struggling for hold. The referee will instruct both wrestlers to be "On your guard and when the referee is satisfied that each wrestler is on his guard he will shout "wrestle and the bout will commence.

The principle behind this rule is that no wrestler should have an advantage before the wrestling starts. The meeting agreed that wrestlers must keep hold even if they feel at a disadvantage so that the referee can sort out the problem. It is thus possible to lose a bout by breaking hold before it begins. Equally, a wrestler can lose a bout before it starts by grabbing too much hold in defiance of the referee's instructions.

Dates:

Saturday 13th June 2pm Roman Wall; U13, U17, 11.5, 13.5, AW

7pm Lowgill U12, U14, U16, 12, AW, Ladies

Sunday 14th June 1.30pm Morpeth U10, U13, U16, U18, 11.5, 13.5, 15.5, AW

Saturday 20th June 2pm Kirkheaton U12, U15, U18, 12, 15, AW

Sunday 21st June 2pm Rothbury Vintage Show U10, U13, U18, 11.5, 14, AW

Silloth

June 17th 2009

MYSTERY PICTURE

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



Two very senior wrestlers had a good weekend at the Roman Wall Show and Morpeth Town Fair. The prize for keenness must go to Joe Threlfall who travelled from Preston to Northumberland on successive days and registered his first win of the season in the All Weights at The Roman Wall Show. The prize for outright success must go to Carlisle coach, Alan Jones, who was on sprightly form to keep his young protégés under control and win both middleweight events.

The advice to young wrestlers confronting Joe Threlfall for the first time is to keep moving at all costs, and watch out for the twist over the right knee. That worked well at Morpeth for Jack Hale who had quick enough feet and enough strength to find the telling last twist. But at The Roman Wall Threlfall was totally in control, winning most of his falls with the outside-hipe.

Alan Jones must have enjoyed himself, not just by winning twice, but also by winning in such swashbuckling style. Time was when he was always ultra cautious in the ring, but he is no longer the wrestler with stamina to spare, so he has to get on with the job, and that means swinging hipes. In the 13½ st final at the Roman Wall he swung Richard Dixon to put him off balance and then chested him down. In the final of the 13½ st at Morpeth he took John Harrington away on a swing straight into an outside stroke for his best fall of the weekend.

Jones was not the only wrestler to win at both events, for Thomas Gibson of Southwaite won the Under 10s in grand style and went ahead against the brilliant Northumbrian lad, Joe Hale in the final of the Under 13s at Morpeth.

Richard Dixon and John Harrington both secured victories as well as providing the high level of skill which pleases the crowd and makes the other wrestlers raise their game. Dixon was losing finalist twice at the Roman Wall, and was given the cup for the best performance of the day.

Joe Thompson made a welcome return to the ring after breaking his ankle on the mats at Carlisle during the winter. He won the Under 17s against the lively Jacob Wragg. At Morpeth Andrew Ord confirmed his status as the 14st Champion when he felled Robert Leiper with a finishing back-heel in the final of the 15½ st, and Richard Younger made one of his unassailable sorties into the ring when he waded through the opposition including Duncan Crazy Horse Hutton in the All Weights final.

Results:**Roman Wall Show**

Under 10 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, L Messer; 3, B Moralee.

Under 13 Years 1, J Burns; 2, J Rogan; 3, A Barker.

Under 17 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Wragg; 3, C Moore .

Females 1, S Wall 2, M Gibson; 3, A Marsden.

11½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon ; 3, W Noimai .

13½ st 1, A Jones; 2, R Dixon ; 3, John Harrington.

All Weights 1, J Threlfall; 2, John Harrington; 3, M Messer.

Best Performance trophy: Richard Dixon

Morpeth Town Fair

Under 10 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, J Wright; 3, C Whitfield.

Under 13 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, T Gibson; 3, G Aynsley.

Under 16 Years 1, J Brown; 2, M Thompson; 3, Joe Hale.

Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Wragg; 3, N Birdsall .

Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson; 3, S Stafford .

11½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, A Carlile; 3, J Wragg.

13½ st 1, A Jones; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon .

15½ st 1, A Ord; 2, R Leiper; 3, J Ewart.

All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, D Hutton; 3, Jack Hale.

Dates:

Saturday 20th June 2pm Kirkheaton U12,U15,U18,12,15,AW

Sunday 21st June 2pm Rothbury Vintage Show U10,U13,U18,11.5,14,AW

1pm Silloth Vintage Rally U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Sunday 28th June Patterdale Lakeland Country Fair

June 26th 2009**SILLOTH AND ROTHBURY SHOWS**

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Clever money was on Wilson winning.

Last week's wrestling was a tale of two vintage shows. On Sunday at Silloth, conditions were considerably different to last year, when wrestlers were competing in horizontal rain. The Under 12s witnessed something quite unique, as every entrant was a Wilson. Sam Wilson wrestled very well and fully deserved his win, beating George in the final. Jamie Wilson picked up third prize. Sam continued his good run and wrestled up to third in the Under 15s. Matthew Atkinson and Bradley Thompson contested the final; Matthew winning.



David Miller missed out on the Under 15s, as it was his 15th birthday. He equipped himself well in the Under 18s, earning himself third prize. Jack Ewart, of Westward, was just too big and strong for Matthew in the final and added another Under 18 win to his tally. Matthew excelled himself and went on to earn himself two more places in both the 11½ stones and 13 stones competitions.

The 11½ stones and 13 stones categories were fought between familiar opponents, John Harrington and Richard Dixon. John earned a hard fought win in the 11½ stones. Richard then, as he has done many times before, reversed the trend by winning the heavier competition.

The All Weights included a larger number of entrants including John Wilson of Kendal, who chauffeured the younger wrestlers who made up the Under 12 entry, and David Barnes, who made a welcomed appearance after relocating to York. He went on to win the competition, beating Wilson in the final by stopping his buttocks and using his own inside hype. John Harrington was third.

The other fixture was at Rothbury, where there were very good entries in both the boys' competitions, the Under 13s obtaining 13 entries. The Under 10s was won by Kade Whitfield, who looks to have a bright future ahead of him. The Under 13s was a hard-fought competition, eventually won by Charlie Carlisle with Will Cartwright a close second.

The Under 18s class was changed at the last minute to under 21. This was to accommodate more wrestlers. The current 14 stone champion Andrew Ord came out on top, beating Ross Wilkinson. Jack Hale was third. These three wrestlers have improved dramatically over the past few years thanks to the coaching up at Rothbury from Darren Whitfield and Jason Davidson among others.

The men's competition drew entrants from as far as Dundee. Frazer Hursh and David Fairfield making a welcome addition to the wrestling and both picking up prizes. Fraser winning the 14 stones and coming second in the All Weights behind Andrew Ord, who picked up his second win of the day. Recognition should also be made to the chairman of the Wrestling Association Jim Bland, who travelled all the way from Kendal to judge at the event.

This week sees a return to the Lake District at Patterdale, in what is traditionally a well-supported event. Let's hope this good weather continues.

Results

Silloth Vintage Fair:

Under 12s - 1, S Wilson; 2, G Wilson; 3, J Wilson.

Under-15 - 1, M Atkinson; 2, B Thompson; 3, S Wilson.

Under 18s - 1, J Ewart; 2, M Atkinson; 3, D Miller.

11½ stones - 1, J Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, M Atkinson.

13 stones - 1, R Dixon; 2, M Atkinson; 3, J Harrington.

All Weights - 1, D Barnes; 2, J Wilson; 3, J Harrington.

Rothbury Vintage Show:

Under 10s - 1, K Whitfield; 2, L Young; 3, H Bartrem.

Under-13 - 1, C Carlisle; 2, W Cartwright; 3, T Wade.

Under 21s - 1, A Ord; 2, R Wilkinson; 3, J Hale.

11½ stones - 1, M Old; 2, D Fairfield; 3, D Brown.

14 stones - 1, F Hursh; 2, J Hale; 3, R Wilkinson.

All Weights - 1, A Ord; 2, F Hursh; 3, R Wilkinson.

Fixtures

Sunday June 28 - Patterdale U12, U15, U18, 11½, 13, AW.

Saturday July 4 - Skelton Including the Under 15/8 Stone Championship.

Alston.

Sunday July 5 - Distington.

Langdale Gala.

July 3rd 2009

WRESTLING TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT PATTERDALE FAIR

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Wrestlers take centre stage at Patterdale fair

Patterdale Country Fair had all the Lakeland ingredients: Herdwick sheep, hounds, terriers and ferrets; mountains as backdrop and a nearby hill for scores of youngsters to labour up and then come helter-skelter down; and the Senior Guide race for people old enough to know better.

There was also rain, of course, and sunshine.

After all the other excitements ended, the wrestling established a ring in the middle of the outfield of the cricket pitch, and the crowd stayed on to enjoy some excellent competitive contests. Virtually every final went to three falls before it was settled. The Kendal Academy coach, John Wilson, in the All Weights, was out-weighted, out-strengthened, and out-youthed by Thomas Brocklebank, but he still managed to buttock for the middle fall, and nearly did the same in the decider.

John Wilson's boy, Sam, had started the trend in the Under 12s, when he wrestled up to Thomas Gibson of Southwaite, and took a fall with his father's chip, the buttock. No fewer than 16 boys entered the lists, most of them still in their fell-running gear, and the crowd warmed to the honest endeavour on display. Gibson, who trains at Carlisle, even though he is still young for the category, has started to make a habit of winning. He progressed positively through each round and was mainly in control in the final.

Mathew Atkinson turned out in a smart traditional strip and wrestled smartly, too, twisting and inside-clicking like a veteran to win the Under 15s, wrestle up to Milnthorpe Academy's Stuart Mason in the Under 18s, and feature prominently in the men's weights. In the first round of the 13 stones, he met an adult wrestler from a martial arts background and was able to bamboozle him with homegrown ploys.

In the men's weights, the champions took over. Firstly, the 10½st Champion, Andrew Carlile, won the decider in the 11½st final against 11st Champion, Richard Dixon. With the bout finely balanced, Carlile struck with a surging inside-hipe and brought his man over. Richard Dixon then reached the final of the 13 stones, but found Graham Brocklebank, the champion at that weight, was immaculate in defence and suddenly effective in attack.

Results

Patterdale Country Fair

Under-12 Years: 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, B Vaillant.

Under-15 Years: 1, M Atkinson; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, W Hayhurst.

Under-18 Years: 1, S Mason; 2, M Atkinson. 3, J Bindloss.

11½st: 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon; 3, M Atkinson.

13st: 1, G Brocklebank; 2, R Dixon; 3, A Carlile.

All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, J Wilson; 3, G Brocklebank.

Dates

Saturday July 4, 12 noon - Skelton Show U12/U15/U18/U15and 8st Ch'ship/11½/13/AW.

3pm - Alston Gala U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW/ Ladies

Sunday July 5, 1pm - Distington U12/U15/U18/12½/AW/ Ladies.

2pm Langdale U12/U15/U18/GirlsU16/11½/13/AW

Sunday July 12, 2pm - Bampton U12/U15/U18/GirlsU16/11½/13/AW. Haltwhistle

Saturday July 18 - Cumberland Show.

July 16th 2009

HALTWHISTLE CARNIVAL

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

The Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling at Haltwhistle Carnival has had a high emotional charge in the past two years following the death of local wrestling champion, Chris Walton at the age of seventeen. His memory is celebrated in a conventional way with a fine trophy donated by the family for the Novice wrestling, but the real memorial is the way that local wrestlers enter the lists in droves, and the way that this family organise and compete in the event.

Chris's older brother, Richard, used to be a boy champion, too, but he drifted away from wrestling to favour other sports



such as Badminton. For some years he has not competed, so it was a pleasant surprise to see him enter the lists in the Novices. He used to be tall and willowy; now he has filled out and is toned from his job in a gymnasium. That physique and his past experience led to a straightforward win, and his mother, Michelle, had the bitter-sweet task of presenting him with his brother's memorial trophy.

And it did not stop there. Younger brother James came a creditable third in the Under 15s, and father, Alan, entered for the 13 ½ stones where a win would have made the script almost too good to be true. In the event he was runner-up in the final, but I do not suppose he was too upset at not winning, for he was felled by his son, the newly resurgent Richard. With his new found strength, Richard was able to pick off his men with sudden twists and attacks when a chance arose. This was his method of felling Alan Jones in the semi-final and his father in the final.

Andrew Ord is making a habit of winning All Weights competitions. He used his assets of height, strength and growing confidence to work his way to the final where he controlled the dangerous John Harrington who had previously impressed with his armoury of throws in winning the 11 ½ stones. Joe Thompson continued his return from injury with a good win in the Under 18s. Thomas Gibson of Southwaite returned to winning ways in the Under 12s where his winter training gave him the edge over the enthusiastic local lads. And the Hodgson family's long journey from Dentdale was rewarded when all three sisters took most of the prize money home from the two female wrestling categories.

The wrestling at Bampton, near Shap, was more low key, mainly supported by the Kendal Academy wrestlers. Joseph Robson in the heavyweights looked a dead cert for the top spot, but was rudely awakened in the first round when a stranger took the first fall. The stranger was Chris Whitaker, a former boy champion from St Michael's Academy, who has not wrestled for many years, now with two young lads in tow. Robson then woke up and took the next two falls and went on for an easy win.

Most successful of all was Matthew Atkinson. He was second best to William Hayhurst in the Under 15s, but reversed that result in the final of the Under 18s when his inside-click clinched it. He then went on to feature in all the remaining finals, two of which were won by Anthony Wilson, brother of the Kendal coach, John.

Results:

Haltwhistle

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, C Balluch; 3, A Cousins.

Under 15 Years 1, L Crawford; 2, C Moore; 3, J Walton.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, C Ridley; 3, P Petrie.

Girls Under 15 Years 1, C Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, D Gibson.

Ladies Open 1, T Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, D Thompson.

Novices 1, R Walton; 2, J Thompson; 3, K Laidlaw.

11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, C Ridley; 3, C Naylor.

13 ½ st 1, R Walton; 2, A Walton; 3, A Jones.
All Weights 1, A Ord; 2, John Harrington; 3, Joe Harrington.

Bampton

Under 12 Years 1, S Wilson; 2, G Wilson ; 3, J Wilson .
Under 15 Years, 1, W Hayhurst; 2, M Atkinson; 3, G Wilson .
Under 18 Years, 1. M, Atkinson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, S Wilson .
11 ½ st. 1, A Wilson ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, S Wilson .
13 st. 1, A Wilson ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Atkinson.

All Weights.1, J Robson; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Atkinson.

Dates:

Saturday, 18 th July 4pm Cumberland Show.U12/ /U15and 7st/ U15/U18/GirlsU15/12/14/AW(£695)
Sunday, 19 th July 3pm Coniston Country Fair U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW
2.30pm Great Ecclestone Show U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW/Ladies Open
Saturday, 25 th July 1pm Penrith Show U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW/Girls
Sunday, 26th July 12 noon Flookburgh

July 22nd 2009

".....A LITTLE BIT PADDLY....."

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

The biggest wrestling news this week is what did not take place rather than what did. The Cumberland Show cancellation meant that two centuries of Carlisle wrestling on the banks of the River Eden was put on hold for another year.

Two other events not affected by imminent flooding took place last Sunday. Great Ecclestone Show, the only wrestling venue left in Lancashire , was a little bit paddly according to the wrestling organiser, David Parsons, but the wrestling took place with a mixture of experienced wrestlers and locals from the crowd. No-one is more experienced than Joe Threlfall of Preston , and he used that and his weight to control the youthful exuberance of 13st Champion Graham Brocklebank of Warton to win the All Weights. Brocklebank had already felled Stuart Mason from Milnthorpe in the 13st final. In the 11 ½ stones the locals had a clear run and Ryan Kearney was a first time winner. In the Ladies Open wrestling Tracy Hodgson of Dentdale returned to the ring after time off, and put her younger sisters in their place.



The wrestling at Coniston followed a similar pattern with some good boy wrestlers in the lists, but

a distinct shortage of senior wrestlers. That vacuum was filled by James Park of Lindal, who fells trees during the week and felled wrestlers galore in the 11 ½ and 13 stones categories to gain a creditable double.



The heavyweight final was a replay of previous years when Stuart Fleming and Thomas Brocklebank had prodigious struggles. This time Brocklebank prevailed with two back-heels, though Fleming did get a consolation middle fall with a cross-buttock.



William Hayhurst continued his good run in the Under 15 events, the Atkinson brothers Michael and William added greatly to the entertainment without taking much prizemoney, and Joe Thompson travelled all the way from Alston to win again on the shores of Lake Coniston .
A remarkable week of wrestling is in prospect with seven events in eight days. The under 18 event at Penrith Show has been given an extra £100 by a couple who are keen wrestling supporters. My wife and I lived in New York for three years and, while it was fashionable in the summer to go out to the Hamptons, we always timed our return to the UK to coincide with the Penrith Show!!! Ambleside Sports is celebrating 200 years with the 14th Championship, and the next day is the All Weights World Championship at Langholm Common Riding.

Results:

Coniston Country Fair

Under 12 Years: 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, G Wilson .

Under 15 Years: 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, T Gibson; 3, S Brown.

Under 18 Years: 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Atkinson.

Ladies Open: 1, C Wilson ; 2, M Gibson; 3, A Beswick.

11 ½ st: 1, J Park; 2, C Naylor; 3, M Atkinson.

13st: 1, J Park; 2, B Dodgson; 3, C Naylor.

All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, S Fleming; 3, W Hayhurst .

Great Ecclestone Show

Under 12 Years: 1, J Lashley; 2, C Williams.

Under 15 Years: 1, B Brocklebank; 2, J Thornton ; 3, R Hughes.

Under 18 Years: 1, S Mason; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, R Kearney .

Ladies Open: 1, T Hodgson 2, C Hodgson; 3, H Hodgson.

11 ½ st: 1, R Kearney ; 2, B McLaughlin; 3, B Brocklebank.

13st: 1, G Brocklebank; 2, S Mason; 3, B McLaughlin.

All Weights: 1, J Threlfall; 2, G Brocklebank; 3, B McLaughlin.

Dates:

Saturday, 25th July 1pm Penrith Show U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW/Girls

Sunday 26th July 12 noon Flookburgh U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW/Girls

Thurs 30th July 1pm Ambleside U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /12 ½ /14st Championship/AW.

Friday 31st July 2.30pm Langholm Common U12/ U16/11½/13/All Weights Championship

Saturday 1st August 1pm Cockermouth Show U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

2.30pm Powburn U10/U13/U16/11 ½ /13 ½ /AW

Sunday 2 nd August 1pm Gilsland U14/U18/11 ½ /13 ½ /AW

Thursday 6 th Aug 3pm Ings U12/U15/U18/12/AW/Costume

July 29th 2009

FLOODS AND MORE FLOODS

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Penrith Show continued its magic formula for wrestling: a crowded ring, abundant wrestlers, smart falls and sunshine.

The performance of the day came from Richard Fox of Hethersgill who has now shed the extra pounds he brought back from New Zealand , and was in slick and bustling form. He blew everybody away in the first rounds of the 13 stones and looked unstoppable, until he met Andrew Carlile of Carlisle in the final. Carlile seemed to know what Fox was going to do before he himself knew, and the first fall went to Carlile who countered a hank. A close cagey wrestle followed when they explored every inch of the ring until the referee halted the bout just as it headed into the crowd. Fox had now time to regroup and he won the next fall by manoeuvring Carlile onto a buttock.

The decider was different in that the decisive move came from an attack from Carlile which was met with a twist over the right



knee. Fox then went on to cut a swathe through the All Weights and won that, too, to give him a fine double. Strangely enough, Fox was not the main star in that category, despite his win, for his final opponent was a fifteen year old wrestler, who was exploring new territory.



James Hall of King's Meaburn mainly trains at Milnthorpe Academy during the winter, with occasional visits to Carlisle for a coaching top-up. In the Under 18 Years he was well beaten by the on-form Matthew Atkinson who was just too sharp for him with a back-heel and a twist back when Hall tried to cross him. In the All Weights all that disappointment evaporated when he reached the semi-final of the men's All Weights where he took on John Harrington of Bewaldeth and flung him around to take two straight falls.

In the end Richard Fox had too much strength and ability for him. For the first, Fox landed after a hipe attempt and immediately buttocked to win. The second was more controlled as Fox used a hank to set up a back-heel.

Flookburgh also had a good batch of wrestlers in the lists, and the prizes went to the usual suspects. In the boys, Thomas Gibson of Southwaite again felled Sam Wilson of Kendal in the final to add to his win at Penrith. And William Hayhurst, too, made it a double win in the Under 15s for the week-end. Richard Dixon, the 11st Champion, won the 11 ½ stones. The 13st Champion, Graham Brocklebank, duly won his category and then big brother Thomas Brocklebank felled Kendal coach, John Wilson, in the All Weights final.

Results:

Penrith Show

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, G Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, J Brown.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, M Atkinson; 3, S Hodgson .

Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson.

11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon ; 3, T Davidson.

13st 1, R Fox; 2, A Carlile; 3, R Dixon .

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, J Hall; 3, John Harrington.

Flookburgh

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, G Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, W Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1, S Mason; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Atkinson.

Girls 1, T Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, C Hodgson

11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, S Mason; 3, M Atkinson.

13st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, R Dixon ; 3, S Mason.

All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, J Wilson; 3, G Brocklebank.

Dates:

Friday 31 st July 2.30pm Langholm Common U12/ U16/11½/13/All Weights Championship

Saturday 1st August 1pm Cockermouth Show U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

2.30pm Powburn U10/U13/U16/11 ½ /13 ½ /AW

Sunday 2nd August 1pm Gilsland Show U14/U18/11 ½ /13 ½ /AW

Thursday 6th Aug 3pm Ings U12/U15/U18/12/AW/Costume

Saturday 8th Aug 12 noon Dalston Show U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

2pm BeethamSports U12/U14/U15Championship/U16/U18/Girls/12 ½ /AW

Sunday9th Aug Forestburngate including 11 stone Championship

August 6th 2009

AMBLESIDE SPORTS

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Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling is alive and well. At five events last week our old sport drew the crowds and kept them attentively watching and applauding for two hours at a time.

Ambleside Sports, with its traditional mix of track and fell racing, hound-trailing and wrestling, at last had some sunshine and the wrestlers turned up in droves. Two surprise entrants were comedians Rory McGrath and Paddy McGuinness filming for their Great British Adventure for Channel 5. The main event was the 14 stones World Championship, and that attracted a big field of real contenders. Young Andrew Ord of Morpeth, the holder, fought hard to retain his title, but was beaten in the semi-final by Richard Fox of Hethersgill, and that set up an intriguing final with the veteran champion, Alan Jones of Hallbankgate. Two Years ago at Allendale Show, the same wrestlers fought for the 14st Championship, and Jones won with robust defence

and sudden attacks. This time the result was different: the first bout was a blur of aggressive action as the two wrestlers spun and twisted before Fox put in the killer blow. The second bout was more sedate and controlled as Fox caught Jones with a back-heel and twisted him down.

Richard Fox has been an excellent wrestler for some years, but this year there is a new confidence and tightness in his wrestling. He has a cast-iron defence, and two main complementary methods of attack. He can back-heel with either leg, and keeps so low and controlled that the usual counters of buttock and inside-hip are thwarted. And all the time he has his lethal weapon, the buttock, to fall back on in emergencies. Fox's day was still not over for he then went on to carve his way to the final of the All Weights. Thomas Brocklebank had twisted and chested down the Northumbrian Heavyweight, Richard Younger in the semis, but was outsmarted by Fox who claimed his second victory of the day and the Guinness Trophy for the best performance of the day. Richard Fox will never have a better day's wrestling in his lifetime.

Richard Younger went home disappointed from Ambleside, with plenty to think about before the All Weights Championship at Langholm Common Riding the following day. He warmed up in the first round lifting and dumping the lightweight Richard Dixon, then found a larger prospect in the second round, the title-holder Russell Housby. Housby won the first fall with a buttock but Younger sharpened up and won the next two with the rush off the right side.



In the semi-final he remembered his wrestling skills in outside-stroking Joseph Robson of Grayrigg, and in the final against Big Mac Robert McNamara that was the weapon that swept McNamara off his feet twice to give Younger his first senior championship.

Of course there were many other notable achievements: John Harrington's double at Ambleside; Andrew Ord doing the same at Powburn. William Hayhurst had three wins, as did Craig Ridley who is really returning to form. But the week belonged to Richard Fox..double winner at Ambleside and at Cockermouth and further wins at Langholm and Gilsland.. a champion wrestler in the form of his life.

Results:

Ambleside Sports

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, G Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Lashley; 3, S Mason.

11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, C Ridley.

12 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, G Benson.

14st Championship 1, R Fox; 2, A Jones; 3, A Ord.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, T Brocklebank; 3, R Younger.

Guinness Trophy: R Fox

Langholm Common Riding

Under 12 Years T Gibson; 2, S Wilson ; 3, A Moffatt.

Under 16 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, J Thompson.

Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, M Gibson.

11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, M Atkinson.

13st 1, R Fox; 2, S Shingler; 3, W Atkinson.

All Weights Championship 1, R Younger; 2, R McNamara; 3, J Robson.

Cockermouth Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Blamire; 2, T Greenbank; 3, R Scott.

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, J Hayhurst.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Atkinson.

Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson; 3, G Lee.

11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, A Carlile.

13st 1, R Fox; 2, A Carlile; 3, John Harrington.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, R Dixon ; 3, A Carlile.

Gilsland Show

Under 14 Years 1, W Atkinson; 2, B Sloan; 3, S Kyle.

Under 18 Years 1, C Ridley; 2, J Thompson; 3, J Hayhurst.

11 ½ st 1, C Ridley; 2, R Dixon ; 3, J Hayhurst.

13 ½ st 1, R Walton; 2, A Walton; 3, R Fox.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, R Walton; 3, Joe Harrington.

Powburn Show

Under 10 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, H Bertram; 3, A Law.

Under 13 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, C Little; 3, C Whitfield.

Under 18 Years 1, C Ridley; 2, J Wragg; 3, C Little.

Novice1, N Birdsall ; 2, C Ridley; 3, J Wragg.

11 ½ st 1, C Ridley; 2, J Wragg; 3, W Scott.

14st 1, A Ord; 2, A Jones; 3, N Birdsall .

All Weights 1, A Ord; 2, A Jones; 3, J Wragg.

Dates:

Saturday 8th Aug 12 noon Dalston Show U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

2pm BeethamSports U12/U14/U15Championship/U16/U18/Girls/12 ½ /AW

Sunday 9th Aug 2.30pm Forestburngate U10/U13/U16/U18/11st Ch'ship/15/AW

Tuesday 11th Aug 2pm Kirkby Lonsdale U12/U15/U18/13/AW/Girls

Saturday 15th Aug 1pm Allendale

1pm Gosforth, U11/U13/U15/U18/12 Stone Championship/ All Weights

2pm Rusland U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

August 12th 2009

1 WRESTLER; 1 WEEK, 5 EVENTS 5 WINS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Two more wrestling championships changed hands last week when Andrew Carlile felled Richard Dixon in the final of the 11 stones at Forestburngate, and age turned the Under 15 Years title holder, Joe Thompson, into a spectator as William Hayhurst felled his clubmate, Matthew Atkinson in the final at Beetham Sports.

In the first round of the 11st Championship Andrew Carlile met the furthest travelled wrestler, David Fairfield of Dundee . All Fairfield 's keenness could not prevent Carlile swinging him away on an inside-hipe for the first fall. For the second Carlile countered a Fairfield attack with a neat twist when he was off balance.

The final between Richard Dixon of Lessohall, Wigton and Andrew Carlile of Carlisle was always going to be close, although the first fall was over quickly. Dixon went for the left side buttock, Carlile stopped it and in turn took his man away off the right hip. The second hold was a much more cagey wrestle which ended near the edge of the ring with a sudden surge of action as Carlile took Dixon up high on a swinging inside-hipe.

Andrew Carlile is one of those rare wrestlers who is on top of his game and yet is able to put so much back into the sport through his coaching ability. He is one of the three coaches at Carlisle Wrestling Club during the winter training sessions at Currock House, and he also was the main coach for the Gouren wrestling earlier this year as the team prepared for the European Championships. Many wrestlers keep fit through farm work, but Carlile is an office-worker who keeps his high level of fitness through running, cycling and gym work.

The new Under 15 Years champion, William Hayhurst of Natland, was no surprise as he has been a consistent winner this year. He is stocky, strong lad for his age, but wins most of his falls with impressive technique, particularly his hipes. In the championship final, however, he was more down to earth, getting a strong hold and then rushing Matthew Atkinson off the right hip. The Hayhurst family has been a major element in Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling in the Kendal area for over sixty years, and the latest scions, William and younger brother, James, are worthy representatives of that family tradition.

Richard Fox of Hethersgill and Graham Brocklebank of Warton were both dominant in their local shows. Fox won both the 13 stones and the All Weights at Dalston Show; Brocklebank did the same at Lonsdale Show. Richard Dixon did well to pick himself up after his championship defeat and win the 15 stones in significantly heavier company. Jack Brown of Haydon Bridge has seemed drained in the weeks after his Under 15Years/8st Championship win at Skelton Show, but he was back on good form last weekend, not just in winning two events, but in the manner in which he is fighting back against stronger opposition.

A special mention must be reserved for Joe Thompson of Alston, and his father, Peter, who chauffeurs him. He was the only wrestler to take part in all five events of the past week, and he won the Under 18s at all of them against strongly competitive wrestlers.

Results:

Ings Sheepdog Trials

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson ; 3, T Hayhurst

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, M Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst 3, J Hall.

Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, T Hodgson; 3, H Hodgson.

12 ½ st 1, M Atkinson; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, W Atkinson.

All Weights 1, P Wood; 2, J Hall; 3, W Hayhurst .

Dalston Show

Under 12 Years1, T Gibson; 2, T Wales ; 3, J Wales

Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, T Gibson; 3, P Potts.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, P Rzepka; 3, J Brown.

11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Brown; 3, Przepka.

13st 1, R Fox; 2, J Brown; 3, John Harrington.

All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, Joe Harrington; 3, John Harrington.

Beetham Sports

Under 12 Years 1, A Wetherill; 2, T Gibson; 3, J Gibson.

Under 15 Years 1, W Atkinson; 2, A Wetherill; 3, T McGuire.

Under 15 Years Championship 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, B Brocklebank.

Under 16 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, J Thompson; 3, W Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1. J Thompson; 2, J Bindloss; 3, W Hayhurst .

Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson.

12 ½ st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, M Atkinson; 3, J Bindloss.

All Weights 1, G Brocklebank; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Hayhurst .

Forestburngate

Under 10 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, D Wilson; 3, H Bertram.

Under 13 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, Joe Hale; 3, C Whitfield.

Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, P Dowson.

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, C Ridley; 3, J Brown.

11st Championship 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon ; 3, J Brown.

15st 1, R Dixon ; 2, R Wilkinson; 3, A Ord.

All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, A Ord; 3, J Davidson.

Lonsdale Show

Under 12 Years 1, A Wetherill; 2, Ted Hodgson; 3, A Hodgson.

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, S Whitfield .

Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, S Mason; 3, S Brocklebank .

Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, D Gibson.

13st 1, S Mason; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, B Brocklebank.

All Weights 1, T Hodgson; 2, S Brocklebank ; 3, S Mason.

Dates:

Sat 15th Aug 1pm Allendale

1pm Gosforth, U11/U13/U15/U18/12 Stone Championship/ All Weights

2pm Rusland U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

Sun 16th Aug 2.30pm, Torver Best Costume/ Ladies Open/ U12/U15/U18/11 ½/13/AW

(Admission refunded)

September 3rd 2009

6 HOUR WRESTLING PROGRAMME AT GRASMERE SPORTS AND SHOW

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



Two wrestlers stood out from the considerable crowd at Grasmere : William Hayhurst of Natland in the boys and Richard Fox of Hethersgill in the men. A single win at Grasmere is a fine accomplishment, but these two wrestlers both won twice. In addition, Hayhurst won the prize for the best performance in all the boys' wrestling, and Fox won the Guinness Trophy for the best performance throughout the six hour wrestling programme. William Hayhurst's win in the Under 15s was not unexpected, though his chief rival at that weight, Matthew Atkinson, is on good form and reached the final. In the Under 18s Hayhurst had to pull all the stops out to win ahead of Joe Thompson and Scott Brocklebank. In the course of the Bank Holiday week-end, he won no fewer than



seven times, always going for his hipes and twists.

Richard Fox's achievement in winning both the 13 and 14 stone Grasmere Championships, was accomplished with great confidence, skill and occasionally, persistence, as the Grasmere ring became muddier and more slippery. Luckily for Grasmere , the sun shone brightly as the crowds arrived. Spectators established themselves in big numbers on the tiered seating round the big ring and stayed there for hours, fascinated by the quality and quantity of the wrestling. Adam Wetherill big for his age, lost a fall in the final to his lesser opponent, Thomas Gibson, but he kept his composure to win the other two falls. In the 11 stones, Richard Dixon kept ahead of this year's Bretons who were there in force at that weight. Carlisle Wrestling Club wrestlers took all three prizes in the 12 stones with John Harrington ahead of Andrew Carlile and Richard Dixon. And in the All Weights, Joe Threlfall from Preston won safely with hipes and twists over the knee. His only scare came in the first bout of the final when Thomas Brocklebank took the first fall. But Threlfall steadied the ship to become the first winner of the Wilf Brocklebank Memorial Trophy.

In what is the biggest and best programme of female wrestling, Connie Hodgson did well to win two sections. In the best entry yet, Donna Thompson felled the Scottish girl, Gemma McNeil in the Women's Open.

Grasmere may have had its problems with rain, but that was nothing compared to the Monday events when wrestlers competed in driving rain on the Green while camels race bizarrely through the slither behind them, and later in the day at Keswick where the green of the wrestling ring was a soggy island in a rough muddy sea. At Silloth Richard Dixon ruled except when he was felled in the All Weights final by the biggest Breton Nicholas Grannec. At Keswick Dixon's rein extended to the 13 stones, but the most notable performance came from young James Hall of King's Meaburn who won in style in the Under 18s and then went on to throw everyone around in the All Weights, too.

Results:

Crosby Ravensworth

Under 13 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, T Gibson; 3, S Wilson .

Under 16 Years 1, J Hall; 2, J Thompson; 3, W Hayhurst .

Girls Under 18 Years 1, H Hodgson; 2, M Gibson; 3, D Gibson.

Under 21 Years 1, Joe Harrington; 2, J Thompson; 3, W Hayhurst .

Newcastleton

Under 13 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, G Robson; 3, E Robson .

Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, Joe Hale; 3, E Robson .

Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Wragg; 3, J Dickinson .

Ladies 1, C Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson.

12 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Wragg; 3, S Brough .

All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, R Fox; 3, John Harrington.

Bellingham Show

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, A Law; 3, C Barksby.

Under 16 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, Joe Hale; 3, J Brown.

Novices 1, J Thompson; 2, J Wragg; 3, T Mitchell.

12st 1, J Wragg; 2, J Brown; 3, J Croft.

14st 1, R Fox; 2, Jack Hale; 3, F Wyrely-Birch

All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, A Ord; 3, R Fox.

Millom and Broughton Show

Under 12 Years 1, S Wilson; 2, J Wilson ; 3, H Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, B Brocklebank.

Under 16 Years 1, M Atkinson; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, W Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, A Woodend.

12st 1, M Atkinson; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, M Knowles.

All Weights 1, G Brocklebank; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, S Fell.

Best wrestler: M Atkinson

Grasmere

Under 12 Years 1, A Wetherill; 2, T Gibson; 3, S Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, J Brown.

Under 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, M Maussion; 3, S Brocklebank .

11st 1, R Dixon ; 2, H Maloeuvre; 3, G Tanguy.

12st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon ; 3, A Carlile.

13st 1, R Fox; 2, P Molloy; 3, John Harrington.

14st 1, R Fox; 2, J Lashley; 3, A Walton.

All Weights 1, J Threlfall; 2, T Brocklebank; 3, J Hirsch.

Female wrestling:

Under 15 Years 1, H Housby; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson.

Under 18 Years 1, C Hodgson; 2, D Gibson; 3, G McNeil.

10st 1, C Hodgson; 2, S Woodend ; 3, J Thompson.

All Weights 1, D Thompson; 2, G McNeill; 3, A McGregor.

Best Boy Wrestler: William Hayhurst;

Guinness Trophy: Richard Fox.

Silloth Carnival

Under 12 Years 1, J Kirkpatrick; 2, T Gibson; 3, S Wilson .

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, M Kirkpatrick.

Under 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Maussion; 3, J Hall.

Girls Under 15 Years 1, C Hodgson; 2, M Gibson; 3, D Gibson.

Ladies Open 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson.

11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, G Tanguy; 3, P Barnes.

13st 1, R Dixon ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, G Salaun.

All Weights 1, N Grannec; 2, R Dixon ; 3, W Hayhurst .

Best performance: Females, C Hodgson; Males, W Hayhurst .

Keswick Show

Under 12 Years 1, S Wilson; 2, G Wilson ;3, S Brown.

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Atkinson; 3, W Atkinson.

Under 18 Years 1, J Hall; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Maussion.

11 ½ st 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon ; 3, F Chaney.

13st 1, R Dixon ; 2, A Carlile; 3, W Atkinson.

All Weights 1, J Hall; 2, R Dixon ; 3, M Atkinson

Ladies Open 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson.

Dates:

Friday 4th Sept 6.30 Rothbury Mart U9/U12/U16/U19/11 ½ /13 ½ /15stone Championship/AW/ GirlsU16/Girls Open (£2,500 prize money)

Saturday Sept 5th 2.00 Harbottle Boys/Novice/10 ½ st Championship/12/AW

3.00 Lowick U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

HESKET NEWMARKET SHOW CANCELLED

Sunday 6th Sept 3.30 Loweswater U12/U15/U18/12.5/AW/Ladies Open

1.45 Wolsingham U12/U15/U18/11/12/14/AW/Ladies (£870)

Thursday 10th Sept 2.00 Westmorland Show U12/U15/U18Championship/11/12/13/14/AW/Girls U14/Ladies Open

Sunday 13th Sept 12.30 Stanhope U12/U15/U18/11.5/13stones Championship/AW/Ladies Open

3.30 Whitfield U12/U15/U18/12.5/AW/Ladies Open

September 16th 2009

£2,500 IN PRIZE MONEY AT ROTHBURY MART

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)



Two Championship events in Northumberland, in successive days, at two very different venues, saw the trophies returning to the same mantel shelves for another year. Richard Fox, under the roof, on the mats, in front of hundreds of spectators, at Rothbury Mart, retained his 15st World title.



Andrew Carlile, eight miles further up the Coquet Valley, on soggy grass, in front of a sprinkling of spectators, did the same with his 10 ½ st World title. The common factor was that each champion was on top of his game and held onto his title with masterly control.

Rothbury Mart with its £2,500 prize-money attracted a big attendance of wrestlers, with thirty or so in each class, so Richard Fox's achievement in winning the 13 ½ st class as a warm-up before winning the 15st Championship and then going on to reach the final of the All Weights, too, was awesome in the proper sense of the word.

In the final of the championship he felled the Northumbrian Andrew Ord, who does much of the winning in his own area. Fox won the first fall with a back-heel which converted into a twist over the knee to finish off. The second was won with his original and best chip.the buttock.



At Harbottle, once Andrew Carlile had mastered young Craig Ridley in the first round, he had to deal with a succession of Bretons, giving them a master-class in technique en route. Appropriately, his hardest bouts came in the final when Gurvan Salaun attacked from the beginning, but failed to put Carlile off-balance, so that it was only a matter of time before Carlile's hips carried the day. And then he did the same again in the 12 stones.

A young, lightweight Breton team added greatly to the sport wherever they competed. They made up most of the entry at Grayrigg Show, held in Kendal Auction Mart, but they could do nothing to prevent John Harrington's triple win in the 11 ½ st, 13st and 15st categories. William Hayhust added another five wins to his total. Two Rothbury brothers, Joe and Jack Hale, showed their class against top opposition at the Mart, Harbottle and Wolsingham.

**Results:
Grayrigg**

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, J Wilson Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, D Hodgson; 3, W Atkinson..... Under 18 Years 1, M Maussion; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, M Atkinson..... Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, D Gibson; 3, H Hodgson..... 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, M Maussion; 3, G Tanguy.....13st 1, John Harrington; 2, G Tassel; 3, F Chaney..... 15st 1 John Harrington; 2, N Granne; 3, W Hayhurst.... . All Weights 1, J Robson; 2, N Granne; 3, M Maussion

Rothbury Mart

Under 9 Years 1, H Bertram; 2, B Wright; 3, S Whitfield Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, S Wilson ; 3, D Brown.....Under 16 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, J Brown; 3, M Atkinson;.... Girls Under 16 Years 1, H Hodgson; 2, E Hayhurst ; 3, D Gibson.....Under 19 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, N Birdsall; 3, W Hayhurst11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, R Dixon13 ½ st 1, R Fox; 2, R Walton; 3, John Harrington..... 15st Championship 1, R Fox; 2, A Ord; 3, J Robson.....All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, R Fox; 3, N Granne .

Harbottle

Under 10 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, A Law; 3, D Wilson.... Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, M Dixon ; 3, C Whitfield.... Under 16 Years 1, J Brown; 2, J Rogerson; 3, C Carlyle.... Under 21 Years 1, A Ord; 2, M Maze; 3, N Birdsall....Novices 1, G Tanguy; 2, S Watt; 3, H Maloeuvre.....10 ½ st Championship 1, A Carlile; 2, G Salaun; 3, F Chaney....12st 1, A Carlile; 2, C Ridley; 3, G Reid.... All Weights 1, A Ord; 2, J Hirsch; 3, F Hirsch.

Lowick Show

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, S Wilson; 3, J WilsonUnder 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, M Atkinson; 3, S WilsonUnder 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst 1, M Atkinson; 3, J hayhurst..... Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, N Thexton 12 ½ st 1, M Atkinson; 2, T Brocklebank; 3, W Atkinson..... All Weights 1, G Brocklebank; 2, W Atkinson; 3, M Atkinson.

Wolsingham

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, S Wilson ; 3, T Gibson..... Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst 2, W Atkinson; 3, T Gibson.....Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, W Atkinson..... Ladies 1, C Hodgson; 2, D Gibson; 3, H Hodgson..... 11st 1, R Dixon ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, A Carlile..... 12st 1, A Carlile; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon14st 1, Jack Hale; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon..... All Weights 1, A Ord; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, A Carlile.

Dates:

Saturday, 12th Sept 2.30 Ingram Show U10/U12/U18/11 ½ /14 ½ AW
Sunday 13th Sept 12.30 Stanhope U12/U15/U18/11.5/13stones Ch'ship/AW/Ladies Open
3.30 Whitfield U12/U15/U18/12.5/AW/Ladies Open
Saturday, 19th Sept 2.30 Egremont Crab Fair U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW
1pm Whalton Village Show U12/U16/U19/12/14/AW
Sunday, 20 th Sept 2pm Borrowdale U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

September 23rd 2009

EGREMONT CRAB FAIR AND BORROWDALE SHOW

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

Richard Fox and John Harrington are the keenest of rivals in the wrestling ring with each bout fought at a high level of intensity and skill, but they are also friends and, occasionally, team-mates. Both train at Carlisle Wrestling Club and are members of the club's Academy Shield team. They trained hard together for the European Championships of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling when they were part of the English team. And last Saturday, at Egremont Crab Fair, they set the world of Wheelbarrow Racing alight as they finished half a lap ahead of the opposition. As the commentator, Alf Harrington, said; being farmer's sons, they have had plenty of experience with the equipment. After that interlude, they resumed hostilities in the wrestling ring. John Harrington had already felled Andrew Carlile in the final of the 11 ½ stones, when he met Fox in the final of the 13 stones. The encounter followed the pattern of their recent bouts with Fox winning with confidence in straight falls. The second fall was typical in that having missed with a hipe and inside-click, Fox then saved the day with a buttock. The same two wrestlers met in the All Weights final, and Fox kept up the momentum by taking the first fall with a very full buttock. Then the normal pattern disintegrated as John Harrington struck with a back-heel for the first and an inside hipe for the second fall, which gave him two wins at the same event, so the judge for the Guinness Trophy had little need for deep thought before awarding it to John Harrington. The wrestling at the Crab Fair was greatly enhanced by the willingness of the local lads to enter the fray. They enjoyed the sport, pleased the crowd and then they found they had won money, too.



The same level of local and active support was evident at Borrowdale, too, where local entries put in the foundations for a good competition for the big crowd to enjoy. After the early enthusiasm of the local lads, the standards move up several levels as the champions, Richard Dixon, Andrew Carlile, John Harrington and Richard Fox gave a master class in the local sport.

One fall in particular stands out for me. In the final of the All Weights John Harrington and Richard Fox were once more the protagonists. Harrington had all the hold for a change and was in control with his man held up in the air. The classic move in that position is to outside-hipe, knocking your opponent's legs high and sideways before bringing him down suddenly on his backside, and this is what Harrington, a brilliant exponent of the outside hipe, did. Fox was thrown out almost horizontally and all seemed lost for him, except that he squirmed in mid-air and spun in Harrington's arms so that instead of landing submissively on his heels and back, he landed on his toes and instantly twisted Harrington to the ground.

Results:

Egremont Crab Fair

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, C Kinrade; 3, A Calander, Under 15 Years 1 D Caine; 2, S Chorley ; 3, J Hewitt. Under 18 Years 1, S Rush; 2, D Caine; 3, A Chorley . Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson. 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, D Caine. 13st 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, A Carlile. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, R Fox; 3, C Naylor. Guinness Trophy: John Harrington.

Borrowdale

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, F Grove; 3, J Gibson. Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, L Grove; 3, R Weir. Under 18 Years 1, J Tonkin; 2, S Rowley ; 3, J Brown. Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson; 3, J Swanson. 11 ½ st 1, R Dixon ; 2, J Brown; 3, A Carlile. 13st 1, R Fox; 2, A Carlile; 3, D Hewitt. All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, D Hewitt.

Dates:

Saturday, 26th Sept 12.15pm Langholm Show U12/ U15/U18/Girls/12 ½ /AW

3pm Eskdale Show U15/U18/10 ½ /AW

October 1st 2009

6 CHAMPIONSHIPS IN THE HANDS OF 3 PRIZE-WINNERS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

The wrestling season suddenly goes from the hyperactivity of the Grasmere period with nine events in eight days leading into September to the gaps in the programme and the plummeting entries of the end of the month. Nevertheless, there were two events last Saturday, and both were called Eskdale Show: one at Langholm in the Borders of Scotland, and the other in, well, Eskdale just South of Wasdale in West Cumbria .



The show at Langholm was not over-endowed with entries, but there were enough to make it interesting. Local lads pushed the trained wrestlers hard in the boys' events, but Thomas Gibson of Southwaite kept his cool and his technique to add another win to his growing list at Under 12 Years. Jack Brown of Haydon Bridge

made a bad start when he lost the first fall of the Under 15 Years, but he rallied, used his head against some stronger lads and won his own age group and the Under 18s, too.

Once the senior wrestlers made their entry, there was less hope for the novices. John Harrington of



Bewaldeth

took care and time and sudden action to fell Andrew Carlile of Carlisle in the first round of the 12 stones, but after that he was less challenged felling young Jack Brown in the semi-final and the local entrant, Ashley Hay in the final with outside-hipe and twists.

The prize-list of the All Weights would have graced any event, with six championships in the hands of the three prize-winners. Best endowed with titles is Richard Fox of Hethersgill, who holds the 13st, 14st and 15 stones challenge trophies, and he made his weight and confidence tell. Even when he missed with an ambitious attempt at a swinging inside-click in the last bout of the day, he had put John Harrington so far off balance that he succumbed to Fox's twists.



Eskdale in West Cumbria had a poor show of wrestlers, with only the Hayhurst brothers from Natland travelling any distance to compete. Their ambition was well rewarded. Big brother, William, the Under 15 Champion won both boys events and wrestled up in the All Weights to a big shepherd, T Postlethwaite, fresh from the sheep pens. Younger brother James took a notable scalp in winning the 12 stones by felling Ashley Killip, a clever wrestler from the Waberthwaite Academy .

Plans for the winter are afoot. Carlisle Wrestling Club's Annual General Meeting will be held next Wednesday evening at Currock House to organise the training and competitions on the indoor mats. Anyone interested in the sport in the Carlisle area is heartily invited.

Results:

Langhom Show

Under 12 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, L Johnston ; 3, N McLeish . Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, M Poole ; 3, D Massey. Under 18 Years 1, J Brown; 2, M Booth; 3, C Brown. Girls 1, E Black 2, L Platt; 3, A Ewer. 12st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Hay; 3, J Brown. All Weights 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, A Carlile.

Eskdale Show

Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, J Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, S Denwood . 10 ½ st 1, S Denwood ; 2, C Naylor. 12st: 1 J Hayhurst; 2 A Killip All Weights 1, T Postlethwaite; 2, W Hayhurst .

Thropton

Under 9 Years 1, H Bertram; 2, D Wilson; 3, A Law. Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, A Wragg; 3, O Ewart. Under 15 Years 1, J Brown; 2, Joe Hale; 3, J Rogerson. Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Brown; 3, C Carlyle. Novices 1, J Wragg; 2, C Carlyle; 3, R Sharkey. Girls 1, G Porter; 2, N Aspin; 3, E Davidson.

Dates:

Wednesday, 7 th Oct 8pm Carlisle Wrestling Club AGM, Currock House

Saturday, 10 th Oct 12.30 Alwinton Show U10/U13/U15/U21/11 ½ /14/AW

4pm Wasdale Head Show U11/U12/U13/U15/U18/10 ½ /12/AW

Friday, 6 th Nov Wrestling Association Presentation Dinner, The Auctioneer, Carlisle (Tickets from Board Members)

October 7th 2009

LAST OPPORTUNITIES TO GAIN POINTS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

As the nights draw in and the frosts begin, Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling, perversely, heads for the hills for its last events. Only three remain of the 2009 Grass Season. Tomorrow, Alwinton Border Shepherds' Show, lost in the Cheviot foothills will attract an unfeasibly large crowd, whilst simultaneously, in the deepest of the Lakeland valleys, Wasdale Head Show, will also be based round a sheep show, fell-running, hound trails and wrestling. Last of all in a fortnight will be Buttermere Show with the same recipe, but perched half way up a mountain.

These are the last opportunities to gain points towards the Wrestling Association trophies for the most successful wrestlers of the 2009 season, which will be presented at the CWWA Dinner on November 6th. Every time a wrestler is first, second or third he or she gains points towards the trophy. Of course, wins score highest, but the system rewards persistence and a big mileage as well.

In the sixties wrestlers simply went into hibernation when the season ended if they were not part of Kendal Academy, the only club still meeting in that decade. Year by year the winter programme has improved since then: there are now five active academies throughout the North; the Academy Shield has been successfully revived after a gap; and the Annual Dinner brings wrestlers, organisers and fans together each year.

International contacts add further interest in the winter month: the Scots will hold their Youth Championships in November; the Icelanders have made an approach about closer contacts and the possibility of borrowing a coach early next year. Is it possible to get one person from England to come to Iceland maybe next spring to teach back-hold (over one weekend)?

And of course, the Bretons also have interesting offers: *Dear friends, we hopefully will have 3 events in Brittany at which we will be delighted to see you in the first part of 2010: in early February, the Breton back hold championship in Guipavas; on the 3,4 of April, the espoirs and female championship in Saint Brieuc; on the first days of June, some wrestlers from your association will be invited for the 80th year of the FALSAB, the Breton traditional games association which included wrestling for a long time. For this last event, could you send to me if you could be able to send some wrestlers? No travel and accommodation charge for them. Best regards, Jean-Francois Hubert*



All this and the Academy Shield in early December at Bootle means that no wrestler need be without a goal during the quiet season.

I have attended Alwinton Show every year since I was a toddler in 1946 (Except for when I was in Australia judging cattle in 2003) and still get a buzz out of the event with its big ring, big crowd, the wrestling and the craic. Wrestlers have to be there earlier this year to make a sharp start, perhaps to make sure that the ring is not taken over by a plague of terriers or balloons halfway through the action.

Carlisle Wrestling Club begins its indoor training sessions for Juniors and Seniors in the Gym at Currock House each Wednesday at 7.45pm, beginning on Wednesday, 14th October. The class is open to all ages but younger children must be accompanied by an adult. Costs are minimal

Dates:

Saturday, 10th October 12.30 Alwinton Show U10/U13/U15/U21/11 ½ /14/AW

4pm Wasdale Head Show U11/U12/U13/U15/U18/10 ½ /12/AW

Friday, 6th November Wrestling Association Presentation Dinner, The Auctioneer, Carlisle (Tickets from **Board Members**)

October 15th 2009

GRIDLOCK IN THE HILLS ON THE WAY TO ALWINTON SHOW IN THE CHEVIOT HILLS
(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Gridlock in the hills proved the popularity of Alwinton Show in the Cheviot Hills . Governing Board Chairman, Jim Bland travelled from Kendal for the wrestling, but spent an hour in a traffic jam looking at the autumnal colours between Harbottle and Alwinton while the wrestlers battled it out in the big ring.

In the age classes, local wrestlers reigned supreme and did their Rothbury Academy proud. Cade Whitfield had a couple of falls with inside-hipes which brought satisfying gasps from the crowd. Charlie Carlyle, a young wrestler who has never been seen West of Hexham was a class act, winning not only the Under 13s but also the Under 16s against heftier opposition. Eleven year old Joe Hale does not appear on the prize-list, but he kept up his reputation with some giant-killing bouts before being overwhelmed.

Two Northumbrians, Andrew Ord and Jack Hale, have established themselves in the mainstream of wrestling. Hale recently won the Under 18 Championship at Kendal, and Ord was last year's 14st Champion. Appropriately they met in the final of the Under 21s where Ord's close control stifled Hale's more exuberant style.



Once the senior wrestling began, the skills of three Carlisle wrestlers took them through the crowd of Northumbrian wrestlers. John Harrington of Bewaldeth felled Andrew Carlile of Carlisle in the 11 ½ st final in straight falls. Basically, Harrington gained the stronger hold and worked off the right hip. For the first he rushed Carlile forward off the hip, and for the second countered Carlile's buttock attempt.

In the 14 stones Richard Fox continued his fine season, though he seemed less fluent than



usual at times. Former champion David Atkinson, now returned to the area after finishing a contract in the South, pushed him hard in the first round, but eventually ran out of leg length when trying the leg-up buttock. Fraser Hirsch of Dundee , on holiday in Berwick, forced Jack Hale to his limits in their second round bout. It began easily enough with a Hale hipe, but Hirsch took the second by countering a buttock attempt. The decider was a desperate affair, but Hale managed the last twist in a hectic bout.

In the final between Hale and Fox, the Northumbrian, gained a quick and surprise fall by twisting off Fox's usually reliable back-heel. Fox then equalised with an outside-hipe, and went on to win when he went for the inside hipe and kept coming forward till Hale succumbed.



In the All Weights, the Champion, Richard Younger was in full control. He is massive and knows how to use his mass. Only at one point was there any doubt about his eventual success. In the first fall of the final Richard Fox went to buttock. Younger's body was clear of the ground and starting to come round and under, but not fast enough. Younger got the fall and a fright. Finale of the day, the last bout, was a simple matter of a Younger lift and a sideways flick to sent Fox sprawling.

Wasdale Head Show was a meeting place for Kendal and Carlisle trained wrestlers. In general William Hayhurst and the two Atkinson brothers, Matthew and William from Kendal had an excellent day in both the Ages and weights. Craig Naylor who is from Wasdale, but is at University in Penrith and trains weekly at Carlisle , had the pleasure of a win at his home sports in the 10 ½ st, after a season of injury. Jack Ewart of Westward, one of the keenest followers of wrestling, now restricted to competing only in the All Weights, went home happy after felling William Hayhurst in the final.

Results:

Alwinton Show

Under 10 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, H Bertram; 3, A Davy, Under 13 Years 1, C Carlyle; 2, D Brown; 3, J Rogerson, Under 16 Years 1, C Carlyle; 2, D Brown; 3, T Wade, Under 21 Years 1, A Ord; 2, Jack Hale; 3, M Lawrie, 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, D Cullen, 14st 1, R Fox; 2, Jack Hale; 3, John Harrington, All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, R Fox; 3, D Atkinson.

Wasdale Head Show

Under 11 Years 1, T Gibson; 2, H Jones; 3, M Hillis, Under 12 Years 1, S Wilson; 2, T Gibson; 3, T Wakefield, Under 13 Years 1, B Thompson; 2, J Nichol; 3, S Wilson, Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Atkinson, Under 18 Years 1, W Hayhurst ; 2, W Atkinson; 3, M Atkinson, 10 ½ st 1, C Naylor; 2, W Atkinson; 3, P Murray, 12st 1, M Atkinson; 2, W Atkinson; 3, C Naylor, All Weights 1, J Ewart; 2, W Hayhurst ; 3, W Atkinson.

Dates:

Saturday, 24th Oct 2pm Buttermere Show U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

Friday, 6th November Wrestling Association Presentation Dinner, The Auctioneer, Carlisle (Tickets from **Board Members**)

October 22nd 2009

A NEW WRESTLING ACADEMY MET FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS WEEK

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)



(This photo of Ted Hodgson at Rothbury Mart, captures the fun for youngsters wrestling on mats, indoors)

A new wrestling academy met for the first time this week, when eighteen young wrestlers turned up at **Haltwhistle Leisure Centre** on Monday evening. The main man behind the development is Alan Walton, an ex-champion who still wrestles occasionally.

On the death of his son, Chris, a brilliant youth wrestler, Alan found that lots of local lads expressed interest in taking up the sport and the new venture is a direct result.

With no qualified coaches in the area, the initial training will come from some of the Carlisle coaches who are firmly behind the project. In addition, David Atkinson, another excellent coach, has returned to Cumbria from Bristol and has expressed support. The new academy meets every Monday from 6.30 to 8pm.

Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling has moved a long way from the dark days of the 1960s when only Kendal Academy kept up its programme of winter training and internal points competitions. There are now **six academies** which cover a wide area of Northern England .

Far to the West of Cumbria is **Waberthwaite Academy** which meets in the village hall each Tuesday from 7 to 8.30pm. The leader, Tom Porter, is struggling with ill health at the moment, but has found two excellent young helpers in the shape of Andrew Woodend and Ashleigh Killip, who are wrestling with the youngsters and bringing them on nicely. Tom particularly commends the impact Alan Jones had on the lads last year when he took a few master-classes to help them with their Basic Coaching Certificate. The wrestling world will be pleased to hear that The pies are organised. Waberthwaite plays host to the Academy Shield Competition on December 5th , and is famous for its hospitality.

Kendal Academy has restructured significantly this year. They still meet in the South Lakes Leisure Centre but on a Monday night in a bid to be more popular with Senior wrestlers. In previous years all ages were mixed throughout the evening, but now the younger wrestlers up to the age of 11 or 12 get John Wilson's undivided attention from 7 to 8pm. Then the mats are cleared and the older wrestlers take over until 9pm.

Nearby **Milnthorpe Academy** never has ambitions for big numbers, but it fulfils an important role in bringing out wrestlers in its low-key way from the local villages. The coach, David Parsons, commented on how well William Hayhurst and Stuart Mason are training together. For the first time, too, girls have been taking part in the sessions which are held in the Milnthorpe Junior Football Club Pavilion each Thursday from 6.45 to 8.15pm.

The other, longer-established Northumbrian wrestling club at Rothbury has existed long enough to begin losing some of the wrestlers who showed promise in the past. The likes of Nathan Birdsall and Ross Wilkinson are now at university, and that means that training partners for Andrew Ord and Jack Hale are lacking. The positive side of this is that the club has already launched some excellent wrestlers good enough to win championships, and they also have more youngsters than ever before. Twenty little-uns turn up for the first session at 6.30 for an hour on the mats in the hall of **Rothbury Middle School** each Wednesday, then the older and bigger lads take over.

Finally, **Carlisle Wrestling Club** serves a huge tract of country with wrestlers travelling from West Cumbria and Northumberland to benefit from the expert tuition of Tom Harrington, Alan Jones, and Andrew Carlile in the Gym at Currock House each Wednesday. Youngsters start at 7.45pm and the older and heavier wrestlers take over at 9pm. A Points Competition for Juniors will take place on the second Wednesday of each month. The Senior wrestlers compete in their Points Competition on the third Wednesday of the month.

I wonder if any young wrestler is keen enough to try out all the academies, for it would be possible to visit all six in a ten day period.

Dates:

Saturday, 24th Oct - 2pm Buttermere Show U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

Friday, 6th November - The Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association Presentation Dinner, The Auctioneer, Carlisle (Tickets from **Board Members**)

November 4th 2009

'YOUNG FARMERS DO IT IN WELLIES'

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

The signs in Land Rover rear windows say, *'Young Farmers Do It In Wellies'*. Wrestlers, on the other hand *'Do It Whatever The Weather'* and that was particularly true at Carlisle Racecourse last Sunday. The theory and planning were excellent: the day that Carlisle had its richest race of the year, the £40,000 Coors Cumberland Chase, was designated the Countryside Day, and trail hounds, terrier racing, falcons and wrestlers were to entertain the crowds and especially all the children, on this bumper family day out.

Carlisle Wrestling Club had it all meticulously planned. Two training sessions, between races, taken by champion coaches Andrew Carlile and Alan Jones, would take place on the club's wrestling mats on a tarmac area near the children's' play area. A certain Roger Robson was to give an amazingly erudite and entertaining commentary to the massed crowds. Wrestling after all had been a key attraction at the old Swifts Racecourse down by the River Eden since 1809.

So, what happened? Rain, gale, rain, gale, more rain and more gale: that's what happened.



On the day itself the heavy rain would have made the wrestling mats into a skating rink; the Public Address system was liable to electrocute the commentator, so Plan B was invoked, thankfully. This consisted of moving the demonstration to a flat, grassy area beside the Parade Ring. The wrestlers were divided into two shifts so that they only got wet and muddy once in the afternoon. My commentary was heavily abridged to the role of referee and the frequent repetition of '*On your guard.wrestle!*'. The wrestlers would appear from under their umbrellas, immaculate in traditional strip, shake hands, wrestle, and squelch each other into the mud until they looked like Rugby League players on a water-logged pitch. The ring was in an excellent spot for the depleted crowd (no children to be seen), but mostly we had only passing trade as punters moved from Parade Ring to the bookies, which was a shame, as the wrestling skills of all the junior and senior wrestlers were a joy to watch.

As the soggy wrestlers made their way home, it was good to know that we had been given a good donation to Club funds, and an invitation to do the same again on a sunnier day.

Dates:

Friday, 6th November - Wrestling Association Presentation Dinner, The Auctioneer, Carlisle (Tickets from Alf Harrington)

Wednesday, 11th November - Carlisle Wrestling Club First Junior Points Night

Wednesday, 18th November - Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points

November 16th 2009

PRESENTATION OF THE VICTOR LUDORUM TROPHIES

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Wrestlers and supporters from throughout the North of England foregathered at Carlisle to honour the most successful wrestlers of the 2009 season, eat a good meal and talk themselves hoarse.

CWWA Trophy winners 2009



Back row (l to r): William Hayhurst (Under 15 and Under 18 Years); Richard Fox (Heavyweights); Richard Dixon (11½st); John Harrington (13st).

Front row: Thomas Gibson (Under 12 Years); Connie Hodgson (Ladies)

Alan Coulthard, President of the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association, and his wife, Christine, presented Victor Ludorum trophies to the wrestlers who had amassed most points for wins and places throughout the season. The winner at Under 12 Years was Thomas Gibson of Southwaite who had twenty-four wins to his credit at events throughout Cumbria and Northumberland. He lives on a dairy farm and has his share of the work to do, so that gives him a basic fitness and resilience. Add to that his willingness to learn from his coach Alan Jones and you begin to understand how he constantly improved throughout the season.

William Hayhurst of Natland is part of a group of lads from **Kendal Academy** who have travelled widely and enhanced events in all parts. Initially, Hayhurst seemed on a par with others in the group, but at **Skelton Show** and at Alston Gala on the same day, he

moved up a level and, from then on was the dominant wrestler in boys wrestling. In all, he gained forty-three wins to make him the most successful wrestler of the season. His success was spread through several age categories and he won the CWWA Victor Ludorum trophies at both Under 15 and Under 18 Years.

The Hodgson sisters from Dent have had a virtual monopoly on the Victrix Ludorum trophy for some years and this time it was the third oldest sister, Connie who was successful. She had seventeen first places, twice as many as her nearest rivals.

Carlisle Wrestling Club provided all the senior winners: Richard Dixon of Lessonhall had one fewer outright wins than his nearest rival in the 11 ½ stones, John Harrington of Bewaldeth, but he had many more second and thirds places, so took the trophy. Much the same happened in the 13 stones where Richard Fox of Hethersgill was unbeaten in all eleven events he entered, but John Harrington was able to win with his mixture of wins and places.

In the Heavyweight section, which covers all competitions above 13 stones, the new Heavyweight Champion, Richard Younger of Ponteland, was only once beaten, in his ten outings. But both Andrew Ord of Morpeth (16) and Richard Fox (19) had many more wins than that in this category. In one of the closest sections of the season Richard Fox was the narrow winner.

Yet another honour was heaped onto him when the active wrestlers present at the Dinner voted for him to receive the Wrestlers' Wrestler Trophy, another accolade to add to Richard Fox's annus mirabilis, a year of wonders.

The Network Private Hire Under 21's Scottish Open Backhold Wrestling Championships 2009 which will be held in Glasgow looks like attracting a good attendance of our young wrestlers on Saturday, 28th November.

Date:

Wednesday, 18th November Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points

November 19th 2009

FIRST WINTER POINTS COMPETITIONS

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

Carlisle Wrestling Club is well into its winter training regime, but that had a rest while the first Points Competitions were held. The star of the Junior Points Night was Megan Gibson of Southwaite who won two categories, 7st and 8½ st, and the old battered trophy for the best performance in all the wrestling.

All summer those in the know recognise that she is the best pound for pound girl wrestler around. The only problem is that she does not have enough pounds and enough years to make it tell against heavier and older opposition and she rarely wins. All that changes on the mats when she is allowed to compete against the lads and proves a doughty opponent. In the 7 stones final she had her younger brother Thomas to keep in place and she duly gained a good hold and wrenched him into the ground off her right hip.

A bigger wrestler, Philip Potts of Dalston awaited her in the final of the 8½ stones. Philip is the son of former champion Andy Potts, but his lineage did not prevent him from succumbing to a right leg back-heel and a twist over the right knee from Mighty Mouse Megan.

The other Junior wrestler who shone was Jack Brown of Haydon Bridge , the Under 15/8st Champion, who won the Under 15 s and at 10st. His chief opponent was Paul Murray of Arlecdon who is older but lighter. Brown felled Murray in one of the best bouts of the night, in the second round of the 10 stones, but lost out in the semi-final of the Under 18 Years. Both have been under par this season: Jack Brown has been keeping his weight down for his other career as a jockey, and Paul Murray is only now coming back to his strength after illness.



In the Senior Points Richard Dixon of Lessonhall made the running, winning at both 11 ½ and 13 stones. After the rigours of the summer wrestling, both John Harrington of Bewaldeth and Richard Fox of Hethersgill were subject to slippage in the weights department: Harrington could not make the lightweights and Fox only had action in the All Weights. Even then they slipped up as Harrington was twisted back in the 13 stones round-robin, so that Dixon went on to win unbeaten. Much the same happened in the All Weights when Harrington felled Fox in a long, close bout which ended with a twist over the knee.

Two important competitions loom for our wrestlers. Next Saturday the Junior Scottish Backhold Championships take place in Glasgow . Ages and weights are such that all wrestlers should be able to find a niche where they are competing on level terms with the opposition. On December 5th, the Academy Shield takes place at Bootle Station, hosted by Waberthwaite Academy . Next Wednesday's training session at **Carlisle Wrestling Club** will double as a selection meeting for the Shield Competition.

Results

Carlisle Wrestling Club Points Night

Juniors: 6st 1, J Kent ; 2, W Allison; 3, J Gibson; 4, H Alcock : **7st** 1, M Gibson; 2, T Gibson; 3, J Gibson; 4, W Allison : **8 ½ st** 1, M Gibson; 2, P Potts; 3, T Gibson; 4, O Burbury. 10st 1, J Brown; 2, P Potts; 3, D Gibson; 4, P Murray .

Girls 1, K Brown; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson. **Under 12 Years** 1, T Gibson; 2, O Burbury; 3, T Allison; 4, W Allison. **Under 15 Years** 1, J Brown; 2, D Gibson; 3, M Gibson; 4, P Potts. **Under 18 Years** 1, P Murray ; 2, D Gibson; 3, J Brown; 4, P Potts.

Best Performance cup: Megan Gibson

Seniors: **11 ½ st** 1, R Dixon ; 2, C Naylor; 3, P Murray . **13st** 1, R Dixon ; 2, John Harrington; 3, M Laurie; 4, C Naylor. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, R Fox; 3, R Dixon ; 4, J Ewart.

Dates:

Saturday 28th November: Network Private Hire Under 21`s Scottish Open 2009 Backhold Wrestling Championship, Glasgow Club John Paul 2, Arrochar Street, Summerston, Glasgow G23 5LY

UNDER 10's		UNDER 13's	
MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
4 st 7 lbs	4 st 7 lbs	6 st 7 lbs	6 st 7 lbs
5 st 0 lbs	5 st 0 lbs	7 st 7 lbs	7 st 7 lbs
5 st 7 lbs	5 st 7 lbs	8 st 7 lbs	8 st 7 lbs
6 st 0 lbs	6 st 0 lbs	9 st 7 lbs	9 st 7 lbs
6 st 7 lbs	6 st 7 lbs	10 st 7 lbs	10 st 7 lbs
Open	Open	Open	Open
UNDER 17's		UNDER 21's	
MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
8 st 7 lbs	8 st 7lbs	8 st 7 lbs	8 st 7 lbs
9 st 7 lbs	9 st 7 lbs	10 st 7 lbs	10 st 7 lbs
10 st 7 lbs	10 st 7 lbs	12 st 7 lbs	12 st 7 lbs
12 st 7 lbs	12 st 7 lbs	Open	Open
Open	Open		

Ladies Adult Scottish Championships: 10st 7lbs and Open

Weigh-in times 9.00am 10.00am. Wrestling commences at 10.30am approx

November 25th 2009

LAKELAND SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR 2009

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Once upon a time, in the 1960s, a youngster who wrestled or ran, and won a pound in his village sports, could be debarred from taking part in any school sports because he was tainted with professionalism. To combat this, the Lakeland Sports Promoters Association was formed to rescue the situation by an accommodation with the Amateur Athletic Association. The original reason for the LSPA is long gone but it continues to support traditional sports meetings and each year awards trophies to the high performers at its events. Five wrestlers and five runners were nominated for the two main awards, but there was little doubt about the winners. William Hayhurst of Natland won the LSPA Junior Lakeland Sports Personality Trophy by winning prolifically at virtually all the affiliated meetings. Not only did he win at Under 18 Years, but there were few who could best him in the Under 18s.



The winner of the Lakeland Sports Personality of the Year 2009 was Richard Fox of Hethersgill. He did not attend so many of the smaller meetings in the south of the county, but at the major events, Ambleside, Grasmere, and the Westmorland Show, he showed his pre-eminence by winning his own weight and then winning again in a heavier category. Thomas Gibson of Southwaite's successful season was recognised by his nomination at Under 12 Years; Connie Hodgson of Dent took the girls' Under 15 nomination, and John Harrington's double wins at Ambleside and Egremont led to his nomination.

Our wrestlers have been invited by the Scottish Wrestling Bond to take part in its Youth Championships on Saturday. Four age groups (Under 10, 13, 17 and 21) for both sexes, divided into many weights, means that there are 42 separate categories. Any of our wrestlers who struggled all summer against heavier and older opponents will be attracted by the chance to compete on equal terms. In addition, the Adult Scottish Women's Championships, at 10½ st and at All Weights, will also be held.

A week later our biggest indoor competition takes place at Bootle Station, West Cumbria, when Waberthwaite Academy hosts the Academy Shield Competition. The new Haltwhistle club has decided it would be premature to enter this year, but we expect teams from the other five academies, including Rothbury which is on the other side of the world.

Wrestlers will be concerned to hear that as I write, Joseph Robson of Grayrigg, one of our elite wrestlers, a prolific winner of championships, is on a ventilator in the Intensive Care Unit in Lancaster Hospital, fighting pneumonia.

December 2nd 2009

SCOTTISH YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Five wrestlers from Carlisle Wrestling Club spent a successful day last weekend in the John Paul Sports Centre in Glasgow where the Scottish Youth Championships were held.



A plethora of ages and weights, and the pool system of competition meant that Donna Thompson of Alston had a long wait before she was in action. In both the Under 21 Years Open and the Scottish Ladies Open Championship her chief opponent was Gemma McNeil of the Red Road Wrestling Club in Glasgow. The two had met in the Ladies All Weights final at Grasmere Sports in August when Donna Thompson won. This time she won again, but not without a long and tough battle. The local support for the Scottish girl was deafening but Thompson kept cool and won the day to become Scottish champion twice over, and the award of the best wrestler in the whole of Under 21 Years section. Her little brother, Joe Thompson, who is a big lad these days, achieved much the same in his categories, as he won the Open weight at both Under 17 and Under 21 Years. In addition he, too, was awarded the best wrestler trophy for the Under 17 Years. In many ways he had the biggest task of the day for there were more wrestlers in his section than in any other, and he had to fight his way through the round-robin pool stage before wrestling in the cross ties and, eventually, the final. All bouts were best-of-five, so his fitness was fully tested as well as his skill. The good news is that he seems to have shrugged aside the injuries which dogged his season, and be on the best of form.

Another set of siblings, Megan and Thomas Gibson of Southwaite, set the ball rolling for the English in the Under 13 Years section. Megan competed well in both the 7 ½ st and 8 ½ st Girls to take bronze and silver medals, but she found herself up against some of the best wrestlers in the whole event, especially Jasmin Carson of the Hamilton Club.

Megan's brother, Thomas, in the Under 13 Years Boys, had a perfect score, winning at 7 ½ st and 8 ½ st. and taking the best wrestler award for his section.

The fifth Carlisle wrestler was Paul Murray of Arlecdon who had dazzled the opposition in the previous event two years ago. In the Under 17s he showed little sign that his wrestling year has been dogged by injury and illness, and he won trophies at both 9 ½ st and 10 ½ st and, of course the best performance trophy, too. However, when he raised his ambitions to the Under 21 Years, he found the Dundee wrestlers too powerful for him, and he wisely, withdrew to keep fit for this weekend's Academy Shield Competition.

The best wrestler of the whole tournament was one of those Dundee lads, George Reid, who wrestled well at Rothbury and Harbottle earlier in the year.

This Saturday is the night when the wrestlers from our whole region foregather for the Academy Shield at Bootle Station in the far West of Cumbria. Weighing-in begins at 7pm.

A CD of photographs of the majority of wrestling events in the CWWA 2009 season will be previewed and on sale at 7.30pm on Sunday, 13 th December in the lounge at Currock House, Carlisle. All profits go to CWWA funds.

Joseph Robson of Kendal Academy remains gravely ill and has been moved to the Cardiac Unit at the Blackpool Hospital where he has shown signs of improvement after surgery.

Saturday 5th December Academy Shield, Bootle Station Hall, weigh-in at 7pm

December 9th 2009

ARLISLE WRESTLING CLUB WINS THE ACADEMY SHIELD 2009

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Carlisle Wrestling Club was the clear winner of the Academy Shield 2009, when finishing ten falls clear of the second placed academy, the hosts, Waberthwaite.



Carlisle was lacking three of its star senior wrestlers, but the youngsters at the club had established such a lead after five weights, that the issue was scarcely in doubt from then on. Brothers, Kieron (6st) and David Miller (8st), smartly stripped in the traditional costume, looked the part and wrestled like veterans.

Jack Brown's chief adversary was gravity, and he spent considerable time running about in a black bin-bag and multiple layers of clothing before he squeaked into the 9 stones. Once weighed in, the rest was easy as he hipped his way through the opposition. Paul Murray had the toughest of groups, the 10 stones, but he has returned to his usual form and he also was unbeaten. His bout with the Waberthwaite star, Andrew Woodend, was one of the most intense of the whole night.

Two more Carlisle Wrestlers were unbeaten, Craig Ridley (12st) and Murdo Laurie (13st). Ridley has returned to training recently and he is well on the way to regaining his silky skills. Murdo Laurie is a newcomer, who began wrestling at an evening class at Brampton 's William Howard School . This year he wrestled occasionally at open events, and once the winter training began on the mats at Currock House, he made huge progress.

Three other wrestlers from other academies were also unbeaten. Connie Hodgson of Kendal amassed more points than any other wrestler, as she felled all her opponents in both the Womens's 10st and Women's All Weights. For Milnthorpe, Stuart Mason was the chief points winner when he felled all opponents in the 12 stones. The furthest travelled wrestler of the night was Andrew Ord who

lives on a farm on the outskirts of Morpeth in Northumberland, which is further away than Ireland from Bootle Station Village Hall, and down some long and winding roads, too. He was unbeaten in the 15 stones and lost only to the Kendal wrestler, Sam Wilkinson, in the All Weights

Carlisle 's success came mainly from two sources: the quality of coaching at the club from Alan Jones, Andrew Carlile and Tom Harrington; and from having a full team of thirteen wrestlers, for any gaps meant that points were conceded.

Wrestling moves from action to image this weekend when the CD of the year's photographs and articles is previewed at a slide show in the main hall of Currock House at 7.30pm on Sunday 13 th December. Photographs of about forty events will be on display. Anyone interested in our traditional wrestling is invited to attend. All profits go to the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association.

The Kendal wrestler Joseph Robson is still in intensive care, but is slowly improving day by day. He is now able to sit in a chair and he is no longer sedated and on a ventilator. Although he is unable to speak because of a tracheotomy, he is able to communicate by text message via his mobile phone.

Result:

Academy Shield 2009 1, Carlisle 38pts; 2, Waberthwaite 28pts; 3, Kendal 24pts; 4, Rothbury 20pts; 5, Milnthorpe 18pts

December 17th 2009

OUR BRETON WRESTLING FRIENDS HAVE A CRISIS ON THEIR HANDS

(CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page)

Our Breton wrestling friends have a crisis on their hands. La Fédération de Gouren appeared in court in Brest this week charged with animal cruelty. Many in the public gallery were dressed in the canvas wrestling jacket of Breton wrestling, prosecution lawyers were met by sheep noises from the crowd, and petitions were signed.



An action had been brought by Stéphane Lamart, supported by the Brigitte Bardot Foundation, to stop an ancient tradition of the main Breton wrestling tournaments, le maout, when the winner is presented with a live sheep, which he carries round the ring on his shoulders.

I have seen a drawing of le maout dating 1837 and witnessed the tradition when I visited their big summer event at St Kadou many summers ago. The same tradition is even mentioned in this country in the Prologue of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales when the Miller, full bigge he was of brawn and eek of bones . At wrastlyng he wolde have away the ram.

The nub of the matter is that most Bretons see le maout as an ancient tradition which is integral to their culture, whilst the prosecution regard it as animal cruelty. The court decided to deliberate and make a decision on February 8th. But the final words of the judges give hope to the prosecution: "Le respect de la tradition n'exclut pas le respect de l'animal et du progrès" The respect for tradition does not override respect for an animal or for progress.

In Cumbria no sheep are under threat from wrestlers, although they can be good hiping and twisting practice in the sheep pens, but we should have some sympathy with our Breton friends. Our Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, ancient though it is, has to conform to the modern world of health and safety, child protection, insurance and qualified coaches. Usually, it comes down to common sense, but we must always be alert to bureaucratic threats which could endanger the continuation of the sport as we know it.

Our wrestlers have again been invited to take part in the Breton Back-hold Championships in Guipavas, on the outskirts of Brest , on Saturday, 27th February. In early April the Espoirs European Championships and the Women's European Championships will be held in St Briec in Brittany , and again our wrestlers are invited to participate.

In Currock House last weekend a healthy gathering of wrestlers and supporters saw an excellent slide-show of wrestling photographs taken during 2009 and now available on CD. Several images show Richard Fox buttocking opponents so high that their feet are more than seven feet above ground level. And the Bretons are there, too, muddied but cheerful during the Grasmere monsoon week. (Anyone who wishes to have a copy of the CD should contact me on 016974 73559 for details. All profit to the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association.)

December 22nd 2009

CHRISTMAS CARDS AND NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Once more my personal archivist, Jeremy Godwin of Penrith, has furnished me with a Christmas card and a packet of newspaper cuttings on wrestling and Belted Galloways taken from regional papers.

The *Whitehaven News* in particular has a rich seam of anecdote and information in its 'Memory Lane' section which gives snippets from 150, 125, 100, 75, and 50 years ago. Some of the pieces go even further back, such as when a brief obituary in 1881 recalled that George Graham 'came to Whitehaven in October 1838 and took part in the heavy-weight wrestling on Bransty; and though only a tall, lanky young fellow he astonished everyone by the scientific way he grassed his men.'

In 1859 an account of the Whitehaven Races and Wrestling on Harris Moor, is a wonderful example of bored, seen-it-all-before journalism, as the writer deals with the weather, 'the arrangements of the police', the laudable lack of 'roulette and other gambling tables' before dismissively reporting on the action: 'the races were not inferior to those of last year while the wrestling was an improvement on last year.'

The *Keswick Reminder* journalist in 1884 even went on strike over the wrestling at the Blencathra Lodge of the United Order of Mechanics' Anniversary day: 'It is useless to attempt to give a return of the wrestling, in as much as so many of the contestants entered in false names.'

In any case, you can't believe everything you read in the newspapers: one week you have an authoritative letter full of detail about Pica people and how 'William Branthwaite, who worked at Oatlands Colliery, became the Cumberland and Westmorland 11st Champion at Grasmere Sports in 1945'. Next week a blunt note from Branthwaite's grandson pointed out that he died in 1926 and had won at Grasmere in 1900. Oops!

In 1909 the *Wasdale Head News* included an account of a challenge match, with a wager of £15 a-side, between Harry Carty of Egremont and Dick Wilson of Wasdale Head. 'There was a large field of about 300 spectators and great excitement was shown in the match' won by Wilson .

A *Penrith Herald* of February 1909 gives an insight into the deep hold that wrestling had at that time. I knew that Carlisle Academy had popular weekly competitions each winter Saturday, but I had no idea that this entertainment was commonplace in other parts. No fewer than four academies: Penrith, Keswick, North Westmorland and Appleby held similar events all with impressive entries of wrestlers.

After Jack Brown's protracted and eventually successful weight loss immediately prior to the Academy Shield earlier this month, perhaps he should note the ploys of a wrestler at Caldbeck Sports in 1934 who 'found he was overweight for the 12st event. Thereupon he ran around the field, took off his socks and even took out his false teeth. His effort was not in vain as he just succeeded in weighing in.'



In the same year *The Hexham Courant* reported that *Bardon Mill* wrestler J. Pattinson won the 11st wrestling championship of Great Britain at the 81st Annual Border Gaames. 75 years later, his grandson Jonjo Pattinson is still keeping the family traditions of wrestling and Hexham style Blackfaced sheep going.

A mere fifty years ago are two cuttings which seem at odds with each other. *By the narrowest of margins Bootle defeated Gosforth in an entertaining indoor match at Gosforth. Although Gosforth won two of the three weight divisions, they lost by 28 falls to 26* By contrast, at the AGM of the Wrestling Association, the secretary, Mr J Fisher, expressed concern about the dearth of wrestlers.

Wrestlers have found something else to do, and more to their liking. It would take a very big effort to arrest this downward trend. The crispy crinkle of a handful of notes, to be the possessor of a medal and the temporary holder of a trophy, which should be the pinnacle of ambition, inspires all too few.

The effort continues.....

December 31st 2009

WHO WOULD FANCY STRIPPING OFF TO WRESTLE ON NEW YEARS DAY

(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

Cumberland and Westmorland wrestlers are a hardy bunch who compete in all sorts of conditions. In a drought year the rings are like concrete. Whilst in the past two years the action has often been in a morass. All these uncomfortable variations are the result of the vagaries of the weather, but two centuries ago choices of venues and dates seemed perverse, verging on masochism.

With all the bracing weather of the past ten days, who would fancy stripping off to wrestle on New Years Day? Yet that was the date of one of the biggest wrestling events, Langwathby Rounds, which lasted from the 1780s to 1870. Wrestling formed by far the biggest attraction of these primitive gatherings; the yeomen, farmers and the husbandmen from the neighbouring hamlets being the principal competitors. The village girls danced, the lads ran and jumped even amidst the cheerless snow. By the time these pastimes were concluded, daylight had either gone or was fast fading away. Owing to the darkness setting in thus early, lanterns were frequently in great request among the rough-spun frequenters of the wrestling ring.

In 1785 the hardiness of wrestlers and spectators was even further challenged when Windermere Lake froze over. When the ice had attained great thickness a project was started for roasting a large ox on it. A vast concourse from all parts of the surrounding country assembled to enjoy the unusual sight. Creature comforts, in the shape of eatables and lots of beer, were not wanting. A band of music from Kendal, too, gave animation to the scene. The wrestling was in clogs, such as country people at that time generally wore. These primitive coverings for the feet, though well adapted for sliding on the ice, were clumsy to wrestle in; nevertheless the falls were eagerly contested, and delighted the throng of spectators. The final victor received a belt.

The wildest venue of all was the annual shepherds' meet each July on top of High Street, 2700 feet above sea level. Shepherds converged on the wide summit with stray sheep to return to their owners. That business done they turned to food and alcohol, and finally to running, horse-racing and wrestling.



I like to think that Thomas Bewick, the wood engraver, whose tiny tale-pieces gave a key-hole vision of rural life, knew about such as the High Street wrestling, for from his workshop came an engraving of two wrestlers taking hold high in the mountains. In 1776 he walked over from Tyneside to visit his uncle and cousins at Ainstable, discovered from his landlord in Langholm that *my cousin who had accompanied me to Carlisle had won nine belts in his wrestling matches*.

The wrestling engraving may have been done by one of Bewick's apprentices, and is a contender for the oldest image of wrestling that I know of.

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