

May 14th 2008

EDEN VALLEY VINTAGE RALLY

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Watchai Noimai wrestles in a vest with both the English and the Thai flags on his back. On Sunday at Dalemmain, amongst the shining tractors and vintage cars of the Eden Valley Vintage Rally, he was given a Cumberland accolade by a spectator: What a lish lad then is. After some years of training at Carlisle Wrestling Club, Noimai knows his hanks from his hips, but in winning the Under 18 Years, he went for basics: survival twists which turned certain defeat into improbable victory. As he was swung or pushed into the ground, he would somehow emerge at the other side without touching down. His Houdini style only ended, when in the senior wrestling he met one of the Carlisle coaches, Andrew Carlile. Carlile has made a perfect start to the season, hiping when he has to, but mainly winning with neat twists and turns which are the hallmarks of wrestling efficiency and experience. His Main Challenge came in the All Weights when his friend and rival of many years, David Atkinson, put in a holiday appearance up North from his work in Bristol. Atkinson reminded the crowd of his wrestling pedigree when he so neatly hiped and crossed Joe Thompson in mid-air. The final was close, but it was appropriate that the wrestler who has trained all winter was jut too sharp for the holiday maker. As usual, the wrestling at the North Cumbria YFC Field Day, this year held near Gosforth, was a wonderful mixture of innocence and experience. The innocents are the fall guys volunteered by others so that a point for entering can be added to the club's total; the experienced are those who have spent many years training and competing at home and abroad. Paul Murray representing Greysouthern showed how to neutralise bigger and stronger lads with his well honed skills. Richard Dixon of Wigton and John Harrington of Caldbeckcut a swathe through the 11 ½ st men before Harrington won a close final; and Joe Lowery of Drigg and Richard Fox of Longtown did the same in the All Weights. There is, however, a third category of YFC wrestler lying between naivety and professionalism: naturally strong and athletic individuals whose main wrestling experience is their annual participation in the Field Day. This is especially so in the women's sections where Katie Wigham of Kirkclinton felled a real battler Mica Graham of Carlisle in the All Weights. In the 10 stones Elyn Groat of Egremont fought the toughest of campaigns before she felled Fiona Reed of Brampton in the final. Reed last year, in the dialect competition, wrote about bin med t' diu Cummelan' wrustlin'. This is her last year of YFC competition and she can look back with pride on her career limited though it has been to an annual outing at the Field Day.

Results:

Eden Valley Vintage Rally, Dalemmain

Under 12 Years 1, A Dent; 2, D Roberts; 3, S Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, M Fisher; 3, A Dent. Under 18 Years 1, W Noimai; 2, P Murray; 3, J Thompson. Women 1, L Murray; 2, S Bendle; 3, J Bendle. 12 ½ st 1, A Carlile; 2, J Thompson; 3, M Fisher. All Weights 1, A Carlile; 2, D Atkinson; 3, J Thompson.

Dates:

Saturday, May 17 th 2pm, Sedbergh Gala, U12/U15/U18/12½/AW

Monday, May 26 th 1.30pm, Northumberland County Show, Corbridge. U12/U15/U19/11½/13½/AW

June 4th 2008

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



My favourite time-warp, A field int back o' beyond, otherwise known as Killington Sports, hosted its usual mix of serious wrestling and running, and less serious egg-throwing, tatie races and pillow fights. The wrestling programme included the 11st World Championship which was bound to have a new title holder because last year's winner, Andrew Carlile was abroad. This gave a chance to a younger contingent of wrestlers, and it was Richard Dixon of Lessonhall, Wigton who came out on top. Dixon used to be unbeatable when he was a tiny eleven year-old, and now that he is twice as heavy and twice as tall, he is a formidable opponent in the lightweight events, and well able to compete with heavier men. His chief opposition came from fellow Carlisle Wrestling Club members. In the semi-final Watchai Noimai proved an active and dangerous opponent, but Dixon finished him off with a sudden twist back from a difficult position. In the final Craig Ridley of Alston nearly caused an upset when the first hold was a dog-fall. After that wake-up call, Dixon got into gear and finished off Ridley with buttocks. Richard Dixon has held various boys championships but this was his first senior title. The championship was the high point for the Carlisle wrestlers, as all the other categories went to Kendal and Milnthorpe wrestlers. The formidable Brocklebank brothers, Graham and Thomas, won at 13 stones and All Weights against the same wrestler in the finals. Richard Fox went ahead in both finals by taking the first fall, but Graham made up ground with some big twists to win the next two falls and Thomas stopped the rot in the All Weights by hoisting Fox up and back over, twice. Another Brocklebank, cousin Scott, had to be careful in the final of the Under 15 Years with Stuart Mason who took the middle fall with a neat cross-click. When he tried the same chip again in the third hold it was less neat and Brocklebank threw him forward and to the ground. As I left the field in near darkness, they were still thrashing away on the bolster and bar, and suicidal runners in droves were hurtling round the hills and hollows of that field int back o' beyond.

Results:

Killington Sports

Under 12 Years 1, I Hammond; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, D Revel. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, S Mason; 3, J Lashley Under 16 Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, L Wilson. 11st Championship 1, R Dixon; 2, C Ridley; 3, W Noimai. 13st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, R Fox; 3, John Harrington. All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, R Fox; 3, John Harrington.

Dates:

Sunday, June 8th 1.30pm Morpeth U10/U13/U16/U18/11/13 ½ /15 ½ /AW

Saturday, June 14th Roman Wall Show

Lowgill Sports & Sheepdog Trials

June 12th 2008

MORPETH FAIR

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The wrestling at Morpeth Fair in Northumberland takes place in Carlisle Park alongside the River Wansbeck and several Carlisle wrestlers made themselves very much at home. On a shelf of lawn between bog, trees and litter bins, Carlisle Wrestling Club took all three places in the 11 stones. Watchai Noimai and Richard Dixon wrestled well, but Andrew Carlile was a class ahead on the day, using minimum effort to win his falls a nudge here, a cunning twist there. He was obviously well extended in the final with Dixon, but rode Dixon's attacks and won with twists. Following on from that, John Harrington took up the baton for the Carlisle club, winning the first fall of the final by inside-clicking Fraser Hirsch, down from Dundee. Hirsch is a powerful and canny wrestler and fought back with a typical grab for hold and a wrench buttock off the right side. This served only to inspire Harrington to one of the falls of the day when he outside-hipped, and then finished off with a buttock. In the heavier weights the Northumbrians came into their own with Jason Davidson felling Andrew Ord with two outside-hipes in the 15st final, and Darren Whitfield did much the same to Jason Davidson in the All Weights final. Usually Whitfield and Davidson have close bouts, but this time it almost looked like an old fashioned barney as Davidson went down so easily. Whitfield was as surprised as the rest of us, for the reason was that Davidson had picked up an injured shoulder which rendered him less competitive. It speaks well for the two wrestling academies that two coaches from each were in top spots: active wrestlers remain the best inspiration for the next generation of wrestlers. The pupils in general lost the war, but they also won some wonderful battles. Craig Ridley of Slaggyford was on excellent form in the Under 16s when he beat the dangerous Jack Hale in the final, but the fall which probably made his day would be the hank that splattered his coach, Andrew Carlile. Watchai Noimai, in turn, took a spectacular fall from his coach, Alan Jones, when he swung him on and sent him flying. Andrew Ord may have lost to his coach, Jason Davidson, when he went down to two outside-hipes, but it was Ord who showed him how to do it in their first bout. The experienced wrestlers are winning, but are pushed every step of the way by the young callants.

Results:

Morpeth Fair

Under 10 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, H Bertram; 3, C Bertram. Under 13 Years 1, C Spence; 2, G Crane; 3, L Spence. Under 16 Years 1, C Ridley; 2, Jack Hale; 3, J Daley. Under 18 Years 1, J Oliver; 2, N Birdsall; 3, C Naylor. 11st 1, A Carlile; 2, R Dixon; 3, W Noimai. 13 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, F Hirsch; 3, A Jones. 15 ½ st 1, J Davidson; 2, A Ord; 3, R Dixon. All Weights 1, D Whitfield; 2, J Davidson; 3, John Harrington.

Dates:

Saturday, June 14th 2pm Roman Wall Show U13/U17/11 ½ /13 ½ /AW

6pm Lowgill Sports & Sheepdog Trials, Lancaster U12/U15/U18/13/AW

Sunday, June 15th 1.30pm Rothbury Vintage Rally U10/U14/U18/U21/AW

Saturday, June 21 2pm Kirkheaton U12/U15/U18/12/15/AW

Saturday, June 22nd Silloth U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Sunday, June 29th 2pm Patterdale U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

June 18th 2008

THE ROMAN WALL SHOW

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One wrestler was Victor Ludorum at the Roman Wall Show. John Harrington of Bewaldeth weighed in at under 11 ½ stones and won that category then went on to be best at 13 ½ stones and in the All Weights. On the way, the old master, Alan Jones, did take a good fall with an inside hipe, but otherwise Harrington was untroubled even when up against much heavier opposition. In the All Weights semi-final he met a powerful and weighty newcomer, Thomas Graham of Alston. Escaping from the Graham's clamping arms, Harrington resorted to the hank for the first fall and an excellent inside-click for the second, both being chips that the

inexperienced find difficult to counter. Nathan Birdsall of Rothbury had a good session at the Roman Wall Show, winning at Under 17 Years and reaching the All Weights final. In typical Northumbrian style he went for the short rib, controlled his opponents and then rushed them forward and round onto their noses. His record at Rothbury Vintage Rally on the following day followed much the same pattern with a win at Under 18 and a final spot against his Coach Darren Whitfield in the All Weights. Good wrestling always needs a supporting cast, and at the Roman Wall two wrestlers played an especial part in this. Craig Ridley was usually up against heavier opposition, but pleased the crowd with his finesse and classic throws. Tristan Davidson has been an occasional wrestler over a number of years, and become good enough to trouble the best wrestlers. Because of his age and weight Jack Brown of Haydon Bridge, has had a comparatively lean year so far, but at Rothbury a rare Under 14s gave him his chance for a win. The wrestling event at Low Gill was on a draughty hillside after the Sheep dog trials ended. The event was an excellent one for the Brocklebanks and their cousins, the Hodgsons. The Hodgson sisters Tracey, Hannah and Connie were first, second and third in the girls' event; and brothers Thomas and Graham contested the final of the All Weights, with cousin Scott Brocklebank third. Graham was by far the most successful wrestler with wins at Under 18 and 13st.

Results:

Roman Wall Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Coates; 2, T Gibson; 3, B Sloan. Under 17 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, F Healy; 3, C Ridley. 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, C Ridley; 3, J Pattinson. 13 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, T Davidson; 3, R Parsons. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, N Birdsall; 3, T Graham.

Low Gill, Lancaster

Under 12 Years 1, I Hammond; 2, T Sexton; 3, S Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; B Brocklebank; 3, W Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, G Brocklebank; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hodgson. Girls 1, T Hodgson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, C Hodgson. 13st 1, G Brocklebank, 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hodgson. All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, G Brocklebank; 3, S Brocklebank.

Rothbury Vintage Rally

Under 10 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, H Bertram; 3, L Craggs. Under 14 Years 1, J Brown; 2, D Brown; 3, C Carlisle. Under 18 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, J Wragg; 3, J Thompson. Under 21 Years 1, A Ord; 2, J Oliver; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, D Whitfield; 2, N Birdsall; 3, A Ord.

Dates:

Saturday, June 21 2pm Kirkheaton U12/U15/U18/12/15/AW

Saturday, June 22 11am Silloth U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Sunday, June 29 th 2pm Patterdale U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

June 25th 2008

SILLOTH VINTAGE RALLY

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On a constantly wet weekend there were still wrestlers daft enough to travel many miles to compete in the rain and spectators to watch them get wet. Silloth Vintage Rally usually crowds the Green between the town and the sea, but this year only a small knot of die-hards squinted through the squalls to see the wrestling and the Sheep Show. Every wrestler on display was a product of Carlisle Wrestling Club, but some had traveled far. Only two wrestlers entered for the Under 15 Years, so Joe Thompson of Alston and Paul Murray of Arlecdon were straight into the final, with the bigger lad, Thompson hiping twice to win. Jack Ewart of Westward has been a keen contestant this year, with mixed success, but at Silloth he kept Joe Thompson under control for a welcome win. In the seniors, two wrestlers stood out: cousins John Harrington of Bewaldeth and Richard Dixon of Lessonhall. Harrington kept Dixon's dangerous buttocking under control to win both the 11 ½ and 13 stones. The All Weights saw the Heavyweight Champion Russell Housby in action for the first time this season. John Harrington wrestles well above his weight, but Housby was too big and too aware to succumb to the trickery of the lesser man. He kept a good hold and when the chance came, screwed his opponent into

the ground. Kirkheaton is a dead-end village lost in the rolling Northumbrian stock-breeding countryside. On Saturday it was the centre of the world for the Rothbury wrestlers and, of course, Joe Thompson. He inevitably won the Under 15 Years, outside-hipping Jack Brown twice in the final. Two brothers had success in the other junior events: Joe Hale is one to watch as he cut through the opposition in the Under 12 Years with skill and confidence. When in a corner he could win with a leg-up, but if in control he used the Northumbrian route: a gud haad o' the short rib and then a rush forward. Big brother Jack won the Under 18s with a final against Jacob Wragg. Hale is all action and twists and was unstoppable. Wragg had some consolation when he later gained one of the falls of the day as he hanked Joe Thompson in a manner which was a credit to his coaches at Rothbury Academy. After Simon Hamilton, a good local wrestler who rarely travels far, won the 12 stones, the Northumbrian Heavy Brigade took over. Jason Davidson, newly recovered from a shoulder injury contested both the 15st and All Weights finals. In the 15 Stones he was hipped and back-heeled by Robert Leiper, and in the All Weights Darren Whitfield hipped and twisted him.

All that then remained was to retreat to the tea-tent for home baking, powerful tea and some good craic.

Results:

Kirkheaton

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, L Cragg; 3, J Nicholson. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Brown; 3, L Cragg. Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Wragg; 3, J Thompson. 12st 1, S Hamilton; 2, S Cuthbert; 3, J Thompson. 15st 1, R Leiper; 2, J Davidson; 3, Jack Hale. All Weights 1, D Whitfield; 2, J Davidson; 3, R Leiper.

Silloth Vintage Rally

Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, P Murray. Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, J Thompson; 3, P Murray. 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, P Murray. 13st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Thompson; 3, R Dixon. All Weights 1, R Housby; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon.

Dates:

Sunday, June 29th 2pm Patterdale U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Saturday, 5th July 2.30pm Alston Gala U12/U15/U18/Ladies/11½/13/AW

7.30pm Plumbland Sports U9/U12/U15/U15girls/U18/13/AW

Sunday, 6th July 11.30am Distington U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

3pm Haltwhistle U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW/Novice

July 3rd 2008

ULLSWATER COUNTRY FAIR

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

At Ullswater Country Fair, Graham Brocklebank won his last Under 18 Years wrestling, only hours away from his personal deadline. Unfortunately for him that excludes him from this Sunday's Under 18 World Championship at Haltwhistle Carnival, where Luke Benn is due to defend his title. There is big prize-money with special sponsorship from the Chris Walton Memorial Fund. Local lad Chris, the Under 18s Grasmere Champion, would have been a main contender for the World Championship but for his untimely death. Fortunately, Graham Brocklebank is not one of those wrestlers who will fade away when he moves into the seniors. He demonstrated that by winning the 13 stones in style when he felled John Harrington in straight falls in the final. First he took him away with a powerful twist off the chest, and then in the second hold smothered Harrington's attempt to hank. Last week at Silloth John Harrington looked to be boss of Richard Dixon, but at Patterdale Dixon had other ideas. When he met Harrington in the final of the 11 ½ stones he dispatched him with a throw which has no name in Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling, but is called a salto in the Graeco-Roman style. Dixon had a strong hold of Harrington, and had him up in the air, but there was still the problem of throwing him down cleanly without being caught by a buttock or a hank. The dictionary definition of salto is a daring jump and that was what Dixon did. He flung himself backwards and sideways with an arched back so that Harrington had to hit the ground first. The second throw was just as spectacular but this time Dixon was the hanker, flinging himself back again whilst pulling his opponent under and himself up by straightening his entwined leg. The All Weights was a keenly anticipated event, as two special heavyweights who rarely meet were entered. Russell Housby is the present All Weights Champion and is a formidable size, has quick feet and good technique; Thomas Brocklebank, who competes mainly in the South of the county, is lighter, but has the power and shoulders endemic to the Brocklebank family. The two met in the semi-final where Brocklebank's upper body strength proved decisive as he gained a good hold and twice drove Housby round, forward and down. In the All Weights final, all John Harrington's finesse came to nothing as Thomas Brocklebank controlled and felled him with twists. In the boys events Paul Murray and Jack Brown had a closely fought final with Murray clinching the win with a hank. **(see center photo above)**. The Under 12 Years was kept back in the programme so that the new wrestlers could observe how it was done. In the event four well matched lads pleased the crowd with their natural skills, with James Lithgoe of Carlisle winning the day, and keen to try it again this coming week-end

Results

Ullswater

Under 15 Years 1, P Murray; 2, J Brown; 3, B Brocklebank. Under 18 Years 1, G Brocklebank; 2, S Wilkinson; 3, J Ewart. 11 ½ st 1, R Dixon; 2, John Harrington; 3, W Noimai. 13st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon. All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, Jophn Harrington; 3, R Housby.

Saturday, 5 th July

2.30pm Alston Gala U12/U15/U18/Ladies/11½/13/AW

7.30pm Plumbland Sports U9/U12/U15/U15girls/U18/13/AW

Sunday, 6 th July

11.30am Distington U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

3pm Haltwhistle U12/U15/U18Ch'ship/11½/13/AW/Novice(£500)

2pm Great Langdale U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Sunday, 13 th July

2pm Bampton U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

July 9th 2008

HALTWHISTLE CARNIVAL

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



Luke Benn, a wrestler rarely seen outside his own area, proved again that he is the best of his age, when he retained the Under 18 Years World Championship at Haltwhistle Carnival. Last year he had even further to travel from Millom when he felled Graham Brocklebank in the Championship final at Rothbury Mart. With nineteen wrestlers contending for the title at Haltwhistle, Benn had to fell a series of big strong and skilful wrestlers to keep his title. He set the tone in the first round encounter with Jack Hale of Rothbury. After a scrappy first hold won by the last twist, he went on to cut through Hale's hyper-activity with a perfectly timed outside-hipe. In the second round Benn met the James Oliver of Jedburgh, gained all the hold and wrenched him forward off his right shoulder and hip. The second fall was won with a counter to Oliver's attempt to lift. An even bigger opponent awaited in the third round. The lofty Fin Healy of Tynemouth was cut down to size by the stockier Benn with a right leg back-heel finished off with a twist over the knee. In their second bout, Benn lifted Healy up in the air and twisted back. In the semi-finals Benn had a rest in the form of a bye, and watched Sam Wilkinson of Milnthorpe use his usual tactics of gaining hold and twisting to fell Jack Ewart of Westward. Benn's winning falls in the final echoed those in the first round against Jack Hale. The first hold was a twisting-all-action-anyone-could-win bout with Benn putting in the final twist. In the second his outside-hipe cut through all the action to leave him a worthy champion for another year. The Under 18 Years Championship had a special poignancy this year when Michelle and Alan Walton, the parents of the late Chris Walton, presented Luke Benn with the trophy. Last year Chris won both the Under 18s and the Novice wrestling at his local Haltwhistle event. In his memory, the Waltons provided a beautiful challenge cup for the Novices. Many of his friends entered their names and gave a good account of themselves, but in the end the three prizewinners were all trained wrestlers. After a slowish start to the season, Jack Ewart is now in full flow, beating Nathan Birdsall of Rothbury in the final. In a new initiative, the Rothbury wrestlers used some of their travel grant from a National Lottery award to fund a minibus

for the day, travelling first to Distington in West Cumbria, before returning to compete at Hatwhistle. In the Saturday rains, entries were low at Alston and Plumbland, with lightweight star, Richard Dixon, winning all the senior events, and felling local heavyweight, Tom Graham, in the All Weights final. Later at Plumbland Dixon' winning streak continued in the 13 stones, but ended surprisingly when Watchi Noimai defeated him in the final of the All Weights. Noimai somehow gained some hold and then trapped Dixon's long legs with a left leg back-heel. Noimai's exploit was rewarded with a splendid trophy for the best performance of the night. Richard Dixon then resumed his successful week-end at Haltwhistle where he won the 11½ stones. John Harrington shone at Distington, where he won the two senior events, but was flickering along at Haltwhistle until he reached the final of the All Weights with Darren Whitfield. Despite many stones disadvantage, he hiped Whitfield for the first fall, went down to an outside hipe for the second and then won the third and deciding fall by going to buttock, but changing direction suddenly with a cross-click which left Whitfield without a leg to stand on. The prize for the highest throw of the day, if not the year, went to Sam Wilkinson, who lifted the hefty Tom March over head height, nearly fell over backwards, but managed to twist clear as gravity re-asserted itself.

Results:

Alston Gala

Under 12 Years 1, J Watson; 2, J Holt; 3, J Goodfellow. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Brown; 3, C Humphry. Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, J Thompson; 3, J Oliver. 11½st 1 R Dixon; 2, W Noimai; 3, J Brown. 13st 1, R Dixon; 2, F Healy; 3, W Noimai. All Weights 1, R Dixon; 2, T Graham; 3, F Healy. Ladies 1, D Thompson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, A Ridley.

Plumbland

Under 9 Years 1, R Miller 2, B Breeze; 3, B Hunt. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, G Winder. Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Noimai. 13st 1, R Dixon; 2, W Noimai; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, W Noimai; 2, R Dixon; 3, J Thompson. Girls Under 15 Years 1, H Hodgson 2, S Miller; 3, C Hodgson.

Distington

Under 12 Years 1, G Crane; 2, A Armstrong. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, P Murray; 3, G Crane. Under 18 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, J Wragg; 3, J Hale. 12½st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Wragg; 3, R Dixon. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, N Birdsall; 3, J Davidson.

Great Langdale

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, A Dent; 3, S Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, M Atkinson. Under 18 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, J Hall; 3, W Hayhurst. Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, E Hayhurst. 11½st 1, M Atkinson; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, B Thompson. 13st 1, T Brocklebank; 2, F Davis; 3, G Brocklebank.

Haltwhistle Carnival

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, J Coates; 3, J Lithgoe. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Brown; 3, G Crane. Under 18 Years World Championship 1, L Benn; 2, S Wilkinson; 3, J Ewart. Novices 1, J Ewart; 2, N Birdsall; 3, J Oliver. 11½st 1, R Dixon; 2, C Ridley; 3, D Parsons. 13st 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, W Noimai. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, D Whitfield; 3, R Fox.

Dates:

Sunday, 13th July 2pm Bampton U12/U15/U18/12½/AW

2.15pm Great Ecclestone U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Saturday, 19th July 4pm Cumberland Show U12/U15(7st)/U15/U18/12/14st Ch'ship/AW

Sunday, 20th July Coniston

Friday, 25th July Langholm Common Riding

July 16th 2008

BAMPTON SPORTS AND GREAT ECCLESTONE SHOW

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



The tiny village of Bampton, lying between Haweswater and Shap hosted wrestling at its Sports day for a second year. While the runners made their way up to the top of the nearby limestone outcrop, Carlisle trained wrestlers took most of the glory in the wrestling ring. Best of all was Watchai Noimai, the Thai lad now settled in Carlisle. He has been producing spectacular falls all season, but recently he has also got into the habit of winning outright. In the Under 18s he had a massive challenge in the form of Jack Ewart of Westward who had wrestled so well at Haltwhistle the previous week. Noimai managed to escape all the power and catch Ewart with a low back-heel. In the final he repeated the back-heel strike against Joe Thompson for the first fall, then won the second with a flying inside-hipe. He carried that spectacular form into the final of the 12 ½ stones when he dispatched William Atkinson from Kendal with another hipe. Then he showed his subtler skills by taking the second fall with an outside stroke. Two big men sat watching all afternoon before joining the action for the All Weights. Joe Harrington made a welcome return to the ring after returning from University at Newcastle. He is a big lad, but was made small by the massive Thomas Graham of Alston. Graham, is virtually untutored, but has been travelling with the Thompsons to several events and is fast catching on. He caught Harrington with a big twist for the first fall in the final, and took the second with an even bigger twist for his first win. Just before the All Weights we were treated to a challenge match. Can we borrow the ring, please. They're determined to wrestle. Two tiny children with serious faces marched into the centre and took hold. After a skirmish sister fell on top of brother, only for him to squirm out and launch a furious and illegal attack on his sister. To cheers, Tom Harrington, the referee, calmed things down and returned the combatants to mum. Great Eccleston Show, near Blackpool had a shortage of senior wrestlers but that gave opportunities to a group of locals who gave a good account of themselves. With Harry Brocklebank's lads in the crowd round the ring you would have thought that Graham and Tom would have had it all sewn up, but they were injured and did not compete. The youngest of the brothers, Ben, took his chance, won the Under 15s and wrestled up in two more finals. His performance brought him the trophy for the best wrestler of the day. Another Brocklebank brother, Tony, who does not usually compete, took a full part in the senior wrestling, reaching the prizemoney in all three weights. A strong local Novice, Louis Derbyshire, won both the 13 stones and the All Weights. Boy champion, Paul Murray of Arlecdon, went up North to compete with the Scots at Stirling Highland Games. Murray often has to wrestle at a weight disadvantage, but at Stirling he competed in the boys 8½st and 10½st sections. Wrestling in a round-robin system he won every single bout and then went on to take fourth place in the senior 9½st Scottish Championship

Results:

Bampton Sports

Under 12 Years 1, C Paulson; 2, T Fraser; 3, J Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, C Paulson; 3, W Atkinson. Under 18 Years 1, W Noimai; 2, J Thompson; 3, B Thompson. Girls 1, S Hindmarch; 2, E Wilson; 3, C Paulson. 12½st 1, W Noimai; 2, W Atkinson; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, T Graham; 2, Joe Harrington; 3, J Ewart.

Great Eccleston Show

Under 12 Years 1, Olly; 2, J Fond; 3, D Molly. Under 15 Years 1, B Brocklebank; 2, I Hammond; 3, S Lashley Under 18 Years 1, B McLaughlin; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, P Bowle. Girls 1, C Hodgson; 2, A Rawcliffe; 3, L Kilpatrick. 11st 1, B McLaughlin; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, Tony Brocklebank. 13st 1, L Derbyshire; 2, Tony Brocklebank; 3, S Lashley. All Weights 1, L Derbyshire; 2, B Rawcliffe; 3, Tony Brocklebank.

Dates:

Saturday, 19th July 4pm Cumberland Show U12/U15(7st)/U15/U18/12/14st Ch'ship/AW

Sunday, 20th July 2.30pm Coniston U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Friday, 25th July 2.30pm Langholm Common Riding U12/ U16/11/13/AW

Saturday 26th July Penrith Show includes 13st Championship

Sunday, 27th July 12.30pm Flookburgh U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Thursday, 31st July Ambleside Sports

July 23rd 2008

CUMBERLAND SHOW, CONISTON COUNTRY FAYRE

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



The old 14st champion was Alan Jones of Hallbankgate. The new champion is Andrew Ord of Morpeth. Jones fought doggedly and sometimes brilliantly to hang on to his title; for Ord it was mainly plain sailing. In the first round, when young Graham Brocklebank clattered Jones forward onto the grass with a right side buttock by the ears, the writing seemed on the wall for the veteran. But instead, he pitched into the next bout with a swinging inside-hipe which was a winner all the way, and then took a hard fought third bout. Life was no easier for Jones in the second round, when he met Richard Fox. The hipe won the first fall again, but a long dour tussle ensued for the second fall. Eventually, Jones won with a back-over twist. By the semi-final stage Jones was taking longer and longer to pull his socks up and charge into the ring where a fresh John Harrington was waiting. Nevertheless, Jones was within a whisker of felling Harrington with the swinging inside-hipe. All seemed over bar the landing, when Harrington somehow touched with a toe and found enough purchase to put in the latest of twists to win. Surely, Jones would go quietly now. No chance. Back he came with a counter to Harrington's outside-hipe to equalise, before a desperate decider which went Harrington's way.

In the meantime, Andrew Ord had been making steady progress through the rounds. Against Robert Wharton he twisted and back-heeled. Andrew Carlile found Ord's long legs cancelled out so many options. Ord got his man on the move and then ran him down to the ground. For the second he used the tried and tested Northumbrian system of a big hold and a strong back-heel. A bye took Ord to the final against John Harrington and in their first fall he went near to winning with another back-heel, but he broke early when the bout was still in the balance, so he lost the fall. John Harrington tried manfully to bring Ord over with the leg-up buttock, but power and inordinately long legs kept the Northumbrian afloat. Ord's trusty back-heel then came into play, and took him over the finishing line for the championship.

Andrew Ord was the first of the young Rothbury Academy wrestlers to show real promise. He is now just turned eighteen and faced the prospect of competing only in senior All Weights events. Drastic and prolonged slimming allowed him to compete in this championship, and his excellent defence and some good basic throws gave him the ammunition to win. David Miller put younger brother Kieron in his place in a rare weight event for boys. Joe Thompson was at his best against the Under 15 Champion, Scott Brocklebank, winning their first bout with an inside-click which cut through Brocklebank's weight advantage. When he tried it again, Brocklebank countered in the classic way and twisted Thompson to the right and down. The decider went exactly the same route, except that when all seemed lost, Thompson found a toe-hold to counter the counter. Amongst some big lads Jack Ewart continued his excellent recent form in the Under 18s. Two heavyweight giants, David Bowman and Russell Housby contested the All Weights final. A decider was needed, and Housby finished off the day with a half-buttock that would have graced the lightweights. At Coniston Country Fayre Stuart Fleming once more kicked off his usual mini season by winning the All Weights against high class opposition in the form of Thomas Brocklebank. Graham Benson had a successful time on his second outing of the year, winning the Under 18s and wrestling second to Graham Brocklebank in the 13 stones. And, of course, the ubiquitous Joe Thompson added another Under 15 win to his growing list for the year.

Results:

Cumberland Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Hall; 2, S Kyle; 3, T Gibson. Under 15/7st1, D Miller; 2, K Miller; 3, M McBratney Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, S Brocklebank; 3, J Hall. Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, A Hird; 3, J Hall. 12st 1 John Harrington; 2, J Thompson; 3, R Dixon. 14st World Championship 1, A Ord; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Fox. All Weights 1, R Housby; 2, D Bowman; 3, R Fox. Guinness Trophy: Andrew Ord

Coniston Country Fayre

Under 12 Years 1, H Barnes; 2, J Cross. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, P Murray; 3, B Brocklebank. Under 18 Years 1, G Benson; 2, C Naylor; 3, J Thompson. 11 ½ st 1, M Knowles; 2, S Lorton; 3, C Naylor. 13st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, G Benson; 3, M Knowles. All Weights 1, S Fleming; 2, T Brocklebank; 3, Joe Harrington.

Dates:

Friday, 25th July 2.30pm Langholm Common Riding U12/ U16/11/13/AW

Saturday 26th July 1pm Penrith Show U12/ U15/U18/11½/13Ch'ship/AW

Sunday, 27th July 12.30pm Flookburgh U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW/Girls

Thursday, 31st July 1pm Ambleside Sports U12/ U15/U18/11½/12 ½ /14/AW

Saturday, 2nd August Beetham Sports

Cockermouth Show All Weights Championship

Powburn Show 10 ½ st Championship

Thursday, 7th August Ings

August 6th 2008

POWBURN, COCKERMOUTH SHOWS , AMBLESIDE AND BEETHAM SPORTS

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

The Little and Large of the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Association Championships were contested simultaneously at Agricultural Shows a hundred miles apart. Powburn in Northumberland hosted the 10 ½ stones and Cockermouth held the All Weights World Championships. Both were won by wrestlers trained at Carlisle Wrestling Club. Andrew Carlile of Carlisle not only trains at the club, but also is one of the main coaches during the winter months. His success in the lightweight championship at Powburn was his fourth in a row and seventh overall, leaving him one short of Jimmy Atkinson's record. Carlile's retention of the title was helped by Craig Ridley of Slaggyford who eliminated one of the favourites, the 11st Champion Richard Dixon, clinching the win with a fine hank. A year ago the final between Ridley and Carlile would have been a one-sided contest, but that has all changed this season, especially after Ridley took a great fall against Carlile at Morpeth earlier in the season. Carlile won the first fall with a lift and an outside-hipe, which sounds clinical, but only happened after a good tussle. Then, surprise, surprise, in the second bout Ridley took the attack to Carlile and gained all the hold. From there Carlile fought to escape the grip, but suddenly changed direction and caught Ridley with a buttock by the ears. Next day Carlile was also runner-up in the Scottish 11½ st and 13½ st Championships at Bridge of Allan Highland Games.



At Cockermouth the wrestling looked forlorn at the advertised starting time with scarcely any entries, but suddenly crowds arrived to compete and to watch, and the whole programme was excellent. Russell Housby from beside Silloth warmed up by subduing the excellent middleweight Richard Fox in the first round before rising to the challenge of David Bowman who could match him for weight and experience. With such big men hipes are not really an option, and Housby won by twists and buttocks. In the semi-final



he snuffed out any potential finesse from John Harrington with brisk action supported by substantial weight to reach the final. On the other side of the draw, the 15st Champion, Joseph Robson, looked like a boy against John Threlfall and Carl Clark, but won with back-heel and hipes for his place in the final. Robson was forced to make the running in the final to have any chance of winning by putting his opponent off-balance. Housby, though, was equal to the task and won by countering Robson's chips. He rushed him forward off a leg-up, and then chested him down from an attempted outside-stroke. Housby also won the heavyweights at Ambleside Sports two days before the championship in a final with Thomas Brocklebank. At Ambleside there was a strange domino effect. John Harrington felled Richard Dixon in the 11 ½ st final, which woke Dixon's ideas up in the 12 ½ stones where he felled Richard Fox in the final. That, in turn woke up Richard Fox who felled a resurgent Alan Jones in the 14st final. The performance of Richard Dixon was judged to be the best overall, and he went home with the Guinness Trophy. Luke Benn reminded everyone why he is the Under 18 Champion in the fall of the day when Graham Benson sent him flying with an inside-hipe, only for Benn to find a toe-hold to carry on the momentum for an even higher inside hipe which left Benson on his back. In the final of the Under 18s a seemingly straightforward fall left Jack Ewart with a hip injury which meant his removal by ambulance. The injury proved less than feared, a bone chipped in the pelvis, and Ewart is hopeful that he can make a swift return. Keenest of the day was the Gibson family from High Hesket. Dad took eight year old Thomas to Powburn in North Northumberland for the Under 10s and mum took Dawn and Megan to Beetham, near Kendal for the Girls' event. They had to be contented with places, but with that attitude, their time will come.

Results:

Ambleside Sports

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, A Dent; 3, S Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, S Mason; 3, W Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, L Benn; 2, J Ewart; 3, J Thompson. 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, M Knowles. 12 ½ st 1, R Dixon; 2, R Fox; 3, G Benson. 14st 1, R Fox; 2, A Jones; 3, G Brocklebank. All Weights 1, R Housby; 2, T Brocklebank; 3, G Brocklebank.

Beetham Sports

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst 2, T Riley; 3, J Wiseman. Under 14 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, B Brocklebank; 3, J Hayhurst. Under 16 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, W Atkinson; 3, M Atkinson. Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, M Gibson 12 ½ st 1, Tony Brocklebank; 2, M Atkinson; 3, J Hayhurst. All Weights 1, G Brocklebank; 2, T Hodgson; 3, S Brocklebank.

Cockermouth Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Blamire; 2, F Clark; 3, A Callender. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, D Miller; 3, R Moore. Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Graves; 3, S Parker. 11½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, C Naylor; 3, J Graves. 13st 1, R Fox 2, John Harrington; 3, S Watson. All Weights Championship 1, R Housby 2, J Robson; 3, John Harrington.

Powburn Show

Under 10 Years 1, J Hale; 2, R Harry; 3, T Gibson. Under 113 Years 1, H Barnes; 2, J Hale; 3, T Gibson. Under 16 Years 1, C Ridley; 2, J Brown; 3, E Cookson. Novices 1, R Wilkinson; 2, D Crane; 3, J Oliver. 10 ½ st Championship 1, A Carlile; 2, C Ridley; 3, J Brown. 14st 1, A Ord; 2, A Carlile; 3, R Wilkinson. All Weights 1, J Davidson; 2, A Ord; 3, J Oliver.

Dates:

Saturday, 9 th August - 12 noon Dalston Show U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Sunday, 10 th August - Lowther

- Forestburngate

Tuesday, 12 th August - Kirkby Lonsdale

Saturday, 9 th August 12noon Dalston Show U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Sunday, 10 th August 1pm Lowther U12/ U15/U18/Ladies/12/14/AW

2pm Forestburngate U10/U13/U15/U18/Nov/12 ½ /15 ½ /AW

Tuesday, 12 th August 1.30 Kirkby Lonsdale U12/U15/U18/13/AW/Girls

Saturday, 16 th August Allendale

4pm Skelton U13/U16/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

2pm Rusland U12/U15/U18/12 ½ /AW

Sunday, 17 th August 2pm Torver U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW/Ladies (Costume class)

Wed, 20 th August 2pm Gosforth U13/U15&8stCh'ship/U15/U18

Sunday August 24th - Grasmere Sports 11am U12/U15/U18/11/12/13/14/AW (£2000+)

Monday, 25 th August 11am Silloth U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

3pm Keswick U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Wed, 27 th August Ennerdale

August 14th 2008

DALSTON SHOW

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

Bad weather felled three wrestling events last week. Lowther Horse Trials looked like a First World War battlefield after two days, and then it really rained on Saturday night. Two sets of ultra keen wrestlers were disappointed to arrive at Forestburngate in Northumberland to find it had been cancelled: Stuart Watson, returned to civilian life in Carlisle after an army career, is trying to rediscover the skills he learned at Carlisle Wrestling Club many years ago; and the other travellers were the Gibson family with young Thomas and his sisters, Dawn and Megan, ready for action throughout the Northern Counties At Ings Sheepdog Trials Megan raised a cheer when she buttocked big sister Dawn for a consolation fall. Ahead of them were the Hodgson sisters Hannah and Connie, who are the leading girl wrestlers at present. Two wrestlers had double wins at Ings. Scott Brocklebank wrestled strongly to win at both Under 15 and Under 18 Years, then he went on to contest the All Weights final with John Harrington. As a result the judges awarded him the trophy for the best performance in all the wrestling. The other double winner, John Harrington, always had too many options for the other wrestlers. He was pushed hard but always had an answer.



At Dalston Show there was a different scenario for Harrington for he reached

the finals of all



three senior categories, won the first fall in each, and then found three wrestlers with more answers than him. In the 11½ stones Richard Dixon twice showed how to trump the hank by arching his back and throwing the hanker back and over his shoulder to the ground. In the 13 stones Harrington won the first fall against Richard Fox with a good outside-hipe, but lost the next two to a right side twist, and then a Fox back-heel which set him off balance, and unable to stave off Fox's follow up attack. The new auctioneer at Wigton Mart, David Bowman, recently resettled in the area, had aninauspicious start to the All



Weights final when

John Harrington caught him nicely with a twist and outside-stroke. Despite suffering from a twinging leg, Bowman remembered that he was significantly taller and heavier than his opponent, and proceeded to lift Harrington high before inside-hiping and then swamping any escape attempt by Harrington. Amongst bigger lads Joe Thompson proved to be too much of a handful and won both at Under 15 and Under 18 Years. His opponent in the final of the Under 18s, Jack Ewart, had been last seen heading off from Ambleside Sports in an ambulance, so it was good to see him so quickly back in action.

Results:

Ings Sheepdog Trials

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, M Newman; 3, S Wilson. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Thompson. Under 18 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Thompson. Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson 12½st 1, John Harrington; 2, Tony Brocklebank; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, S Brocklebank; 3, J Thompson.

Dalston Show

Under 12 Years 1, Jack Hall; 2, P Potts; 3, T Gibson. Under 15 Years; 2, D Miller; 3, Jack Hall. Under 18 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Ewart; 3, James Hall. 11½st 1, R Dixon; 2, John Harrington; 3, D Miller. 13st 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, D Bowman; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Dixon.

Dates:

Saturday, 16th August 12.45pm Allendale U12/ U15/U18/11½/13/AW

4pm Skelton U13/U16/U18/11½/13/AW

3pm Whittingham U10/U14/U18/13½/AW

2pm Rusland U12/U15/U18/12½/AW

Sunday, 17th August 2pm Torver U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW/Ladies (Costume class)

Wed, 20th August 2pm Gosforth U13/U15&8stCh'ship/U15/U18

Sunday, 24th August 11am Grasmere U12/U15/U18/11/12/13/14/AW (£2000+)

Monday, 25th August 11am Silloth U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW

3pm Keswick U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Wed, 27th August Ennerdale

August 21st 2008

GOSFORTH SHOW

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



Gosforth Show specialises in boys wrestling. that's all they have, so it was especially appropriate that it sponsored the youngest and lightest championship of the wrestling calendar where all the wrestlers have to be under 15 years of age and weigh less than 8 stones. For a few boy wrestlers it gives them a rare opportunity to wrestle on level terms. The three favourites for the title: Ben Brocklebank, Jack Brown, and the holder, Paul Murray are all having a lean season despite their manifest skills, simply because they are at a disadvantage in both age and weight. When Jack Brown and Ben

Brocklebank met in the first round it was like two stags locking horns, as they had the rare opportunity of trying to impose their will by power and control rather than by defence and speed. In the end Brown won by twisting Brocklebank over his right knee.



In the same round the holder of the title, Paul Murray, was doing handstands over Haydon Barnes, but such exuberance was soon quelled when he met Jack Brown in the semi-final, and the serious tactics came into play. Murray's favourite position is to gain a good hold and then either hipe or rush his opponent. Hiping was obviously a riskier strategy, so Murray set about disposing of Brown in the semi-final, and Jamie Nicholson in the final with wrenches and pushes off the right hipto retain his title. Paul Murray will be moving to Wyndham School in September after the closure of the school in Cleator Moor. At home he has a flock of Jacob Sheep and helps with his father's Belted Galloway herd. He is a good gymnast, and has a room at the farm fitted with wrestling mats to enhance his training. Despite his age and weight disadvantage he has travelled widely to wrestling events, and in winter he is a regular at Carlisle Wrestling Club despite living so far away down West at Arlecdon. At Penrith in early July he pulled ligaments in his neck, and had not wrestled since, until his triumphant return at Gosforth Show

At Allendale John Harrington stole the show with three wins. Pity Richard Dixon who was runner up to him in all three finals. Dixon had his own successes though especially when he splattered the massive Thomas Graham of Alston twice. That pattern continued later in the afternoon at Skelton Show when Harrington felled Dixon in the final of the 11½ stones. After that it was Harrington's turn to be the bridesmaid and not the bride as Richard Fox felled him in finals of the 13 stones and All Weights events. Wrestlers from Rothbury Academy added greatly to the action at Allendale. Nathan Birdsall won the Under 18s and then travelled back to Whittingham where he won two more events. Grasmere Sports this Sunday offers a rare chance for girls and women to shine in the wrestling, and gain substantial prize-money. Instead of being lumped together in a single event, Grasmere provides them with four classes, with prize-money comparable to that of the men. The annual contingent of Breton wrestlers, ten males and two females, is due to arrive in Cumbria later today. Their programme has been curtailed this year because of the way the dates fall, and more directly by the cancellation of Keswick Show because of the weather.



Results:

Allendale Show

Under 12 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, R Palmer; 3, J Crossan. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Brown; 3, Joe Hale. Under 18 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, Jack Hale; 3, J Wragg. 11½st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, J Wragg. 13st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, S McKenzie. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, Jack Hale

Skelton Show

Under 13 Years 1, W Atkinson; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, Jack Hall. Under 16 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, M Atkinson. Under 18 Years 1, G Benson; 2, J Thompson; 3, D Ewart. 11½st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, M Atkinson. 13st 1, R Fox; 2 John Harrington; 3, R Dixon. All weights 1, R Fox; 2, Joe Harrington; 3, R Dixon.

Whittingham

Under 10 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, J Montgomery. Under 14 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, J Montgomery. Under 18 1, N Birdsall; 2, Jack Hale; 3, D Heron. 13½st 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Wragg; 3, N Birdsall. All Weights 1, N Birdsall; 2, Jack Hale; 3, S McKenzie.

Gosforth Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst 2, D Kilby; 3, A Young. Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst 2, J Thompson; 3, A Barnes. Under 18 Years 1, A Killip; 2, W Hayhurst; 3; J Thompson. Under 15 Years/10st World Championship 1, P Murray; 2, J Nicholson; 3, J Brown.

Dates:

Sunday, 24th August 11am Grasmere Boys U12/U15/U18/Mens 11/12/13/14/AW/Girls U15/U18/Womens 10/AW (£2000+)

Dyke Neuk U9/U12/U15/U18/Ladies Open/11½/14/AW

Monday, 25th August 11am Silloth U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW/Ladies

Keswick CANCELLED

Wed, 27th August 2pm Ennerdale U12/U15/U18/12½/AW/Ladies

Saturday, 30th August 12 noon Newcastleton U10/U13/U15/U18/12½/AW/Ladies

3.15pm Hesketh Newmarket U15/U18 and 10st Ch'ship/U18/12½/Novice.

Millom and Broughton Show

3.30pm Bellingham Show U12/U16/Novice/12/14/AW/Ladies

Thursday, 4th Sept Grayrigg Show

August 28th 2008

GRASMERE SPORTS, SILLOTH CARNIVAL, ENNERDALE

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



Glorious Grasmere was a feast of wrestling in wall to wall sunshine. A huge crowd encircled the wrestlers for six hours of action. The Brocklebank family had a day to remember when Scott Brocklebank won the Guinness Trophy



for the most meritorious performance in all the wrestling, having won both the Under 15 and Under 18 Years. Then in the last bout of a long day, his cousins, the two brothers Graham and Thomas, contested the final of the All Weights, with the heavier Thomas coming out on top. After Kerndal Academy wrestlers dominated the youths' wrestling, Carlisle wrestlers largely took over in the senior events with Richard Dixon felling the Carlisle Coach, Andrew Carlile in the final of the 11 stones, John Harrington felling the Breton Mael Dugue in a scintillating final of the 12 stones, and the veteran Alan Jones, another Carlisle coach, clocking up his twentieth Grasmere title. In the 14 stones. Now in his late forties, Jones can no longer wait around to wrestle carefully, or wear down the opposition. Instead he flung his opponents with swinging hipes, and if that did not work, he did it again.



In the midst of the Carlisle success, Fraser Hirsch of Dundee, did his kilt proud by winning the 13 stones title, felling that irrepressible Breton Mael Dugue in the final. A dozen Bretons added greatly to the day's action, with Dugue in the lead, but did not figure largely in the prize money, except in the female wrestling where they gained three first: Nina Gray, and English-Scottish-Breton, won the Under 18s and the Women's all weights, whilst the slighter figure of Eloise Letort felled Connie Hodgson in the final of the 10 stones. John Harrington did have one win at Grasmere, but that was his quietest day of wrestling last week, for he was simply unbeaten elsewhere, winning thrice at Silloth and twice at Ennerdale. Although he is a strong lad for his weight, his physique gives no clue to his wrestling capabilities. In the All Weights he often looks slight and almost frail against much heavier opposition. But in the course of the week, I saw him hipe (inside, outside and swinging) hank, inside-click, cross-click as he attacked the opposition, as well as countering anything that was thrown at him. The Bretons must wonder what they have to do to get him to the ground.

An amazing weekend of wrestling is in prospect next week with Rothbury Mart putting up a £500 first prize for the 15½st on the Friday night, Harbottle staging the 12st Championship the next day and Wolsingham holding the 15st Championship as part of its programme on the Sunday. Over £4000 will make its way into wrestlers' pockets over the three days.

Results:

Grasmere Sports

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, C Perkins; 3, L Spence. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, James Hall; 3, A Barnes. Under 18 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, S Wilkinson; 3, G Benson. 11st 1, R Dixon; 2, A Carlile; 3, L Milland-Millour. 12st 1, John Harrington; 2, M Dugue; 3, R Dixon. 13st 1, F Hirsh; 2, M Dugue; 3, D Parsons. 14st 1, A Jones; 2, S Wilkinson; 3, G Brocklebank. All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, G Brocklebank; 3, J Hirsch. *Female Wrestling*: Girls Under 15 Years 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson. Girls Under 18 Years 1, Nina Gray; 2, C Hodgson; 3, K Brown. 10st 1, E Letort; 2, C Hodgson; 3, K Brown. All Weights 1, N Gray; 2, D Thompson; 3, E Letort.

Silloth Carnival

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, P Potts; 3, G Robson. Under 15 Years 1, J Hall; 2, M Atkinson; 3, W Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, G Everon; 3, P Murray. 11½st 1, J Harrington; 2, A Carlile; 3, M Atkinson. 13st 1, J Harrington; 2, L Boucher; 3, A Carlile. All Weights 1, J Harrington; 2, Y Salaun; 3, T Graham. Ladies 1, N Gray; 2, E Letort; 3, C Hodgson.

Ennerdale

Under 12 Years 1, D Kilby; 2, S Glaister; 3, A Callander. Under 15 Years 1, James Hall; 2, F Ingram; 3, P Murray. Under 16 Years 1, G Evenou; 2, James Hall; 3, D Davies. Ladies 1, N Gray; 2, L Murray; 3, E Letort. 12½st 1, John Harrington; 2, G Flaux; 3, J Graves. All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, D Barnes; 3, Y Salaun.

Dyke Neuk

Under 10 Years 1, J Hale; 2, H Bertram; 3, C Bertram. Under 12 Years 1, J Hale; 2, H Bertram; 3, C Bertram. Under 15 Years 1, S Lamont; 2, G Cummings; 3, G Crane.

Dates:

Saturday, 30th August 12 noon Newcastleton U10/U13/U15/U18/12½/AW/Ladies
3.15pm Heskett Newmarket U15/U18 and 10st Ch'ship/U18/12½/Novice.

3.00pm Millom and Broughton Show U12/local U15/U16/U18/12/AW

Bellingham Show Cancelled

Thursday, 4th Sept 3.00pm Grayrigg Show U12/U15/U18/11½ /13/15/AW/girls

Friday 5th Sept 6.30pm Rothbury Mart U9/U12/U16/Girl U16/U19/11½/13½/15½/mens and womens AW (£2,560 prizes)

Saturday, 6th Sept 2.00pm Harbottle U10/ U16/U18/Novices/12st Ch'ship/AW

Sunday 7th Sept 1.30pm Wolsingham U12/U15/U18/Ladies/11/12/14/15st Ch'ship/AW

September 3rd 2008

HOLM SHOW AND HESKET NEWMARKET SHOWS

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

Three big wrestling events coincide to make this the hottest weekend of the year in Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling: Rothbury Mart, tonight, with its £500 first prize for the 15½ stones and £2,600 overall prize-money, need not worry about the weather, for it takes place indoors in the old mart ring with its tiered seating. Some Cumbrian wrestling fans will be taking hotel accommodation for, only six miles up into the hills from Rothbury, Richard Fox will defend his 12st World title at Harbottle on Saturday afternoon. The action then moves to Weardale for Wolsingham Show and another important Championship, the 15 stones, presently held by Joseph Robson of Grayrigg. Two other events, Lowick and Loweswater, have been cancelled because of the weather.



Last week the action was halved when both Millom and Broughton Show and Bellingham Show were also cancelled. This left the Holm Show as the focus of wrestlers from North Cumbria and Northumberland to meet on neutral ground in Scotland. The Hale family from Rothbury set the early pace when the young star, Joe Hale, won two age groups, and his big brother Jack felled Joe Thompson in the final of the Under 18s with a twist off the chest. The men's wrestling was dominated by Richard Fox who lives deep in Reiver country on the English side of the Border. He was able to show off his fluent skills in buttocking and swinging young Joe Thompson in the final of the 12½st, but had to dig much deeper in the All Weights final against his old adversary, John Harrington. Four holds were needed before Harrington succumbed. The last fall was typical of the strategy used by Fox when the two meet. He kept Harrington in front of him and attacked with a back-heel, sending him backwards. Then he



followed up fast and strongly with a swamping back-heel till his man went down.

When many showfields are swamped with rain, Heskett Newmarket was inundated with children, most of whom, both boys and girls, wanted to wrestle. The main event was Adam Ridley's defence of his Under 18 Years/10st Championship. Ridley warmed up by winning the Open Under 18s and then sailed through the rounds of the championship to retain his title. Probably his biggest problem would be getting his weight right beforehand. In the final with Craig Naylor of Wasdale he picked his man up and twisted him back for the first fall, and threw Naylor forward off the hank for the second. The Hayhurst family did well to fight their way through the local hordes for James to win the Under 12 Years and William to win the Under 15s. Another Kendal wrestler, Hannah Hodgson, had her keenness rewarded when she won the Ladies Open in a big entry, to add to her win at Newcastleton earlier in the day.

Results:

Holm Show, Newcastleton

Under 10 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, T Gibson; 3, G Robson. Under 13 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, T Gibson; 3, S Craig. Under 15 Years 1, J Dickinson; 2, C Frill; 3, T Gibson. Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Thompson; 3, J Wragg. Ladies 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson. 12½st 1, R Fox; 2, J Thompson; 3, John Harrington. All Weights 1, 1, R Fox 2, John Harrington; 3, G Nichol.

Heskett Newmarket Show.

Under 12 Years 1, J Jayhurst; 2, J Lightfoot; 3, P Potts. Under 15 Years 1, W Hayhurst; 2, M Fisher; 3, J Hayhurst. Under 18 Years/10st Championship 1, A Ridley; 2, C Naylor; 3, P Murray. Under 18 Years 1, A Ridley; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Ewart. Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, L Murray; 3, C Hodgson. 12½st 1, John Harrington; 2, S Watson; 3, J Thorburn.

Dates:

Friday 5th Sept 6.30pm Rothbury Mart U9/U12/U16/Girl U16/U19/11½/13½/15½/mens and womens AW (£2,560 prizes) Saturday, 6th Sept 2.00pm Harbottle U10/ U16/U18/Novices/12st Ch'ship/AW
Lowick Cancelled

Sunday 7th Sept 1.30pm Wolsingham U12/U15/U18/Ladies/11/12/14/15st Ch'ship/AW

Loweswater Show Cancelled

Thursday 11th Sept 2pm Westmorland County Show U12/U15/U18/11/12/13/14/AW/Girls U14/ Womens Open

Saturday, 13th Sept Ingram Sports

Stanhope Whitfield

September 10th 2008

ROTHBURY MART AND WOOLSINGHAM SHOW

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

A roof is wonderful thing in a sodden year. Rothbury Mart had a roof, buckets to catch the drips, a grand crowd on the tiered seating, a bar, loads of prize-money and loads of wrestlers from all "airts" as they say in Northumberland. Three wrestlers travelled down from Dundee, and Luke Benn, who won the Under 18 Years Championship at Rothbury last year, came with two companions



all the way from Millom, which is nearer to

he fought his way through a big crowd of big lads to win the Under 19s. In the final, the local star, Nathan Birdsall took the lead with a late twist, but Benn came back with an outside stroke to equalise. Benn's winning fall came from gaining hold, lifting and twisting back. The biggest draw of the night was the 15½ stones with its £500 first prize. Twenty-three wrestlers entered the draw, and after several rounds of dynamic wrestling Robert Leiper and the 15st Champion, Joseph Robson faced each other in the final. Both are big powerful lads, but on the night Robson just had too much in his armoury for the Northumbrian. Leiper made a good shot at hipping but Robson rode it, and then immediately used the momentum to hipe the hipper. The second fall was an anti-climax after the swirling action of the first, but the winning chip was one for the connoisseur, a neat outside-stroke and twist where timing beat power.

Ireland than Rothbury. His journey was worthwhile as



Two days later Joseph Robson was at Wolsingham Show, which did not have a roof, to defend his 15st World title. The Dundee wrestlers had been stranded in Rothbury, but they and a good contingent of young contenders managed to escape the floods to compete in the Wolsingham mud, and it was one of the Scots, John Hirsch, who sprung a surprise by defeating the champion in the first round. The first fall looked like a slip, when Robson, feet shot out from under him. He rallied in the second with another crisp outside stroke, but in the third an attempt to hipe left him face down in the mud. Hirsch continued his



success in the second round

into the final. His opponent there was Richard Fox of Hethersgill who had warmed up nicely by already winning the 14 stones, before cutting a swathe through the Northumbrians in the championship. Ross Wilkinson had felled him at Rothbury, but Fox put that right, twisting Wilkinson off the inside-click which had done for him at the mart previously. Ironically, Jason Davidson used the

by felling John Harrington in straight falls and then gained a bye



same counter to fell Fox in the next round, but Fox came back with a right leg back-heel.

Davidson attacked for the decider with his well-honed outside-hipe. All seemed lost for Fox, but somehow he squirmed out of Davidson's grip and defied gravity longer to take a close fall. In the semi-final Fox had too much for Nathan Birdsall, and he won with a back-heel and a buttock. And that was exactly what won him the final with John Hirsch. Having gone ahead with a back-heel for the first fall, he was like a sprinter on his blocks waiting for the gun. "Wrestle!" said the referee, and a second later Hirsch was on his

back, buttocked, and Richard Fox was the new 15st Champion. With plenty competitors at both venues, quality still shone through and several wrestlers won at both Rothbury and Wolsingham. Kendal wrestlers James Hayhurst and Joseph Robson, and Carlisle's Richard Dixon, John Harrington, Richard Fox and brother and sister Joe and Donna Thompson all achieve double wins.

Results:

Rothbury Mart

Under 9 Years 1, C Whitfield; 2, T Davidson; 3, H Bertram. Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, Joe Hale; 3, C Whitfield. Under 16 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, S Mason; 3, W Hayhurst. Girls Under 16 Years 1, K Brown; 2, C Hodgson; 3, H Hodgson. Under 19 Years 1, L Benn; 2, N Birdsall; 3, S Mason. 11½st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, S McKenzie. 13½st 1, R Dixon; 2, R Wilkinson; 3, John Harrington. 15½st 1, J Robson; 2, R Leiper; 3, L Benn. Women's Open 1, D Thompson; 2, K Brown; 3, J Thompson. All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, D Whitfield; 3, J Robson.

Wolsingham Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, Joe Hale; 3, T Davidson. Under 15 Years 1, Joe Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, N Birdsall; 2, Jack Hale; 3, W Hayhurst. Women's Open 1, D Thompson; 2, H Hodgson; 3, C Hodgson. 11st 1, R Dixon; 2, J Hayhurst; 3, Joe Hale. 12st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, J Hayhurst. 14st 1, R Fox; 2, A Jones; 3, R Wilkinson. 15st World Championship 1, R Fox; 2, J Hirsch; 3, N Birdsall. All Weights 1, J Robson; 2, J Davidson; 3, John Harrington.

Dates:

Saturday, 13th Sept 12 noon Stanhope U12/U15/U18/Girls/11½/13/AW

3.30pm Whitfield U12/U15/U18/12½/AW

Ingram Sports Cancelled Saturday, 20th Sept 2pm Egremont Crab Fair U12/U15/U18/11½/13/AW

Sunday, 21st Sept Borrowdale Cancelled

September 17th 2008

WESTMORLAND SHOW

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

In a difficult year, the Westmorland Show, with its hard showfield roads, was always going to happen regardless of the weather. A large audience watched engrossed round the big wrestling ring, and for much of the time the partisan crowd had local wrestlers to cheer into first places.



Best of all was Graham Brocklebank who cut through two big entries to win at 13 and 14 stones. In both finals, though, he wobbled before coming out on top. In the 13 stones he took the first fall against David Parsons with an inside-click and a twist off the breast. David Parsons had been bustling and shaking up his opponents throughout the rounds, and he did the same in the final by bringing Brocklebank over on a full buttock. No slack was given by Brocklebank in the decider and he rushed his man off the right hip. John Harrington took an early lead in the 14st final when he went for a leg-up buttock, the chip that won so many bouts for his father, Joe. In the second hold Brocklebank played it more safely, gaining a good hold and then twisting. The winner was a classy throw from Brocklebank when he swung Harrington and then inside clicked him on landing, an unstoppable throw when properly done. Just to make the Brocklebank family's day even better, big brother Thomas won the All



Weights, despite Richard Fox's wriggling and bustling in the final.

The boys' wrestling provided plenty to talk about with Scott Brocklebank and Joe Thompson in the final of the Under 15 Years taking for ever to take hold, the only hiatus in a continuous stream of high quality single fall wrestling, "sudden death" all the way. A highlight was Luke Benn's success in a highly competitive Under 18 Years. The Under 18 Champion, from Silecroft in the far west of Cumbria, was on his usual excellent form, countering anything thrown at him and, in the final, attacking Sam Wilkinson with a back-heel for the first and

an outside-hipe for the second fall. Carlisle Wrestling Club men, John Harrington and Richard Dixon, both had wins at the Kendal Show and contributed to the entertainment both there and elsewhere. Harrington had four wins at three events, and looked certain to win a fifth time at Whitfield when he felled the massive Thomas Graham of Alston in the semi-final of the



All Weights. All that remained was to sort out Ross Wilkinson of Rothbury in the final. Wilkinson had struggled to make his mark earlier in the day at Stanhope Show with young Joe Thompson bossing him into submission. As the day wore on, however, he showed signs of waking up, although John Harrington did gain all the hold and throw him off the hank for the first fall. In the second hold Wilkinson surprised Harrington with an inside-click and gained the equaliser. Surely, Harrington would reassert himself for the decider, but, no, he did not: Wilkinson struck again with the inside-click and won the day. A regular theme in recent weeks has been the success of James Hayhurst in the Under 12 Years wherever he roams. Last week was no exception and he won three out of three events.

Results:

Westmorland County Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, Jack Hall; 3, T Gibson. Girls Under 14 Years 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson; 3, E Hayhurst. Under 15 Years 1, S Brocklebank; 2, J Thompson; 3, W Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, L Benn; 2, S Wilkinson; 3, J Ewart. Ladies Open 1, T Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, D Gibson. 11st 1, R Dixon; 2, C Naylor; 3, M Knowles. 12st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, J Parsons. 13st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, D Parsons; 3, S Wilkinson. 14st 1, G Brocklebank; 2, John Harrington; 3, R Fox. All Weights 1, T Brocklebank; 2, R Fox; 3, T Hodgson.

Stanhope Show

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, Joe Hale; 3, J Watson. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Thompson. Girls 1, H Hodgson; 2, C Hodgson; 3, E Hayhurst. 11 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, J Hayhurst. 13st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Thompson; 3, R Dixon. All Weights 1, T Graham; 2, R Dixon; 3, John Harrington.

Whitfield

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, J Watson; 3, Joe Hale. Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hayhurst. Under 18 Years 1, Jack Hale; 2, J Ewart; 3, W Hayhurst. Women's Open 1, H Hodgson; 2, A Ridley; 3, C Hodgson. 12 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, C Naylor; 3, J Hayhurst. All Weights 1, R Wilkinson; 2, John Harrington; 3, J Ewart.

Dates:

Saturday, 20th Sept. 2pm Egremont Crab Fair U12/U15/U18/11 ½ /13/AW

Whalton Village Show Cancelled

Sunday, 21st Sept. Borrowdale Cancelled

Saturday, 27th Sept. 3pm Eskdale Show includes Under 15 Years Championship

October 1st 2008

UNDER 15 YEARS OF AGE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

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



Joe Thompson of Alston had the best day of his wrestling life at Eskdale Show. The thousands of miles travelled to wrestling events all over the North of England in the past few years paid off with a famous victory in the Under 15 Years World Championship. Just to confirm his newfound status, he then waded through a heavy and numerous entry in the

Under 18s competition to win that too. The real tension of the Championship came in the second round when Thompson met the titleholder, Scott Brocklebank. For both wrestlers a strong hold is important and the referee, Joe Harrington, had to work hard to give each wrestler a fair hold. The wrestling rules for the commencement of the bout stipulate a slack hold, keeping hold, feet motionless, chins over shoulders, heads touching, shoulders level and no struggling for hold. All of these strictures were ignored as the young wrestlers' adrenaline kicked in. Once the action began, it was ironic that most of the bouts were won from the "turned in" side. Thompson took the first by keeping tight hold of Brocklebank's head and twisting him forward from the right. Then Thompson manoeuvred himself into a strong position in the second bout, only to have Brocklebank twist him back over to level the score. All seemed to be going well for Brocklebank in the decider for he gained the coveted hold and back-heeled strongly with his right leg, sending Thompson falling backwards. At the last moment Thompson found space to spin round and twist Brocklebank past him and down. A battle had been won, but the war went on as two other strong contenders, William Hayhurst and James Hall, met in the semi-final. Hayhurst's stocky power took him through by clinging low and close to Hall before back-heeling. The first fall of the final kept the suspense going as the two wrestlers flew through the air to land simultaneously for a dog-fall. In the second, Hayhurst had all the hold, but when he attacked to finish his opponent, Thompson caught him with a buttock. Hayhurst had a cunning strategy for the third bout: as the referee shouted "wrestle" he immediately went to buttock, but Thompson was alert enough to react by



pushing hip forward into the turf.



Stan Roberts, Eskdale Show Vice-President, was an especially appropriate person to present Joe Thompson with his trophy, for exactly sixty years ago he had felled John Williamson in the Under 15 Years Championship at nearby Bootle to win the same trophy. John Harrington of Bewaldeth had another of those days when he was virtually unbeatable. He felled a good local wrestler, Richard Benn, in the final of the 12 stones, and in the All Weights felled the young Carlisle Heavyweight, Jack Ewart, in the final. His biggest challenge came earlier when Thomas Graham of Alston used his weight and power effectively to take the first fall against him, but Harrington's skill told in the end. Carlisle Wrestling Club will hold its AGM at 8pm on Friday 10th October at Currock House, and wrestling sessions in the Gym will start on Wednesday, 15th October at 7.45pm. Anyone interested in wrestling is invited to attend.

Results:

Eskdale Show

Under 15 Years World Championship 1, J Thompson; 2, W Hayhurst; 3, J Hall.

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

10 ½ st 1, S Denwood; 2, C Naylor; 3, J Hayhurst.

12st 1, John Harrington; 2, R Benn; 3, C Naylor.

All Weights 1, John Harrington; 2, J Ewart; 3, Scott Watson.

Dates:

Saturday, 11th October 1.30pm - Alwinton Show U10/U13/U16/U21/12 Ch'ship/14/AW

- Wasdale Head

Friday, 7th November - Wrestling Association Dinner (*Tickets available*)

October 8th 2008

NEARING THE END OF A SOGGY SEASON

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



A typical scene at the beginning of IFCW European Championships

After this soggy summer wrestlers may welcome a roof overhead and dry mats under their feet as Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling moves indoors for the winter. Before then only three outdoor events remain but they are special; Alwinton in the Cheviot Hills and Wasdale and Buttermere deeply embedded in Western Lakeland. I remember a time when the end of the Grass Season meant hibernation for wrestlers as we retreated from public eye to do our weekly training and internal competitions at the various academies.

A much busier schedule at home and abroad awaits our current wrestlers. On the international scene the biggest event is the European Championship of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling in April 2009. Usually our participation involves expensive flights to distant destinations, but this year they will be held just up the road in Scotland; East Kilbride to be exact. A team of seven wrestlers is needed at a wide range of weights (62kg, 68kg, 74kg, 81kg, 90kg, 100kg and over 100kg). The event will be a clash of two styles - Cumberland's traditional backhold wrestling and Gouren, the Breton style. A winter of training in the alien Breton wrestling is necessary if we are to do ourselves justice. As it happens some of our champion wrestlers have experience of competing in European events which could give us a strong possibility of success. At the same time the Female European Championships takes place in tandem with categories at 50kg, 56kg, 63kg, 70kg and 80kg. There is no category for females over 80kg. In both male and female competitions wrestlers must be over 16 years on the day. So far we have had no female wrestlers taking part in the championships, but as there is now a significant number of female events on our calendar, that may change. The Bretons are staging two events which may affect our wrestlers. From the 15-20 February 2009, the Breton Federation will organise an international traditional wrestling training course, probably at Ti ar Gouren, their purpose-built facility at Berrien in Central Brittany. Obviously it is in our interests to have our wrestlers participate to boost skill levels. Last year over 20 of our wrestlers took part in the Breton Backhold Championships in Carhaix, Brittany. That will take place on Saturday, 21 February at the end of the training week. Meanwhile on our own patch the end of the Grass Season will be celebrated at a Presentation Dinner on Friday, 7 November when the most successful wrestlers of the 2008 season will receive their CWWA Trophies. The Academy Shield takes place on Friday, 21 November at Kendal Rugby Club when teams of 11 males and two females will battle for the 'boiler lid', the silver shield first presented in the period following the Second World War. Female wrestlers are included for the first time with categories at 10st and Open.

Carlisle Wrestling Club's AGM will be held at 2000 BST on Thursday, 9 October in the Gym at Currock House. All those interested in our ancient sport are invited to attend.

Saturday, 11th October 1.30pm Alwinton Show U10/U13/U16/U21/12 Ch'ship/14/AW

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

October 15th 2008

12 STONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AT ALWINTON SHOW

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



John Harrington of Bewaldeth reclaimed his status as a World Champion wrestler when he won the 12st title at Alwinton Show. Once the holder of three championships simultaneously, he has had a comparatively lean time in the past year, although continuing to notch up wins wherever he travelled to compete in the normal wrestling calendar. The outside-hipe was his favoured chip in the early rounds when he controlled the lively wriggling of Watchai Noimai before dispatching him. The exciting young Northumbrian prospect, Scott McKenzie, went much the same route, and that left Harrington



facing his friend, relation and fellow Carlisle Club member, Richard Dixon.

Dixon has been steadily growing in confidence as the season has progressed, spending less time thinking what to do and more time going for his chips. In the first round of the championship he had hiped Andrew Carlile so high that he was able to cross him in mid air so decisively that Carlile was virtually upside down when he landed. Dixon's attacking policy took him into an early lead in the final when he won the first bout by falling backwards, arching his back and throwing Harrington clockwise over his shoulder. Dixon attacked again with a hipe in the next hold but Harrington rode it, dropped into an attacking position and twisted to win. Harrington's main problem was to get his feet disentangled in time to complete the fall. Only in the deciding fall did Harrington take the initiative rather than reacting to attacks. He gained a good hold and then flung Dixon forward and round off the right side.

The wrestling feast did not end there for Harrington figured in a second close final when he wrestled up with Richard Fox in the 14 stones. He took the lead by borrowing his opponent's favourite chip, the buttock. Scores levelled when Fox swung Harrington before inside-clicking him in mid-air, a move that Fox has tried without much joy all season, but which was spectacularly successful at Alwinton. For the decider Fox reverted to type and went to buttock..failed.. buttocked again.failed.and so on, until by sheer persistence he wore down Harrington's defence and caught him sweetly to win.



Another Carlisle wrestler Joe Thompson won the Under 16s; Isaac Hammond came all the way from Milnthorpe



Academy to win at Under 3, but otherwise the local Rothbury Wrestling Club supplied the winners. Young Joe Hale showed his class in the Under 10s; Andrew Ord the 18 year old 14st Champion, came back from a broken arm injured while keeping fit on a bike to win the keenly contested Under 21 Years competition; and the Northumbrian powerhouse Richard Younger was in a different league in the All Weights.

Only one event remains in the 2008 Grass Season, Buttermere Show on Saturday 25th October, so if any wrestlers need points for the CWWA 2008 trophies, that is where he should be. The News and Star web-site says that the committee is vowing to go ahead with the show, despite nearby Wasdale Head Show having to cancel for the first time in sixty years.

Carlisle Wrestling Club will meet for training each Wednesday in the Gym at Currock House: 7.45pm for youngsters; 8.45pm for seniors.

Results:

Alwinton Show

Under 10 Years 1, Joe Hale; 2, S Brown; 3, C Whitfield.

Under 13 Years 1, I Hammond; 2, C Spence; 3, Joe Hale.

Under 16 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, S Mason; 3, T Lakely

Under 21 Years 1, A Ord; 2, N Birdsall; 3, J Thompson.

12st World Championship 1, John Harrington; 2, R Dixon; 3, S McKenzie.

14st 1, R Fox; 2, John Harrington; 3, A Ord.

All Weights 1, R Younger; 2, R Leiper; 3, R Fox.

Dates:

Saturday 25th October Buttermere Show, the last of the season.

Friday 7th November, CWWA Presentation Dinner in the Auctioneer, Rosehill, Carlisle (Tickets from BoardMembers)

October 29th 2008

'SWINGING' IN THE RAIN

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



I was probably responsible for all the rain that fell in the Lake District last week-end. I should have known better than to recommend Buttermere Show so enthusiastically; but I cannot help myself; I am a serial optimist. In 1979, in the early days of my wrestling articles for the Cumberland News, I enthused about Alwinton Show: The sun will shine, the trees will be in Autumn colours, and I will talk all afternoon and seem to know everybody. The following week revealed the reality: At Alwinton Show, the place where I promised the sun always shone, three generations of Robsons huddled under several coats and umbrellas, virtually the only spectators when Ken Davidson won the high jump while still wearing his wellies. The steadily increasing



downpour drove spectators to shelter and sports.

Jock Hall had little choice but to abandon the

Lake District events, held in the wettest area of England, are hostage to the weather. Who would have thought that the famous Keswick Sports, the big spending event which could afford to bring world class American athletes to compete in the running events, would be obliterated by a succession of wet years. Even the presence of Jimmy Saville in 1966 failed to stave off its threatened demise when the rains fell. Ironically, a well-funded attempt to restart Keswick Sports in 1992 failed. I wonder why?



Despite all this, rainy days can have pleasant memories. Governing Board member Cyril Bragg recalls that his brother, Billy, liked wrestling in the rain especially when he won both the Grasmere and the Heavyweight Championship in downpours in 1950. Cyril remembers at Great Orton Sports, when wrestlers came soaked and dirty from a previous event, and competed bare skinned, like slippery eels. Bob McGregor had a notable victory at the Holm Show in the early sixties when he felled Ted Dungalinson best-of-three whilst wearing his council worker's huge oilskin trousers to keep me arse dry. Ted, apparently was speechless; in itself a rare event.

My favourite wet day was at Grasmere in 1970. As I walked out into the ring the water met over the top of my feet at every step. Immediately after I felled Edwin Younger in the 12st final, a Cumberland News photographer took a picture of me with rain-flattened hair, mud splatters and the adrenalin still coursing. That photo with the tag The new English master at Trinity School served to introduce me to my new pupils and colleagues. That photo surfaced again recently in the Evening News pull-out Nostalgia feature on Sport in this area.

My day at Grasmere was not yet finished, for in the All Weights I met the spherical



heavyweight, Donald Dayson and decided to use the conditions to my advantage. I set off backwards, pulling Donald around as fast as possible to induce a slip. All he did was keep his feet on the ground, water-ski-ing after me. At some point my strategy failed and I remember ending flat on my back, motionless, with eighteen stone of Donald on top as the Grasmere waters rose and left me with high tide marks all round my body.

Dates:

Friday, 7th November CWWA Presentattion Dinner in the Auctioneer, Rosehill, Carlisle. including music from Lyn Murray, tickets from Alf Harrington 01228 576675

Wednesday 12th November Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points Night

November 5th 2008

TRAINING FOR THE ACADEMY SHIELD

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

All five Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling Academies are in action and preparing for the big night on Friday November 21st when the Academy Shield will be up for grabs at Kendal Rugby Club.



A hundred years ago Academy Wrestling was an important part of the weekly entertainment in Carlisle when there was wrestling each Saturday night at Mary Street on a carpet. At a special match between the academies of Carlisle and Newcastle in 1908, my Uncle Geordie was the only Northumbrian winner from thirty-two couples in the 11 stones. The winners were then put in the hat for an individual competition and he survived a broken nose on a ringside spectator's boot, and a tough bout with Nichol of Knightslodge in the semi-final before reaching the final with Davis. Geordie was exhausted, but luckily for him Davis's favourite chip was the hank, a trip that Geordie was adept at countering with the back-heel. He duly did that to win the first fall, but the second *went to Davis with a very clever buttock*. According to *The Carlisle Journal*, Both men were wary in the third hold, Davis again assaying the hank and failing to turn his man, both falling to the carpet. The umpires disagreeing, the referee decided in favour of Robson, his opponent having touched the carpet first. Robson was loudly cheered on receiving the prize a handsome silver cup.



After the Second World War, a great resurgence of wrestling took place, both at the summer sports meetings and indoors with an unprecedented number of new academies. In 1949 there were academies at Gilsland, Carlisle, Kirkbride, Wearhead, Alwinton, Gosforth, Egremont and Bootle, and others being planned for Penrith and Appleby. From then until the late fifties wrestling reached its highest intensity when the Academy Shield was the prize for the winning the Academy League when clubs wrestled each other, home and away.

Then the balloon burst: academies closed, with Kendal Academy the only one left alive in the sixties. On my arrival in Carlisle in 1970, Carlisle Wrestling Club was set up in the Strand Road Sports Centre by Tom Harrington, Ted Duglinton and me, and inter-academy wrestling resumed. The first fixtures were more like social gatherings with wrestlers from the two Academies casually matched against each other on the mat, and any gaps plugged by spare wrestlers from the home academy.

Then, in 1983, the Academy Shield was retrieved from somebody's cupboard, and put up for competition again under a new set of rules devised by me. These rules reflected the change in the Academies for they valued young wrestlers as much as the seniors, with nine weights from 6st. to 14st and an All Weights section. Each weight was wrestled in a round-robin with one wrestler representing each academy.

In the Good Old Days, matches were won by all sorts of ploys. The home team could match the wrestlers in such a way to gain advantages, and a single brilliant wrestler could wrestle and win several times, whilst less talented clubmates sat and watched. Under the new rules each wrestler could compete only once and always in weight order.

The basic format remains the same, with slight alterations which reflect changes in the academies. Smaller academies such as Minthorpe, were obviously unable to find ten wrestlers to fill all categories, so wrestlers were allowed to compete twice if no-one else was available.

The general population has become heavier, so an extra weight, the 15 stones was added to the list. Female wrestling has become commoner in recent years, and for the first time this year, there will be two categories for females (10st and All Weights)

Five Academies are expected to take part at Kendal on November 21st : Carlisle, Kendal, Milnthorpe, Rothbury and Waberthwaite, a healthy number when compared with the lean times of the sixties and seventies.

Dates:

Wednesday 12 th November Carlisle Wrestling Club Junior Points in the Gym at Currock House

Wednesday, 19 th November Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points

November 12th 2008

PRESENTATION DINNER IN THE AUCTIONEER, CARLISLE,

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



Left to Right - Back Row : Joe Thompson (Under 15, Under 18 and The Wrestlers' Wrestler), Richard Dixon (Lightweights), John Harrington (Middleweights and Heavyweights)
 Front Row: James Hayhurst (Under 12), Hannah Hodgson (Females)

Nine years ago, at the end of my book on *Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling*, a photograph under



the heading The Future, Stars of the present and future champions shows two tiny wrestlers in full wrestling gear looking very seriously at the camera. That prediction has long ago been fulfilled, and Richard Dixon of Lessonhall and John Harrington of Bewaldeth, who both work at home on the farm, added more honours to their name last week,

when they received CWWA trophies at the Presentation Dinner in the Auctioneer, Carlisle, where wrestlers and fans had gathered from all over Cumbria and Northumberland.

Richard Dixon's year started well when he won the 11st Championship at **Killington Sports** in early June. Later in the year he took the 11st **Grasmere Championship** also. His main rival was his friend and relative, John Harrington, who was fleetingly 11st after clipping time around Langhom Common Riding. The two of them battled it out at 11 ½ st all season.

One week, such as at **Silloth Vintage Rally**, Harrington would be completely the boss, and then the following week Dixon would be throwing Harrington high wide and handsome at **Patterdale** Dixon was usually at a half stone disadvantage, but in the end that became an advantage as he accumulated points from 11st events. He began the season well, and then got better, a worthy winner of the CWWA Lightweights trophy.

John Harrington won the Middleweights Trophy with his consistent skilful performance. The Breton wrestlers, for all their flair, must have wondered what they had to do to beat him. Like Richard Dixon he won at the big occasions like **Amblesid** and **Grasmere**, but for much of the season something was missing. a championship. In some years he has been a triple champion, but somehow they had slipped away from him, until that glorious climax of the Grass Season at Alwinton when he felled Richard Dixon in the final of the 12st to regain the World Championship.

Harrington's strength and style means that he is competitive when wrestling bigger men, and he also travels well, so once again he was the winner of the CWWA All Weights trophy for the season.

For a few years the dominant female wrestler has been Tracy Hodgson. This year that mantle fell to her younger sister Hannah Hodgson of Dentdale, who is fourteen years of age and a pupil at Settlebeck School. Her keenness has taken her to wrestle in Brittany in February and all over the North during the main season, and includes a win in the Female Under 15 Years at **Grasmere**. The youngest category was also the closest, with only one point separating the winner, James Hayhurst of Natland, from the runner-up Joe Hale of Rothbury. James, who trains at Kendal Academy was well chauffeured by his Grandad Peter and won throughout the region. In the end the difference between the two contenders came down to the likes of **Stanhope Show** where the two met in the final and Hayhurst came off best. Hayhurst, who goes to Dallam School, is also brilliant at Motor Trialling, coming fifth in the Nationals for his age. He competes as far afield as the Isle of Man and Wales, negotiating rocks and ramps and riverbeds on his trial bike.

Most successful of all at the Dinner was Joe Thompson of Alston, for he won three trophies. His father, another Peter takes him wherever there is wrestling, and we have seen him developing in skill and character. Best of all for him was the win at **Eskdale Show**, when he battled his way to win the Under 15 Years Championship against bigger opposition. Tellingly, before that event, he felt the need of some specialised coaching, and went to Alan Jones for some intensive work in the fortnight before the championship, which may have made all the difference. At **Eskdale**, he then went on to win the Under 18 Years despite even greater weight disadvantage. His success in the older age-group was repeated often enough in the season to bring him the CWWA Under 18s trophy, too.

The third trophy? That was a small cup awarded to the Wrestlers' Wrestler, voted on by the active wrestlers present at the dinner. It may not be hall-marked silver, but maybe it is the most valuable trophy of all.

Brooks Mileson, the Gretna Football Club owner, who died recently, only came into our wrestling world once. When we were struggling to find funds to stage the European Championships in Carlisle in 1999, he gave us £2000 with no strings attached, which made all the difference.

Dates:

Wednesday, 19 th November Carlisle Wrestling Club Senior Points

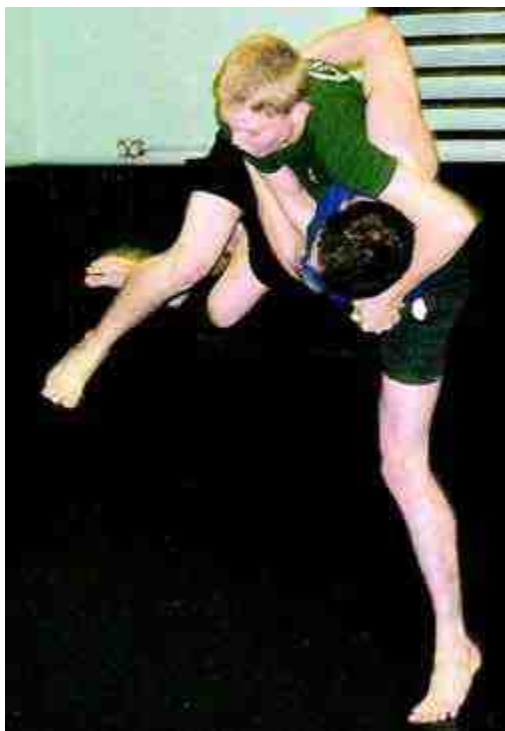
Friday, 21 st November 7.30pm Academy Shield in Kendal Rugby Club. All Welcome.

November 20th 2008

CARLISLE WRESTLING CLUB'S POINTS NIGHTS

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

Richard Dixon, weighing in at around 11st, is improbably tall and strong for that weight, and he is clever, too. At the first of the Carlisle Wrestling Club's Points Nights he was unbeatable. True, most of his opponents were young callants feeling their way into the adult wrestling, as he won all three weight categories, but he won with style, and felled that other wrestling genius, John Harrington en route, twice.



Once upon a time he would gain a good position and then hesitate. But that is all in the past: given a half chance he explodes into generous curves of movement and action with swirling buttocks and hips and twists.

In the Juniors a new name has demanded attention. Joe Coates of Gilsland, a pupil at Haltwhistle Middle School, was voted the best junior wrestler of the night by the judges. He is one of those natural wrestlers who know instinctively when to twist. In the final of the Under 12 Years he twisted Philip Potts by the neck until he had to go down. In the second bout of the final he feinted to go one way and then smartly changed direction to win the bout. Shepherding and wrestling often go hand-in-hand, and Joe Coates fulfils that observation, for he is a keen breeder of Beltex sheep. Watch out 2009.

The first category of the Boys' Points, the 6st, was a walk-over for Kieron Miller, but he had to work for his money in the 7 stones where he was obviously at a weight disadvantage throughout. On his way to winning he had to account for big brother David, in the semi-final and then fell the steadily improving Philip Potts in the final.

Jack Brown, given a chance to compete at his own weight in the 8 ½ stones, won handsomely with a hipe in the last bout of the final against Jamie Nicholson. Craig Naylor of Wasdale, currently a sports student at Newton Rigg, had kept under the 10st mark and reaped the reward by felling Paul Murary in the final.

Joe Thompson of Alston, as befits a World Champion, blasted his way through the field in the Under 15 Years. And Jack Ewart of Westward used his weight advantage to good effect, particularly a helicopter swing on Jack Brown in the first round

Carlisle Wrestling Club Points Nights

6st 1. K Miller.

7st 1, K Miller; 2, P Potts; 3, D Miller; 4, T Gibson.

8 ½ st 1, J Brown; 2, J Nicholson; 3, P Murray; 4, M McBratney.

10st 1, C Naylor; 2, P Murray; 3, J Nicholson; 4, R Coates.

Girls 1, D Gibson; 2, M Gibson.

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

Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, F Magnay; 3, J Brown; 4, J Nicholson.

Under 18 Years 1, J Ewart; 2, C Naylor; 3, S Mather; 4, B Wilde.

Men's 11 ½ st 1, R Dixon; 2, J Brown; 3, C Naylor; 4, P Murray.

13st 1, R Dixon; 2, John Harrington; 3, C Naylor; 4, P Murray.

All Weights 1, R Dixon; 2, John Harrington; 3, C Naylor; 4, J Thompson.

Date:

Tonight, Friday 21 st November, 7.30pm Academy Shield at Kendal Rugby Club.

November 26th 2008

THE ACADEMY SHIELD AT KENDAL RUGBY CLUB

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



The Academy Shield at Kendal Rugby Club should have been boring, because Carlisle wrestlers were unbeaten in the first nine weights and quickly established an unassailable lead in the team competition. but it wasn't. Every bout fizzed with energy; every single step was a challenge for the Carlisle wrestlers, and the noise level rose and rose. The Academy Shield is a series of round-robin competitions starting at 6 stones rising a stone at a time up to 15 stones. In addition there is a female 10 stones and women's and men's All Weights sections. Six teams from all over Cumbria and Northumberland took part. Two brothers, Kieron and David Miller from Carlisle set the standard in the first two categories, winning by finesse rather than power. Jack Brown at 8st had a real challenge to make the weight and was running the back streets of Kendal, heavily dressed, before he managed the weight and then had enough energy left to fell good wrestlers like Bradley Thompson and Sam Lashley.

Paul Murray at 9st had a particularly tough group, including as it did the likes of Andrew Woodend, Ben Brocklebank and Isaac Hammond. Andrew Woodend caught the eye with his emphatic style, so when Murray and he met late in the section there was a special buzz. Murray is adept at gaining hold and wrestling off the right side. Despite Woodend's power he managed to get in front and rush him forward



Craig Naylor hales from Wasdale and began his wrestling at Waberthwaite, but he is now a sports student at Newton Rigg, and has regularly attended Carlisle Wrestling Club. For his new academy he turned in a performance of such quality, with hipes and hanks and twists as necessary that Jim Bland, when the dust settled, awarded him the trophy for the best performance of the night. Katy Brown won the first ever female section of the Academy Shield to keep the Carlisle pot boiling. In Andrew Carlile, Richard Dixon, and John Harrington, Carlisle had the men's wrestling sewn up, each performing with the sort of class that has brought each of them a championship this year.



Only in the 14 stones was Carlisle's dominance challenged. Graham Brocklebank, just turned 18 this summer, was in great form for Kendal, taking all his falls. Even then Carlisle went back to winning ways when Joe Harrington won the first bout of the 15 stones against former champion, Joseph Robson, and went through unbeaten. In the ladies All Weights two Carlisle wrestlers ended up with four wins each. Lynn Murray for Carlisle B upset the form book by felling Donna Thompson, but was in turn felled by Sandra Woodend of Waberthwaite.

The most even section was the men's All Weights, when three wrestlers, Thomas Brocklebank (Kendal), Jason Davidson (Rothbury) and Joe Lowry (Waberthwaite) all gained four falls out of five.

In the open competitions after the main event, Jack Hale of Rothbury excelled himself by winning the All Weights, no doubt making the long ride back to the North-East more palatable.

Results:

Academy Shield

1, Carlisle 69pts; 2, Kendal 42pts; 3, Waberthwaite 30pts; 4, Rothbury 27pts; 5, Milnthorpe 23pts; 6, Carlisle B.

Best Performance Trophy: Craig Naylor, Carlisle,

Open results:

Under 12 Years 1, J Hayhurst; 2, A Dent; 3, J Hale.

Under 15 Years 1, J Thompson; 2, J Hall; 3, J Brown.

Girls Open 1, D Thompson; 2, K Brown; 3, E Hayhurst.

12 ½ st 1, John Harrington; 2, J Wragg; 3, C Naylor.

All Weights 1, Jack Hale; 2, Joe Harrington; 3, J Robson.

December 3rd 2008

LAKELAND SPORTS PROMOTERS' ASSOCIATION'S AWARDS

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

The extended Brocklebank/Hodgson family nearly monopolised the wrestling section of the Lakeland Sports Promoters' Association's awards at the recent presentation luncheon at the Heaves Hotel, near Kendal.

Top of the pile was Graham Brocklebank of Warton, who won eight events on the LSPA calendar. His exploits meant that the guest of honour, Kenny Stuart, announced him as the Lakeland Sports Personality of 2008, to join a long list of famous wrestlers and athletes which includes his Grandfather Wilf Brocklebank.

Graham Brocklebank won at Under 18 Years at Lowgill, but a birthday meant that he could only compete in the adult events after that. The transition can be hard for some wrestlers, but that was not the case for Graham for he won six 13st LSPA events and two at All Weights. Undoubtedly his greatest day was at the **Westmorland Show** when he won at both 13 and 14 stones despite a large and competitive entry.

Graham's cousin, Scott Broclebank had a near perfect start to the season winning at Killington, Lowgill, Ambleside, Beetham, Rusland, Grasmere and the Westmorland Show. Best of all was at Grasmere when he won both the **Under 15s and the Under 18 Years**, and was awarded the Guinness Trophy for the best performance in the whole wrestling programme.

Another of Brocklebank's cousins, Hannah Hodgson, was nominated as the female wrestler. She won wherever she went except on two occasions when big sister Tracy felled her. Highlight of her season was the win in the **Under 15 girls at Grasmere** .

Joe Thompson of Alston's performance was like a mirror image of Scott Brocklebank. While Scott dominated the first two thirds of the season, Joe Thompson only came to life in the LSPA events when he won at both Under 15 and Under 18 at Egremont Crab Fair. Then at Eskdale Show his season peaked when he won a fiercely fought **Under 15 Years Championship** and then he went on to win the Under 18s in a weighty entry.

At the luncheon there was no sign of James Hayhurst, the Under 12 Years nominee, at presentation time for he was competing on his motorbike in a quarry near Millom. Just as the guests were dispersing he arrived with his dad. The trophy was rescued from big brother William, and re-presented to James by the guest of honour. James won at most places his grandad Peter took him, including the major events at Ambleside, Grasmere and the **Westmorland Show**.

Ali Johnson, the Tynedale rugby player who was paralysed when a scrum collapsed on him, died of a stroke on Monday. As a boy he and his brother were keen wrestlers and trained regularly at Carlisle Wrestling Club. The last time I saw him before his accident was at the Roman Wall Show where he had been showing sheep. He made himself known to me, and needed to, for he had grown from a boy into a big athletic frame. He spoke fondly of the wrestling and said he might be giving it another go. The next time I saw him he was in a wheelchair.

Wrestling supporters have the opportunity to review the 2008 season in photographs at a slide show

On Sunday, 14th December, 7.30 pm at Currock House, Carlisle . **A CD of the photographs and all my 2009 wrestling articles** will be available afterwards.

December 18th 2008

IFCW REP. ON OFFICIAL VISIT TO DISCUSS FORTHCOMING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN E. KILBRIDE
(*CLICK on thumbnail to see a larger picture - CLICK anywhere EXCEPT on the larger image to return to this page*)

This week-end, Jean- François Hubert, a senior official of the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling will be in Glasgow to discuss details of the 15th European Championships which are scheduled for the 24th to 25th April, 2009 in East Kilbride. Separate female championships will also be held at the same time and place.

Two years ago in a mountain village near the Spanish city of Leon, the English team was Andrew Carlile, instead of seven wrestlers ranging from 9 ½ st to 15 ½ st plus an Open Weight. Carlile won the backhold title and did well in the Gouren style, but surely we can do better in Scotland next April. The Carlisle coach, Alan Jones, reckons that we could win the title, but that depends on a rigorous training regime in the coming months and the individual determination of each wrestler to fulfil potential.

Our present crop of champions is notable for its youth and technical ability in the Back-hold style. Many of them have had experience of International competition in the European Espoirs Championships for youths 16 to 20 years of age. Andrew Carlile and David Atkinson are both gifted coaches and practitioners in both the international styles and no-one is better at strategy and motivation than Alan Jones.

In addition, the Bretons are organising a training week from the 15 to 20 th February at Ti ar Gouren, the House of Wrestling, at Berrien in the dead centre of the Brittany Peninsula. Such an intensive training session could lift the standard of the team radically. Four wrestlers from this area are invited to take part as well as a travelling official. On the 21st, the Breton Backhold Championships will be held to round off the week.

What about the state of the pound? Luckily, the Bretons are past masters at finding European money, and if we have a full group over 850 Euros would be available to subsidise the travelling expenses. In addition all accommodation expenses would be free.

The cost of the European Championships will also be minimal, as East Kilbride is only two hours away by car.

Training is always problematical because of the geography of the area. Basic training may well have to be in each wrestler's local academy with the occasional plenary session on a Sunday.

Any wrestler, male or female, and over 16 years of age, keen to take part in this prestigious event and to represent the region against the best traditional wrestlers in Europe should contact me, Roger Robson. (tel: 016974 73559) as soon as possible.

One wrestler will have a particular problem with distance from the training sessions. Richard Fox is at present in the South Island of New Zealand clipping sheep. Over 15,000 sheep were presented for shearing at one venue, and he got so hot he turned the shears on himself for the haircut of a lifetime. We know that he will be back before the championships, because his dad needs him for the lambing in March.

December 22nd 2008

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

This year wrestlers have had to contend with some atrocious conditions and many events have been cancelled; but at least you can feel that the organisers have chosen places and dates that would be fine in a normal year. Our ancestors had a much more masochistic streak at times, and held events in midwinter and on the tops of mountains.

In 1785, wrestlers competed in the middle of Lake Windermere, in clogs, on ice. The ice on the lake *'attained a great thickness'*, a large ox was roasted, Kendal band tootled, *'lots of beer'* was swilled, and the wrestlers took hold. *'The wrestling was in clogs, such as country people at that time generally wore the falls were eagerly contested, and delighted the throng of spectators. The final victor received a belt.'*

That was a special impromptu event, but *'Wrestlings, Jumpings, Horse Races and other sports'* took place at 2,700 feet on the top of High Street *'annually on the 10th July for many years, and long continued to be a flourishing institution'*. The excuse for this venue was that it served as a Shepherd's Meet when stray sheep could be mustered and returned to owners.



One of the earliest images of Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling is a woodcut by Thomas Bewick which depicts two wrestlers in holds, high in the hills. Bewick, born in 1753 wrote in his memoirs about walking over to Cumberland from the Tyne in 1774 and finding that his cousin was a famous wrestler who had won nine belts.

At least the High Street event took place in summer. Langwathby at the edge of the Pennines, tempted fate each year by holding its Rounds on New Year's Day. *'Wrestling formed by far the greatest attraction of these primitive gatherings; the yeoman farmers, and husbandmen from the neighbouring hamlets being the principal competitors.'*

Not unexpectedly, the weather could be bad. *'In 1820, on New Year's Day, the ground was covered with a coating of snow three or four inches deep.'* Nevertheless, the wrestling went on, and in a bout between Mason of Croglin and Westmorland of Ousby, Mason entered the ring wearing an *'old home-spun overcoat so thick and patched that it set at nought Westmorland's attempts to clasp his hands around it'*

As his opponent became *'numb and frigid with cold'* Mason took his time to be persuaded to strip. Even when the huge overcoat was shed, Westmorland still was unable to get hold. After more lengthy negotiations Mason eventually stripped to *'his sark in the snow, with nothing on but his trousers, where his opponent managed to keep him standing until he, in his turn, was nearly starved to death'*

Those were the days !

December 31st 2008

PERSONAL ARCHIVIST!

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

Not many people below the rank of baronet have their personal archivist, but I do. Once a year, as Christmas approaches, a large fat envelope, stuffed with newspaper cuttings, drops on my mat. Retired archivist, Jeremy Godwin, who obviously reads all the northern local papers, has assiduously cut out and referenced any mention of wrestling, and passed them on to me.

The Cumberland News wrestling column, for the last sixty years, week by week, has set out to cover Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling wherever it happens, but for all the other local papers the coverage of wrestling is more parochial, reflecting local events. The Hexham Courant covered the death of Haltwhistle wrestler, Chris Walton, killed by a freight train in February, but also had a story in June when his friends organised a new bench in the town complete with a remembrance plaque. In November the Courant reported his inquest, including the criticisms of the unlit and unmanned crossing where he died.

On a happier note, boy champion, Paul Murray, who often appears in this column, has had special articles in his local Whitehaven News to recognise some of his special achievements such as retaining his Under 15 Years/8st Championship, and a particularly impressive sally into Scotland when he was unbeaten in two competitions.

The Westmorland Gazette has no regular coverage of wrestling, even though it has top class wrestlers and two academies in its patch, but it gives good coverage of the likes of Grasmere Sports, and has a good photograph of Richard Dixon and his newly won 11st Championship trophy at Killington Sports.

Wrestling's importance as part of the local culture over the centuries is reflected in a number of references in the *'Memory Lane'* sections. Oldest of all is in the Westmorland Gazette for 1858 with an account of *'Mr Robert Gordon, sire of the noted*

wrestlers bearing his name, strewed two cart-loads of foot cocks, turned over the hay and put it up into a big-cock, all in one day' at the age of ninety-five.

The Hexham Courant of 125 years ago reported that a large crowd of spectators watched a wrestling tournament promoted by Hugh Tulip of Half Way House, Prudhoe.

The Whitehaven News has snippets from every twenty-five years over the last century. At Sandwith Sports in 1908 *'For boys wrestling, Under 15 Years, resident within six miles of the ground, £1 will be given.'* There were also prizes for waltzing and the boy running in the neatest costume. 75 years ago Douglas Clark, the famous Rugby League international and Cumberland and Westmorland wrestler, had turned to all-in wrestling, for he was hoping to set up a training camp at Salt pans, between Maryport and Allonby, to train there for his upcoming fight with the Masked Marvel. Fifty years ago the News reported that *'the question of whether Cumberland and Westmorland wrestlers should be registered like footballers, with their fees to go towards meeting the bill for insurance against injuries in the ring, has been raised.'*

Jeremy Godwin also included handwritten notes about wrestling references in the Penrith Herald from a hundred years ago. The gist of these is that Penrith had a wrestling academy which, like that at Carlisle, met for competitions every Saturday evening. Appleby, too, had its own academy, and there were reports on wrestling at many local events: Greenholme School Treat and Gala, Tebay Sports, Warcop Rushbearing, Ravenstonedale Sheepdog Trials, and Tebay Women's Liberal Association's Meeting and Sports.

At Ravenstonedale Joe Bowman made his return to the ring for the first time since his suspension. 'Barneying' (buying and selling falls) had bedevilled the sport, and even at the homely Warcop Rushbearing two wrestlers were caught barneying. The Herald also reported on the measures to sort out the problem when it gave a long and detailed account of a meeting of the recently formed C&W Wrestling Association.

Meanwhile the local magistrates were also doing their bit when they found James Taylor of Kirkoswald, *'locally known as a wrestler,'* guilty of drunken fighting.

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