Holmes soon back in winning groove

by PHIL SMITH

T&A Athletics Correspondent

After a magnificent run on the road in Sunday's 12-stage relay, Ian Holmes returned to what he does best – winning fell races as he led home a record first-night entry of 234 runners in the Bunny Run over Harden Moor.

This four-race series will run over the next three weeks, with next Tuesday's race starting at 7.15pm.

Holmes's winning time was almost a minute outside his own course record of 16-43 set in 1997, due mainly to the slippery nature of the steep scramble up the banking just beyond the halfway point of the three-mile event.

Todmorden's Andy Wrench had the edge over Pudsey and Bramley's new recruit Robert Hope for second place.

Great Horton-based Steve Oldfield was first veteran (over-40) with seventh place overall, with team-mate Richard Crossland over half a minute adrift.

Mike Mahoney (St Bede's), fresh from his success over 20 miles in the Northern Veterans Championships at Rochdale, took top spot in the over-60s, with Bingley's Bernard Crowther in third.

Former British fell champion Sarah Rowell (Pudsey and Bramley) easily took the women's award, ahead of Spenborough veteran Kath Drake, who combined with third placed Amy Green to lead the way for the team award.

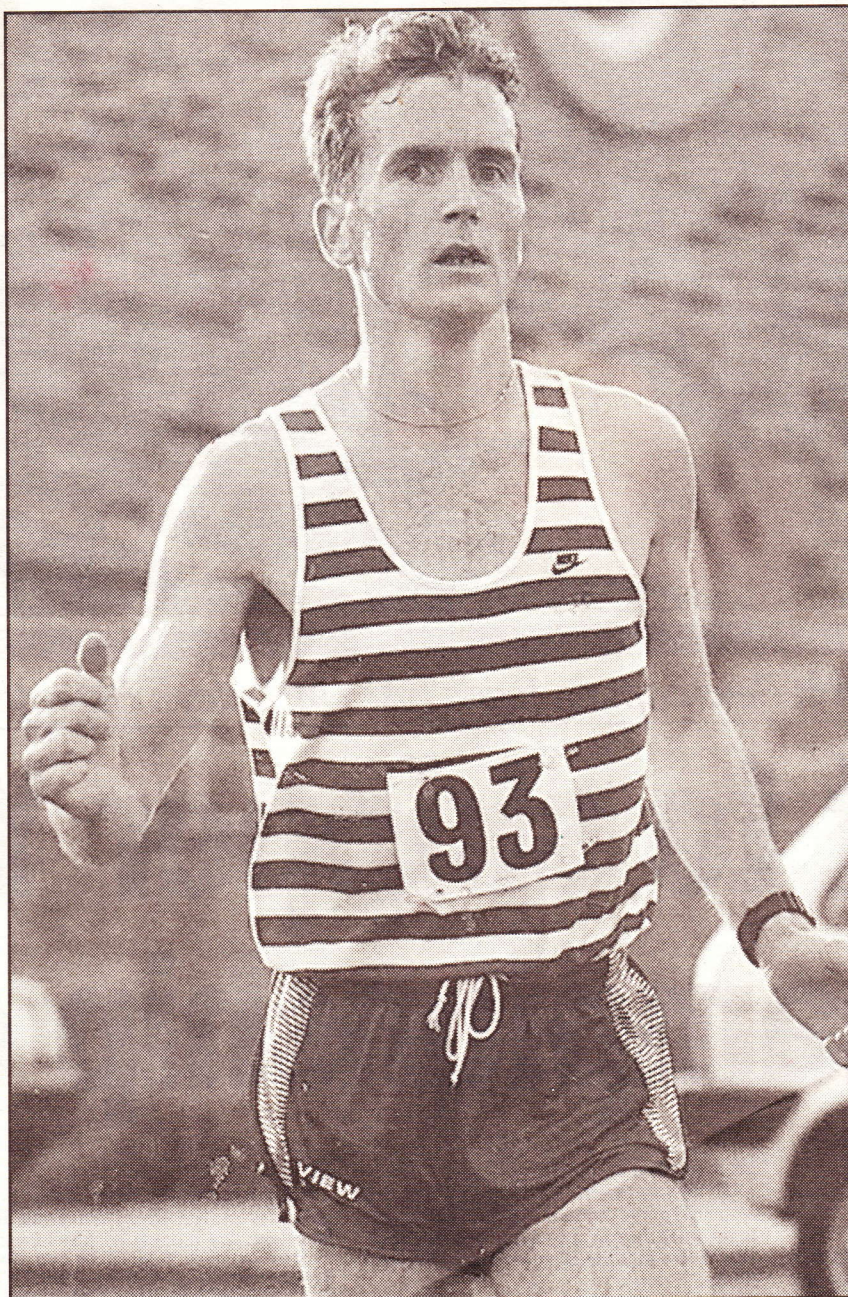Two off-road events take place over the Easter weekend.

On Saturday at 3pm is the Rivington Pike fell race from the Crown Hotel, Horwich.

John Wild (RAF) set the course record of 15-53 way back in 1981 for, the 3¼-mile route, and Bingley's Carol Greenwood's women's record from 1986 of 19-35 has also stood the test of time.

On Sunday, at 11am from West Side Retail Park, Guiseley, is the Skyrac-promoted Guiseley Gallop – a multi-terrain event of about 10km.

The course goes through woodland and crosses the River Aire to follow the towpath on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal before a road section into Esholt, then woodland tracks back up to the finish.

Bunny Run One Results – Men: 1 I Holmes (Bingley) 17-40, 2 A Wrench (Todmorden) 17-57, 3 R Hope (Pudsey and Bramley) 18-03, 4 S Livesey (Clayton-le-Moors) 18-06, 5 G Oldfield (Pudsey and Bramley) 18-14, 6 M Horrocks (Clayton-le-Moors) 18-32. **Over-40s:** 1 S Oldfield (Bradford Airedale) 18-52, 2 R Crossland (Bradford Airedale) 19-34. **Over-50:** J Holt (Clayton-le-Moors) 20-26. **Over-60:** M Mahoney (St Bede's) 24-37. **Teams:** 1 Clayton-le-Moors, Pudsey and Bramley. **Women:** 1 S Rowell (Pudsey and Bramley) 20-41, 2 K Drake (Spen) 22-17, 3 A Green (Spen) 22-58, 4 H Johnson (Ilkley) 23-11. **Over-40:** M Green (Bingley) 23-55. **Team:** Spen.

QUICK AS A RABBIT: *Ian Holmes finished 17 seconds clear in first Bunny Run*