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220TH EDITION

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SUMMER REFLECTIONS

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE SHOW

At this year's show, young Izzy Hool won the handwriting class for under-8 year olds with the theme "Rain, rain, go away". And it did! Despite a very uncertain forecast, the weather held off for the 131st running of the Rusland Show. Attendance was very encouraging with gate receipts being higher than the last few years. This was a relief to the Rusland Valley Horticultural Society after last year's show was all but washed out. Those who came enjoyed a varied programme of exhibits, displays, sports, hound trails and demonstrations. There were fun and games for the kids with a bouncy castle and other colourful attractions.

Despite a mixed season of weather, entries in the horticultural sections held up well. Jean Woodhouse won three cups and, yet again, J.Athersmith from Newland won the Blue Ribbon for the best horticultural exhibit, this time with near-perfect tomatoes.

First-time judge, Tom Attwood of Halecat Nurseries, Witherslack, was hugely impressed by the range and quality of the exhibits. He said "Given the strange weather we have had recently, the results are tremendous".

All-rounder Margaret Postlethwaite won the Fardy Jackson Memorial Challenge Trophy as the most successful exhibitor in Cut Flowers, Home Produce, Handicraft and Photography. She also was also the points-winner in the Home Produce section.

The most successful competitor in the Floral Art classes was young Rebecca Knipe with some excellent entries including a memorial to World War I.

Turning to up-and-coming exhibitors, the much-coveted May Lambert Memorial Trophy was awarded to Oscar Buchanan who won the Krispie Cakes class.

Although the Children's classes were less well supported than in previous years, the quality was as good as ever. Particularly notable performances came from Ruth Cooper and Amelia Thompson who won three classes each and won cups. Other cup winners included William Patterson and Eliza Patterson.

Dennis and Linda Wall had a clean sweep in the walking stick classes – surely someone else out there can provide some competition!

Melanie Gard from Satterthwaite won the Spring Garden competition and Edward and Hilary Collins won the overall Summer Garden competition, both judged earlier in the year. Yet again, the Sports events were well supported with record entries and records falling. (Continued in next column)

There were 54 competitors in the 5-mile race concluding in a very exciting finish with Kendal AC's Craig Roberts just pipping Phil Davies from Borrowdale in a new record time of 31.27. The race is gaining notoriety and competitors came from far and wide; the first lady home over this demanding and steep course was Fiona Hughes running for Cambridge University. Rusland's own Oscar Meanwell achieved fifth place at the tender age of 17.

In the Short Senior Fell race, Phil Davies gained revenge leading home Craig Roberts and, in third, Oscar Meanwell. Show Secretary and Oscar's determined father, Antony, came home in a very creditable fifth place in a field of 26 runners. Fiona Hughes picked up the lady's prize.

Luke Bowen (Ambleside) won the U17 fell race, with Heidi Murray (Lancaster) being the first girl home.

In the U14 race, both the boys and girls record times were bettered by Logan Hargreaves (Wharfedale) and Frances Bell (New Marske Harriers) respectively. In a day of excellent fell-running, both records were also broken in the U12 race by Liam Bond (Cumberland Fell Runners) and Chloe Rylance (Ambleside).

A full track programme was held in good running conditions. There was fierce competition among the girls with Megan Busby picking up first places at three distances and Anya Clough scoring top three results in four races. James, Harry and Luke Bowen shared out most of the boys prizes with James Thornley and Joe Wilkinson also winning races. A first-time entrant, Raj Madhas from Wharfedale, was heard to say that this was one of the best organised sports events he had taken part in and he "would definitely be back next year".

There was fierce rivalry between George Wilson and Robert Albion in the Cumberland and Westmorland Wrestling, the former coming out on top. Trevor Hodgson won the all-weights competition.

The delightfully-named 'Huntsmans Hope', 'Pips Spirit', 'Barmaid' and 'Rascal' were the Hound Trail cup winners.

Mr Giles Wingate-Saul and Mr Barry Harrison held their usual entertaining auction of produce and raised a substantial sum thanks to the generosity of supporters. Thanks to the exhibitors, competitors, judges, sponsors, supporters, organisers and members of the Rusland Valley Horticultural Society for putting on yet another excellent show. With a recently-formed 'Young Persons Committee' already having an impact on proceedings, the future of the Show looks promising indeed!