

## RUGBY

## Comfortable derby win for Keswick

KESWICK 27  
ASPATRIA 3

A MIX of determination and efficiency saw Keswick run out comfortable winners over Aspatria in their derby clash at Davidson Park.

The excellent kicking game of Keswick's Kieran Mewse was largely responsible for establishing a gap between the teams both on the scoreboard, and also ensuring that when Aspatria did attack it was usually from a deep field position.

The first quarter of the game was largely devoid of action in either 22 but a Mewse penalty put Keswick ahead and was the only early noteworthy occurrence.

It took Aspatria 20 plus minutes to mount a first forage to the home try line. A burst through the middle by centre Ryan Scott set up a perfect position for a try. It was not to be, but the effort seemed to put life into Aspatria and they produced a decent 10 minutes of action.

While this was in progress Mewse was still able to pop over a couple of penalties between the posts to keep the scoreboard ticking over in favour of Keswick.

It looked likely that 9-0 would be the half-time score but a late penalty by Aspatria's Matty Irving reduced the deficit.

After the break, Keswick gradually took control and almost immediately Mewse added another three points and the game became increasingly concentrated in the Aspatria half.

This was the best of the day's rugby with the crowd appreciating, not only Keswick's well-constructed attacks, but also the ferocity of the Aspatria defence.

However, Aspatria paid a price in their last ditch defending with back row Jamie Lightfoot sent to the sin bin.

A sensible change of tactics followed from Keswick as a result. They turned down the easiest penalty opportunity of the day and a certain three points to chase a try.

Yet again Aspatria held out but at the cost of a further penalty. An excellent decision by Mewse to launch a cross-field kick caught-out Aspatria and home winger Joe Allday was handed a simple walk-in to take the home advantage out to 17-3.

Following the re-start Mewse added a further long range penalty and at 20-3 Aspatria were deep in trouble.

The visitors were just about still in the fight but badly needed a score. This should have been delivered in a period of intense pressure on the Keswick line. It was Keswick's turn to defend and they did well to keep Aspatria at bay.

Frustration crept in among the visitor ranks and Scott was sent to the bin. Keswick were now happy to feed off Aspatria errors and were able to see the game out comfortably with a second try by Ryan Weir.

It was a deserved win for Keswick leaving Aspatria with no complaints but plenty of work to do in training.

## Abbie plays her part in England win

KESWICK'S Abbie Ward was a member of the England team that comfortably defeated world champions New Zealand 24-12 at the newly re-named Allianz Stadium at the weekend.

The game, which was the first played since Twickenham's naming rights were sold, was played in front of a crowd of 41,523.

Lock forward Abbie, who plays for Bristol Bears, did not get on the score-sheet but played her part in what was a clinical England performance.

The victory extends

## IT ALL CAME GOOD IN THE END

ALL'S well that ends well.

Keswick 2nds completed a difficult but, for the most part, enjoyable 2024 season with an amazing late run of form that saved the team from relegation and set up the prospect of a more risk avert campaign in 2025.

On the final day of the current season, last Saturday, the team travelled to play a Wigton 2nds side already doomed to relegation. Keswick needed to win to be certain of retaining their newly-acquired premier division status in the Eden Valley Cricket League (EVCL), writes Keith Richardson.

This they did, winning quite comfortably, but in the final analysis the victory was not critical because the threat to their survival also depended on lowly Stainton winning at Lanercost. This they failed to do, and Stainton now join Wigton 2nds in Division One of the EVCL next season.

Meanwhile Keswick, rock bottom of the league and staring the drop in the face only a few short weeks ago, now finish the league in sixth place and can look forward to a fresh campaign in April 2025, including two derby matches against arch rivals Threlkeld.

Both games against their near neighbours fell victim to the seemingly endless rainfall in this the bleakest of 'summers'.

It is only now the cricket season has ended, that we are blessed with an Indian summer. At least ground staff facing all-important end of season work on cricket squares are quietly happy at the season being over and the sun shining brightly on their efforts.

Speaking after Keswick's 2nds win at Wigton, team cap-



IMPRESSIVE: Paul Ireland top scored with 44 for Keswick 2nds against Wigton 2nds. Pictures: Ben Challis.



PROMISING FUTURE: Lewis Edwards took two Wigton wickets.

tain Jamie D'Leny said: "It was a great effort considering we were several players short. But if the result on the day was good

it was an unbelievable effort from everyone over the last seven weeks of the season.

"To go from being bottom of the table with just one win to finishing in sixth and winning five out of the final seven that included one rain off (Langholm at home) is a great achievement.

"We had a difficult start in the first half of the season with some tough games that could have gone either way and others where we were below par, but everyone showed character and togetherness.

"Every single player has contributed, and it's been a real all round team effort. Morale has remained high all season. To remain positive and stick together the way we did after that difficult start shows what fantastic team spirit we have.

"We now know that we have what it takes to compete in the EVCL premier league. We can build on what we have achieved this season and aim to finish higher."

The story of the match at Wigton was that the home side won the toss and elected to bat first in a game that was reduced from 40 to 32 per side to try and ensure completion on a poor day.

The home side made 129/6 with Tane Manehera (not out 25) and Jonathon Pearson (not out 26) scoring important runs down the order as left armer James Beekingham took 2/21, the youthful Lewis Edwards 2/36, Jamie D'Leny 1/22 and Joe Grisdale 1/39, all from eight overs each. Stand in wicket keeper Mark Cameron, playing his first competitive game of

cricket since Methuselah was a lad, took two catches.

In reply, openers George Fleet (18) and Joe Grisdale (23) gave Keswick a confident start. No3 Paul Ireland (44) again impressed and D'Leny added 22 before Paul Fleet (not out 10) and Lewis Edwards (not out 1) finished the job and Keswick reached a match winning 130/5 from 26.3 overs.

All in all, it's not been a bad season for the club on the field, a first ever county title for the women's squad, junior success for the Under 11s, a 2nd XI avoiding relegation and the 1st XI finishing third in the Cumbria Cricket league premier. This will doubtless be reflected at the club's presentation evening on Friday, October 25 at The Skiddaw Hotel.

In the meantime, 10 volunteers (including three players, Will Atkinson, George Fleet and Vedant Barole) turned up for the working party on Monday evening to complete essential end of season tasks around the ground and pavilion.

Looking ahead, the next meeting of the club committee on Tuesday (September 24) will hear of revised plans to those previously drawn up to extend the building back towards the path and which were presented to Keswick Town Council – as trustees of the park – earlier this year.

The revised plans seek to elevate the building and include some exciting features. But the principal objective is to raise the building above the flood plain. It was felt that applications for grants and funding in general would be more successful and attractive to potential funders if flood risk was averted.



GO JOE: Joe Allday celebrates his try in front of Keswick RFC's new clubhouse. Picture: Ben Challis.

England's winning run to 17 matches since their last defeat, which came against the Black Ferns in the World Cup final in 2022.

## Learning experience for young side

KESWICK SECONDS 13  
WIGTON 45

KESWICK were resoundingly beaten by a Wigton side destined to play in a higher league under the lights at Davidson Park last Friday.

The home side fielded a strong forward pack but lacked experience in the backs with several players playing out of position.

But Keswick gave everything especially in the forwards who competed well and dominated several areas of play and made Wigton's defence work extremely hard.

Wigton with ball in hand looked very useful and their sharp passing and the speed they moved the ball made defending difficult. They exploited missed tackles or a player being out of position and they were very difficult to stop once they were playing at speed.

This was one of those games where the score does not reflect the game. Keswick had their opportunities and failed to cross the line on three occasions because of being too eager or making the wrong decision.

These are all moments for this young second team to learn from and there were far more positives than negatives to take from the game.

Tries were scored by Jake Winter and Joe Quail with Steve Holloway kicking one penalty. Next Saturday Keswick travel to Cockerthorpe, kick-off 3pm.

## Falcons get off to a flyer

KESWICK FALCONS 21  
PETERLEE & HORDEN VALKYRIES 0

KESWICK Falcons got off to a flying start in their Women's NC1 North campaign in a physical and demanding game against the Valkyries at Davidson Park.

It was an impressive start to the season following promotion and all the points up for grabs were scored by Falcons superstar and back-of-the-match Lilly Hodgson playing through the centre.

A combination of wet weather and rugby meant the ball was battled out in the majority of the forwards from both sides until the second half when the sky began to clear allowing for the backs to play an open game.

Keswick kicked off with Horden receiving just past the 10m line with Ange Wray getting stuck into the first tackle and continued to press into the approaching attack until a penalty was given for hands in the ruck. Horden then gained some ground with a line-out but was stolen by high jumping captain Leanne Grave releasing Keswick's attack straight back into the visitors' half.

Some impressive go forward and hits were seen



SUPERSTAR: Lilly Hodgson fends off a Valkyrie defender on her way in to score. Picture: Ben Challis.

from newcomer and forward-of-the-match Katie Jackson whose threat at bursting the defensive line proved troublesome for Horden.

In partnership with Katie in the front row was Zelia Clash and Mag Todd who tackled hard, won turnovers, and bossed the scrum against a strong opposition pack. All three played the full 80 with no signs of letting up and were crucial to the result.

Thirty minutes in Keswick were put under pressure from ill discipline in the ruck in attempts to counter ruck the ball. This added pressure took its toll as the go forward was sapped from the home team allowing Horden to edge close to the try line forcing further defending.

Keswick looking for an out of the danger zone were gifted by Horden where an attempt to move the ball out to the wing saw a pass fly too high, seeing Isla Turnbull spring the Falcons back into attack mode with a kick through and chase back into Horden's side.

Keswick secured a vital penalty from the defensive line being offside from the changeover in possession and set up for a line-out. With Horden's attacking stint cut short and running on fumes before the half time break, Keswick sprung into attack with a flow of passes to Lilly Hodgson who broke the line and scored a try from halfway under the sticks. Lilly would convert the tries in the game. There was just enough time to play for another try and once again in almost identical fashion, Keswick secured a penalty, kicked for a line-out and some quick hands to Lilly sent her through for her second ending the half.

A boost in confidence allowed the Falcons to go all out in attack and the defence took advantage of Horden who looked to tire. Keswick did themselves no favours by needlessly giving penalties away but they did make up for it when in possession brilliantly shifting the

ball away from the Horden pack making them move to generate some gaps to penetrate.

The teams battled further holding out for the 30 minute mark in a stalemate making use of the substitutions to keep the fresh legs going.

The continuous pressure kept the defensive line staggered and the space once again opened up in the centre for Lilly to claim her hat-trick all resulting from a top team performance.

The next game on September 29 is in the Intermediate Women's Cup against Southport who sit one league above Keswick.

## FOOTBALL

## Men's team in home Conway Cup action

KESWICK Football Club's men's players will take a break from league action when they play a Conway Cup home tie against Cockerthorpe Reserves this Saturday (2pm kick-off).

In their first season at Cumberland County League Premier Division level, Keswick have had a tough start to 2024/25.

They have lost five of their opening six matches. The latest reverse was a 1-0 home defeat against Wigton Harriers last weekend.

In addition to winning the Division I title last time out, Keswick enjoyed great cup success as well as they lifted the Whitehaven and Divisional trophies.

This Saturday they entertain newly-formed Cockerthorpe Reserves, who play in the first division, in a Conway Cup second round. Kick-off at Crosthwaite Road is 2pm.

Keswick return to Premier Division action next Saturday with a trip to Whitehaven Miners Social.

## Tough start for U13s

KESWICK U13s 3  
ASPATRIA U14s 5

KESWICK U13s have had a tough start to life in the U14 Penrith and District Junior Football League.

On Sunday, they hosted Aspatria U14s for their first home match of the new season. After yet another slow start, and a frantic opening seven minutes, Keswick quickly found themselves three goals down.

After the early setbacks the players started to find their composure, playing

their usual passing game.

Sixteen minutes into the match, Lewis Whipp pulled back a goal, assisted by Stan Bardsley. Ten minutes later Riley Alston hammered in another from outside the box, with his supposedly weaker right foot, after a clever pass forward by Joseph Ross.

Unfortunately Keswick switched off briefly allowing Aspatria to respond straight away with another goal and the half finished 4-2.

The second half was evenly contested, with the Keswick players working hard for each other. Aspatria scored first but Keswick responded again with a goal late in the half from Stan Bardsley, with Riley Alston this time providing the assist. Although this set up a tense end to the match, Keswick could not find another.

## Wolves given a mauling

KESWICK U11s 3  
CASTLETOWN WOLVES U12s 0

KESWICK U11s hosted Wolves at home for their first competitive 9 v 9 game of the season last Sunday.

Keswick started brighter, dominating the midfield with Jack Nettleton and Charlie Edwards not giving their opposite numbers any time on the ball.

This set the tempo for the game with Keswick being strong in the tackle and moving the ball well.

The first half ended 0-0 but was played predominantly in the Wolves half with the visitors' defence restricting Keswick to long range shots and half chances. Joey Mason worked the channels well and stretched the Wolves defence allowing Keswick to maintain positive pressure throughout. Joseph White deputised well with good hold up play as the target man.

The second half began as the first had ended with Keswick dictating the play. The squad was rotated and those coming on were excellent and there was minimal disruption to the flow of the game.

Keswick scored the opener with a strong run from debutant Barney Causey seizing on the chance to drive through a gap in the Wolves defence and after powering through, cut back onto his right foot to curl one into the top right of the goal.

Finley Harrison gave a commanding and vocal performance between the sticks for the home team

keeping the Wolves attack out each time they troubled the goal. Harrison was ably assisted by the defensive team of James Ratcliffe, Sammy Paxon, Theo Hawker, Harrison Dodds, Jess Ferris, and Will Chadwick.

With the game in the balance Keswick continued to play confidently and with Jack Barnes and Stan Fellows marauding down their respective flanks Keswick continued to pose a threat. Barnes crossed for the tireless Nettleton to increase the lead to 2-0 with an assured finish.

Keswick continued to press well and they were rewarded with a third goal. Nettleton burst through the midfield and raced clear, the Wolves keeper, to his credit, attempted to narrow the angle but Nettleton kept his cool to go around him only to be thwarted by the returning defence, however in the ensuing melee the Wolves defender handled in the area when grounded with Nettleton converting the resulting spot kick.

On Sunday Keswick host Castletown Athletic Under 12s.

MOTM: Jack Nettleton

## FELL RUNNING

## Atkinson's trial triumph

MORE 150 fell runners braved heavy rain, wind and thick mist while competing in the Lyon Equipment Lake District Mountain Trial last Sunday. This was the 69th running of the Mountain Trial, first held in 1954.

It was the earliest navigational fell race and was a favourite of Joss Naylor who won it 10 times. Competitors start at minute intervals and choose their own route between a number of checkpoints. They only get the map with the checkpoints marked on it just after they have started.

This year the race started from Horsemoor Hills Farm, at Orthwaite, near Bassenthwaite, and went across the northern Lake District fells including the slopes of Skiddaw and Blencathra.

Despite the tough conditions, with streams in spate making crossing them difficult, 35 competitors completed the Classic course with a straight-line distance of 19 miles and 7,000 feet of ascent. Last year's runner-up, Keswick AC's Matthew Atkinson started last in the field and finished in four hours 24 minutes. He had a close battle with Sam Dixon,

of Helm Hill, who had started just two minutes ahead.

Despite a poor route choice at the very start, Atkinson had caught Dixon by checkpoint three after an hour's running, and they were in each other's sights the rest of the way. Dixon finished just over a minute behind Atkinson with a time of 4-27. Jack Eyre of Eden Runners was 3rd, 14 minutes behind the winner.

First woman in the classic was Eleanor Johnstone, of Pennine Fellrunners, who last won the race in 2021. She said she found the river crossings difficult with fast flowing water nearly up to her waist. Her time of 5-49 placed her 11th overall. Local athlete Jessica Richardson, from Caldbeck, running for Northern Fells Running Club was second woman in 6-12.

Harry Ellis, from Keswick, won the 13-mile medium course in 4-28 while Black Combe Runners' Anne Edwards was first lady in 4-39 and third overall.

On the 9.5 mile short course, 21-year-old James Birkinshaw, running for West Cumberland Orienteering Club, was the winner in 2-34. Black Combe Runners' Cat Taylor was first lady and second overall just seven minutes behind.

## Success for Lesley in Spain

A NUMBER of athletes from the Keswick area travelled to Spain to take part in the World Masters Mountain Running Championships 2024.

This year the event, for runners 35 and over, was held at Canfranc in the Pyrenees. More than 1,000 runners arrived from all over the world to take part in one or more of the three races.

Among them was a small contingent of Keswick runners, all very excited to have the chance to run in GB colours. In this event, runners must represent their country and there are individual as well as team medals. There is no selection process as such, but an entry must be approved by the national masters athletics association.

The first race was uphill on a 6km track zig-zagging steeply up 1,000m through the forest and then open ground.

At the summit there were hot drinks and refreshments followed by a fun ride down on the ski lift. Keswick runner Lesley Malarkey won the V75 category and Paul Cornforth, from Threlkeld came second in the V60. Keswick's Nicky Butler was part of the bronze medal winning team.

The following day was the hardest 34km event – a figure of eight route with a tough 1,000m plus climb, again zig-zagging through forests.

This was followed by a very exposed open section and then a forested descent. The second loop was more challenging but similar in character with the addition of a very rocky top section.

Again, there were good results for the Keswick runners: Lesley Malarkey won the V75 category and Cat Evans came in fifth and was part of the GB team who took the gold medal.

The last event was the classic 17km race with 1,000m plus of ascent. This was the most popular event and covered the first loop of the long race. Keswick's Nicky Butler took third in the V60 class as well as a team bronze medal. Another Keswick runner Steph Illingworth was part of the bronze V55 team. Local runners Lou Osbourne and Hazel Robinson were both part of the gold medal winning GB team.

Lesley Malarkey said she was delighted to win two gold medals and be declared world champion but it all seemed a little surreal.

"I now fully appreciate how unusual it is to be able to run the hills at my age and how very lucky I am," she said.