

SCOTTISH NORTHERN DISTRICT

RELAY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Nairn

ROSS ARBUCKLE anchored Keith and District AC to victory over Forres Harriers and Moray Road Runners in the men's race while Inverness Harriers dominated the women's competition.

Arbuckle, who clocked the fastest lap time of the day, was supported by Steve Gill, Frank Barton and Mike Stewart in the winning line-up. It was the Banffshire side's fifth win in seven years and Barton is the only man who has featured in all five teams.

Junior hill running international Donald MacAulay (Nairn) led from British 100km champion Alan Reid (Peterhead) at the end of the opening stage, but as neither had any team-mates to hand over to, it was third placed Stan Mackenzie (Inverness) who was able to put his side into pole position.

Barton's fine effort on the second stage hoisted Keith and District from sixth to first while Doug Cowie lifted Forres from fifth to second with defending champions Inverness slipping back to fourth.

Mike Stewart retained Keith's lead on the third leg although Paul Matheson kept Forres in contention and Brian Foreman lifted Moray into a close third.

Arbuckle, who has recently returned to action following a lengthy spell on the sidelines because of injury, produced the best performance of the day on the final stage, however, to secure the gold medals for Keith. Graeme Bartlett fought bravely for a Forres side chasing its first relay title since 1992, but he could make no inroads on the leaders and eventually settled for second. Martin Flynn secured third place for Moray.

Inverness Harriers made up for the loss of the men's title by winning both the women's and girls' championships.

Fiona Spence, Jennifer Main and Julie Wilson gave the Highland capital side a fourth successive women's win while Danka McLaren, Rachel MacKenzie and Mhari Spence lifted the young athletes' team gold medals.

The Forres Harriers trio of Andrew Rogan, Mark Mitchell and Kyle Greig retained the boys' title with a clear victory over Wester Ross AC who featured among the medals for the first time.

Men

1 Keith and District 49:21 (S Gill 12:57, F Barton 12:02, M Stewart 12:44, R Arbuckle 11:38), 2 Forres Harriers 49:39 (P Rogan 12:50, D Cowie 12:22, P Matheson 12:46,

G Bartlett 11:41); 3 Moray Road Runners 50:05 (G Sim 12:33, C Dempster 12:48, B Forman 12:44, M Flynn 12:00); 4 Inverness Harriers 51:10; 5 Moray Road Runners B 54:44

Fastest: Arbuckle 11:38, Bartlett 11:41, DJ MacAulay (Nairn) 11:45, Flynn 12:00, Barton 12:02, A Reid (Peterhead) 12:03

Boys

1 Forres Harriers 22:50 (A Rogan 8:10, M Mitchell 7:37, K Greig 7:03); 2 Wester Ross AAC 24:16 (R Russell 8:03, R Cadell 8:54, J Shearer 7:19); 3 Moray Road Runners 25:20 (S Houston 8:22, G Sweeney 8:17, C Sweeney 8:41)

Women

1 Inverness Harriers 46:15 (F Spence 16:01, J Main 15:10, J Wilson 15:04); 2 Inverness Harriers B 48:05 (F Dhal 15:31, K Boocock 16:09, M MacIvor 16:25); 3 Moray Road Runners 50:04 (D Hardy 15:01, L Smith 17:17, S Henderson 17:46)

Girls

1 Inverness Harriers 26:45 (D McLaren 9:30, R MacKenzie 9:02, M Spence 8:13); 2 Moray Road Runners 27:14 (L Mair 9:44, J Houston 8:17, R King 9:13); 3 Inverness Harriers B 30:45 (J McLaren 9:43, J Bannerman 9:01, L Mathieson 11:11)
