

Painful winning return for Nat

SCOTTISH champion Nat Muir of Shettleston Harriers returned to competition in Scotland after a series of cross-country races on the Continent to win the senior seven-and-a-half mile title at the Western District cross-country championships at Houston.

Muir's victory had its painful moments, especially when he was spiked halfway through the race. He finished the muddy, hilly course in 37min. 24sec., holding off the persistent Tommy Murray (Greenock Glenpark), who was beaten on the run-in by two seconds, with Springburn's Adrian Callan third in 37-42.

Cambuslang Harriers retained the senior championship with 82 points from Bellahouston (201), with Greenock Glenpark third (259) to collect their first championship medals for more than 40 years.

Clydebank AC dominated the younger age-group races, with two individual and two team titles. Nick Freer won the senior boys' event in 16-22, 11 seconds in front of club-mate David Hill. Anglo-Scot Malcolm Campbell was a surprise winner of the youth title in 20-07, leaving Clydebank colleague Glen Stewart, the pre-race favourite, broken by Campbell's fierce pace to finish a disappointing eighth. Clydebank took the team titles in the junior and senior boys' races, and were runners-up to Victoria Park AAC in the youths' event.

Northern Ireland steeplechase record-holder Peter McColgan, scored his first major success in Scotland by winning the senior race at the Eastern district cross-country championships at Wilton Lodge Park, Hawick. McColgan covered the heavy seven-and-a-half mile trail in 43min. 20sec., outsprinting Terry Mitchell (Fife AC), by two seconds, with Gary Grindlay (Edinburgh Southern Harriers) third in 43-43.

Teviotdale Harriers, from Hawick, lifted their first championship for 25 years, winning the senior team title with 115 points from Aberdeen AAC (125), and Dundee Hawkhill (157).

Pitreavie's Clark Murphy won the junior six-mile race in exactly 36min., defeating Terry Reid (Dundee Hawkhill) by three seconds. Pitreavie (22 pts) took the junior team championship from Edinburgh University (37).

FORMER Scottish junior champion Robert Quinn of Kilbarchan AC, now studying with a sports scholarship at Salford University, finished first equal in the South Lancashire cross-country league meeting at Oldham.

Quinn, one of the possibilities for the Scottish team in the world cross-country championship trial race at Gateshead at the end of this month, tied with former Dundee University student Paul Dugdale (Horwich RM) ahead of more than 300 rivals in the six-mile race, won in 34min. 21sec. They finished one-and-a-half minutes in front of Nigel Barlow (Salford Harriers), a 2-19 marathon runner.

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Spiked Muir holds out

SCOTTISH champion Nat Muir of Shettleston Harriers suffered a foot injury on his return to cross country competition in Scotland after a series of races on the Continent in the early part of the winter. Competing in the Western District cross country championships at Houston, Muir was spiked halfway through the senior 7.5 mile race but held on for victory in 37mins 24secs before being taken off to hospital for attention to his injury.

Tommy Murray (Greenock Glenpark Harriers) finished runner up just two seconds behind Muir with Adrian Callan (Springburn Harriers) taking third place in 37.42.

ROSS Arbuckle of Keith & District AC won the senior six mile race at the Northern Dis-

trict cross-country league at Peterhead. He won in 31.38 holding off a challenge from John Bowman (Inverness Harriers) who finished runner up just eight seconds behind

NORTHERN Ireland international steeplechaser Peter McColgan (Dundee Hawkhill Harriers) survived a real endurance test to win the East District cross-country title for the first time at Hawick on Saturday. He just outsprinted Terry Mitchell (Fife AC) after 7.5 miles to win by two seconds in 43min 20secs

SCOTLAND'S team for the British international cross-country team trial at Gateshead on January 31 is — Y. Murray, C. Price, A. Jenkins, P. Rother (EAC), L. Bain (Aberdeen), L. Wight (Stevenage), L. McCoglan (Dundee), Barbara Murray (Macclesfield), Hailey Haining (Nith Valley), Sonya Grainger (Edinburgh WM).

EUROPEAN indoor 3000 metres champion Yvonne Murray (Edinburgh AC) won the Scottish women's closed 4,000 metres championship at Irvine Moor yesterday. She finished out on her own in 14mins 35secs, over 100 yards in front of Christine Price (Dundee Hawkhill Harriers) 14.56 with Alison Jenkins (Edinburgh WM) third in 15.05. Sonia Grainger (Edinburgh WM) finished fourth in 15.51 and helped the Edinburgh club to win the team championship

DICK Hodelet of Greenock Glenpark Harriers won the Scottish Veteran Harriers club cross country championships at East Kilbride yesterday. He covered the five mile course in 27mins 38secs.