



Valley News

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS (51) JANUARY 1999

1998 CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Spedding and Barber head the lists

Men's captain Simon Spedding again reaped the rewards of diligent training and frequent competition when he repeated his 1997 club championship success, and Rose Barber was a convincing winner of the women's section. Final results are:—

MEN

Pos.	Name	Age	10km	10 miles	Half-marathon	Total best 3	Cat. pos.
1	SIMON SPEDDING	—	35:02 Trowbridge	59:10 New Forest	1:17:29 Bath	2:51:41	—
2	KEVIN SPAREY	40-49	35:48 Bromham	59:07 Bournemouth	1:21:05 Stroud	2:56:00	1
3	ALISTAIR BARTLETT	—	35:18 Trowbridge	1:00:04 Bournemouth	1:21:14 Stroud	2:56:36	—
4	GERRY FICE	40-49	37:07 Bromham	1:01:17 Bournemouth	1:22:55 Stroud	3:01:19	2
5	BOB ELLIS	—	37:31 Bromham	1:02:15 Bournemouth	1:25:01 Bath	3:04:47	—
6	TED ROCKLIFFE	50-59	38:37 Bromham	1:04:15 Bournemouth	1:23:49 Bath	3:06:41	1
7	LES UNSWORTH	40-49	39:54 Bromham	1:05:38 Bournemouth	1:30:41 Bristol	3:16:13	3
8	ALAN MEADOW	—	41:05 Trowbridge	1:08:42 Bournemouth	1:33:59 Bath	3:23:46	—
9	ANTHONY HICKSON	60-69	41:12 Trowbridge	1:12:00 New Forest	1:35:21 Bath	3:28:33	1
10	MIKE CARPENTER	50-59	42:26 Trowbridge	1:13:02 Bournemouth	1:38:49 Bath	3:34:17	2
11	RAY WITHEY	50-59	43:12 Bromham	1:11:50 Bournemouth	1:40:55 Bath	3:35:57	3
12	MIKE PRATT	50-59	46:47 Langport	1:14:04 Bournemouth	1:39:27 Stroud	3:40:18	4
13	TONY BARTLETT	60-69	46:47 Trowbridge	1:19:24 Warminster	1:48:13 Bath	3:54:24	2
14	BOB SALES	40-49	47:50 Trowbridge	1:22:07 New Forest	1:48:21 Bath	3:58:18	4
15	DENNIS MELLOR	60-69	51:28 Bromham	1:23:28 Bournemouth	1:50:57 Stroud	4:05:53	3
16	JOHN BOWLEY	50-59	48:59 Bromham	1:29:30 New Forest	1:47:26 Bath	4:05:55	5

WOMEN

Pos.	Name	Age	10km	10 miles	Half-marathon	Total best 3	Cat. pos.
1	ROSE BARBER	40-49	41:16 Trowbridge	1:08:05 Bournemouth	1:34:29 Stroud	3:23:50	1
2	JOYCE FIELD	50-59	48:37 Bromham	1:18:38 Bournemouth	1:41:07 Bath	3:48:22	1
3	SUSIE PHILLIPS	40-49	46:50 Bromham	1:17:31 Bournemouth	1:49:54 Stroud	3:54:15	2
4	VIV TOMS	50-59	50:31 Trowbridge	1:21:24 Bournemouth	1:49:36 Bath	4:01:31	2

Although the new format of the championships has proved satisfactory in combining variety with simplicity, the comparatively low numbers who qualified, especially of women, has caused the committee to alter slightly the rules for 1999. (1) This year the men's championships will again be decided by adding up best times over 10km, 10 miles and half-marathon, while the ladies will compete over 5km, 10km and 10 miles. (2) To facilitate greater qualification for the championships, any certified races in the U.K. will be valid for calculation, given proof of times achieved.

Editor: Tim Northwood, 45 Hilperton Road, Trowbridge; Tel. 769929.

Award-winners, 1998

The best times achieved during the past year represent a clean sweep by **Simon Spedding** for the men's trophies, with 35:02 in Trowbridge 10km, 58:27 in Hayling Island 10 miles, 1:17:29 in Bath half-marathon, and 3:00:16 in the Shakespeare marathon at Stratford-on-Avon. The women's trophies are more widely distributed: 10km, **Madelaine Gay** 37:56 (Bromham); 10 miles, **Rose Barber** 1:08:05 (Bournemouth); half-marathon, **Rose Barber** 1:34:29 (Stroud); marathon, **Joyce Field** 3:53:30 (London). The best marathon by an over-50 for the Vic Bull Shield was **Ted Rockliffe's** 3:14:15 in London; and the percentage shields are to go to **Rose Barber** (82%) and **Gerry Fice** (81%).

These and other awards whose recipients will not be announced until the night, will be made at the club's

* ANNUAL PARTY *

in Southwick Village Hall
at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday 6 February.

IMPORTANT: Please get your ticket(s) – £3 adults, £2 children – from Judy Farr as soon as possible, so accurate catering arrangements can be made.

Annual general meeting

At the a.g.m., held after training on Thursday 7 January, the message was business as usual, with most of the officers being re-elected, and the most time being devoted to discussing a couple of slight changes to the rules for the club championships (*see Page 1*).

Officers for 1999: President, Mike Holland; vice-chairman, Clive Crocker; chairman, Bob Ellis; vice-chairman, George Henderson; treasurer, Dennis Mellor; men's captain Simon Spedding, vice-captain Ted Rockliffe; women's captain Joyce Field, vice-captain Denise Ellis; secretary, Stan Farr; assistant secretary, Judy Farr; press secretary, Tim Northwood; additional committee members John Bowley, Tony Griffith, Mike Hehir, Bernie Hobbs, Susie Phillips, Robin Porter, Simon Reeves, Les Unsworth.

The recent influx of youngsters to the membership has prompted two of their parents, Bernie Hobbs and Simon Spedding, to express an interest in following Bob Ellis by taking a coaching course, so the future of budding athletes seems to be in good hands.

SECRETARY'S NOTES

As we enter our fourteenth year membership stands at just below the 100 mark. The majority of these are veterans, although there has been an increase in younger members during the past year.

Since the last newsletter one of our members has become a great-grandfather and two others have become man and wife. We offer our congratulations to **Dennis Mellor** and to **Cathie and Sean Greenland**.

Fifty-nine members raced during 1998, with the thirty members in the Bromham 10-kilometre race being the largest turnout. – *Stan Farr*.

Welcome to the Valley!

Five new members added their names to our list during the quarter just past, incidentally increasing the already healthy percentage of female members in Avon Valley Runners. We're glad to welcome **Emily Cole**, **Julia Fairley**, **Patricia Pope**, **Isla Powell** and **Dawn Rossiter**. Although he joined on 1 January (strictly speaking in the present quarter), by the time you read this **Geoff Saxty** will also have signed on. Founder members of AVR will greet Geoff as a former clubmate: he was one of the successful race-walking section of Trowbridge AC, from which the distance-runners migrated to form the new club in 1986.

Milestones

Happy new year and many happy returns of the day to **Jan Hunt**, whose birthday was on 2 January; and best wishes to the following, who will all move into their next age-groups this quarter: **Tim Laney**, 40 on 6 January; **Ray Withey**, 55 on 10 January; **John Kent**, 50 on 19 February; **Martin Connor**, 45 on 22 February; **Bob Sales**, 45 on 5 March; and **John Millichip**, 60 on 6 March.

RESULTS: October–December

SUN. 4 OCT. – Box 6½M: 2 Simon Spedding 37:14, Mandy Spedding (*1st woman*) 48:42; **Box 6¼M:** Sam Ghey (*2nd u-15*) 21:04. **Longleat Relays** (4 & 6x5K): *1st veteran women's team* – Linda Brown 20:51, Rose Barber (*fastest female vet.*) 20:49, Susie Phillips 24:26, Judy Farr 24:38 (total 1:30:44); *8th women's team* – Julie West 22:45, Madelaine Gay 19:31, Joyce Field 24:52, Rose Barber 22:00 (1:29:08); *12th men's team* – Gerry Fice 17:57, Paul Turner 21:55, Bob Ellis 18:47, 4 Bernie Hobbs 23:30, 5 Joby Hobbs 19:14, Bob Sales 22:40 (2:04:03). **Windsor Half-Marathon:** Alan Meadow 1:37:04, Mike Pratt 1:43:12, Pauline Sanger 2:07:11. **Cricklade 10K:** 43 Tony Griffith (*1st o-60*) 47:38.

WED. 7 OCT. – Abbeywood 4M: 2 Gerry Fice 22:13, 6 John Kent 23:15.

SUN. 11 OCT. – Thrupton Duathlon (inc. South-West Championships): 3 Simon Spedding (*1st SW*) 5K run 8:03, 30K bike 52:13, 4K run 15:02 = 1:25:18. **Ilchester 8M:** 8 Kevin Sparey (*3rd vet.*) 48:49, 27 Rose Barber (*2nd woman, 1st vet.*) 56:17, 54 Susie Phillips (*3rd vet.*) 1:03:44, 56 Judy Farr (*1st o-55*) 1:05:40, 57 John Bowley 1:05:44, 58 Joyce Field (*2nd o-55*) 1:05:48, 75 Bill Howsego 1:18:09; **4M:** 3 Sam Ghey 27:11, 4 Adam Ghey 27:41. **Solent Half-Marathon:** Tony Griffith 1:49:18. **Southend 10K:** Les Unsworth 41:16.

SAT. 17 OCT. – Weymouth 10M: 115 Mike Pratt 1:17:00, 158 Joyce Field (*1st o-55*) 1:23:49, 174 Judy Farr 1:29:07, 183 John Bowley 1:34:13, 185 Bill Howsego 1:39:01.

SUN. 18 OCT. – Abingdon Marathon: Danny Kay 3:36, Viv Toms 4:15. **Avalon CC, Mangotsfield: Under-13 Boys** – 12 Jake Hobbs 9:09; **Senior Men** – 52 Bob Ellis 30:31, 94 Bernie Hobbs 37:08.

SUN. 25 OCT. – Stroud Half-Marathon♦: 81 Kevin Sparey 1:21:05, 82 Alistair Bartlett 1:21:14, 109 Gerry Fice 1:22:55, 160 Ted Rockcliffe 1:26:07, 290 Danny Kay 1:33:12, 314 Rose Barber 1:34:29, 398 Bob Ellis 1:39:09, 406 Mike Pratt 1:39:27, 646 Susie Phillips 1:49:54, 666 Dennis Mellor 1:50:57, 708 Joyce Field 1:53:20, 783 John Bowley 1:59:03. **Warminster 10K:** 14 Richard Hudson* 42:56, 18 John Makin* 43:29, 20 Paul Turner* 43:41, 21 Linda Brown† (*3rd woman, 2nd vet.*) 43:44, 25 Alan Meadow* 44:55, 30 Anthony Hickson (*1st o-60*) 46:32, 33 Bernie Hobbs 47:54, 43 Judy Farr† 55:41, 47 Pauline Sanger† 57:54, 51 Bill Howsego 1:01:39. **1st men's team; †1st women's team.* **The Stickler 10-1M MT,** Shillingstone, Dorset: Neil Whitehead 1:22:29.

SAT. 31 OCT. – Dorking Duathlon (8M run, 24M bike, 8M run): 5 Simon Spedding 48:04 + 1:16:54 + 50:35 = 2:55:33, Mandy Spedding (*13th woman*) 1:00:43 + 1:42:33 + 1:09:33 = 3:52:49.

SUN. 1 NOV. – New York Marathon: 9453 Mike Pratt 3:56:07. **Harrow Marathon:** Danny Kay 3:27:32. **Salisbury Half-Marathon:** Tony Griffith 1:46:46. **Ilminster 10K:** 6 Kevin Sparey (*1st o-40*) 37:26, 59 Susie Phillips (*1st o-45*) 50:37, 61 Judy Farr (*2nd o-45*) 51:25, 82 Bill Howsego 59:54; **5K:** 5 Sam Ghey (*2nd u-16*) 2:30, 24 Stan Farr 34:12. **Cardiff Fireworks 5M:** Denise Ellis 42:31.

SUN. 8 NOV. – Beagle Bash 8M MT, Chipping Sodbury: 8 Simon Spedding 1:00:53, 45 Bob Ellis 1:07:12, 59 Neil Whitehead 1:08:29, 216 Anthony Hickson 1:21:07, 369 John Bowley 1:35:46, 372 Mike Gerrish 1:36:26, 373 Dennis Mellor 1:36:27, 384 Joyce Field 1:38:02, 398 Viv Toms 1:39:42.

SAT. 14 NOV. – Victoria Park 4M, Bath: 20 Alistair Bartlett 22:47, 33 Madelaine Gay 24:46, 42 Linda Brown (*3rd vet.*) 26:59, 44 Anthony Hickson (*1st o-60*) 27:41, 46 Alex Cox 28:30, 49 Susie Phillips 31:46; **1-6M** (u-14): 2 Sam Ghey 9:47, 4 Adam Ghey 10:15.

SUN. 15 NOV. – Luton Marathon: Danny Kay 3:35:41. **Gillingham 7½M:** 10 Kevin Sparey 4:20, 55 Tony Griffith 59:45, 59 Susie Phillips (*3rd vet.*) 1:00:29, 65 Judy Farr 1:02:34, 79 Bill Howsego (*oldest competitor: 73*) 1:10:28, 85 Stan Farr 1:30:29. **Avalon CC,** Bridgwater: **Senior Men** – 55 Bob Ellis; **U-13 Boys** – 22 Jake Hobbs.

SUN. 22 NOV. – Bournemouth 10M♦: 36 Kevin Sparey 59:07, 40 Alistair Bartlett 1:00:04, 53 Gerry Fice 1:01:17, 67 Bob Ellis 1:02:15, 85 Neil Whitehead 1:04:15, 86 Ted Rockcliffe 1:04:15, 109 Les Unsworth 1:05:38, 151 Rose Barber (*1st o-45*) 1:08:05, 19 Alan Meadow 1:08:42, 203 Paul Turner 1:11:49, 205 Ray Withey 1:11:50, 222 Mike Carpenter 1:13:02, 239 Mike Pratt 1:14:04, 277 Gordon Babb 1:14:48, 281 Tony Griffith 1:17:01, 291 Susie Phillips 1:17:31, 314 Joyce Field 1:18:38, 345 Viv Toms 1:21:24, 356 Mike Gerrish 1:22:34, 33 Dennis Mellor 1:23:28, 380 Denise Ellis 1:26:02, 433 Bill Howsego 1:34:04, 449 Stan Farr 1:43:22.

WED. 25 NOV. – Benidorm Marathon: Danny Kay 3:34:13.

SUN. 29 NOV. – Hayling Island 10M: 42 Simon Spedding 58:27.

SUN. 29 NOV.–WED. 2 DEC. – Lanzarote Festival: 10K: Susie Phillips (*4th o-45*) 52:58; 13K Ridge Run: Susie Phillips (*4th o-45*) 1:07:47; 5K Beach Race: Susie Phillips (*4th o-45*) 30:14; 23K Transisland: Susie Phillips (*5th o-45*) 2:02:59. (*Susie placed 4th overall in the over-45s.*)

SUN. 6 DEC. – Bromham 10K♦: 13 Alistair Bartlett 35:26, 16 Simon Spedding 35:47, 18 Kevin Sparey 35:48, 31 Gerry Fice 37:07, 34 Bob Ellis 37:31, 37 Madelaine Gay* (*2nd woman*) 37:56, 43 Ted Rockcliffe (*2nd o-50*) 38:37, 44 Neil Whitehead 38:40, 51 Les Unsworth 39:54, 5 Roger Carey 40:05, 68 Rose Barber* (*1st woman o-40*) 41:20, 75 Alan Meadow 41:55, 78 Paul Turner 42:15, 82 Neil Fyfe 42:41, 83 Linda Brown* 42:49, 88 Ray Withey 43:12, 104 Mike Carpenter 45:03, 109 Alex Cox 45:52, 114 Susie Phillips 46:50, 122 Tony Griffith 47:48, 130 Joyce Field (*1st woman o-50*) 48:37, 147 Robin Porter 50:32, 148 Linda Unsworth 50:39, 155 Dennis Mellor 51:28, 156 Denise Ellis 51:38, 185 John Bowley 56:06, 186 Bill Howsego 56:25, 190 Pauline Sanger 57:06, 197 Emily Cole 58:22. **1st women's team.*

SUN. 13 DEC. – Avalon CC, Bath University: **Senior Men** – 61 Bob Ellis 32:20; **Boys Under-13** – 2 Sam Ghey 10:51, 12 Adam Ghey 11:33, 26 Luke Hobbs 13:08, 32 Jake Hobbs 19:32 (*4th team*). **Wyvern Christmas Cracker 10K,** Weston-super-Mare: 28 Kevin Sparey 36:12, 156 Rose Barber (*1st o-45*) 41:54, 359 Susie Phillips 47:57, 426 Judy Farr (*2nd o-50*) 49:42. **Duck Pond Waddle 15K MT,** Worthing: 11 Neil Whitehead (*3rd o-50*) 1:02:52.

SAT. 26 DEC. – Boxing Day 3-4M, Trowbridge: 1 Alistair Bartlett 19:47, 2 Nigel Stevens (*1st o-40*) 21:50, 3 Simon Reeves 22:23, 4 Rose Barber (*1st woman*) 22:50, 5 Sam Ghey (*1st u-18*) 23:04, Neil Fyfe (*1st o-50*) 23:38, 7 Adam Ghey 23:59, 8 Susie Phillips (*2nd woman*) 25:23, 9 Geoff Saxty 25:23, 10 Judy Farr (*3rd woman*) 26:23, 11 Pete Chapple (*1st o-60*) 27:09, 12 Tony Griffith 27:28, 13 Nick Stevens 28:14, 14 Craig Thomson 28:42, 15 Verity Bartlett 29:00, 16 Tony Bartlett 29:19, 17 Bill Howsego 30:27, 18 Stan Farr 31:39, John Woodsford (Trowbridge Walkers) 39:47. **Speke 10K:** Paul Turner 43:10.

♦ 1998 club championship event. To ensure inclusion in *Valley News, Wiltshire Times & The Book*, 'phone results to Stan Farr, 01225 755605.

FIXTURES: January–April

JANUARY

- Sun 17 Avalon CC (venue to be announced).
 Sun 24 Slaughterford 9M MT, 10.00; Romsey 5M, 11.00; Yate 5M, 11.00.
 Sun 31 Nailsea M MT, 11.00.

FEBRUARY

- Sat 6 AVR Party, Southwick Village Hall, 7.30.
 Sun 7 Blackmore Vale Half-Marathon & 5¼M.
 Sun 14 Shrivenham Half-Marathon, 11.00; Dursley Dozen, 10.30; Weston Tough 10M, 11.00;
 Avalon CC, Glastonbury.
 Sun 21 Babcary 7½M, 11.00; Yate 10K, 11.00.
 Sun 28 Pewsey Hill 10M, 10.30; Bourton-on-the-Water 10K, 10.30; Winchester 10K, 11.00.

MARCH

- Sun 7 Ringwood 5K, 11.00; Imber Half-Marathon (provisional date).
 Sun 14 Porsmouth Half-Marathon; Yate 5M, 11.00; Grizzly 19M, Seaton, Devon, 10.30.
 Sun 21 Avalon CC, Salisbury; Trowbridge Lions' 10K, 11.00 (*NB: this fixture may be moved to avoid clash with Bath Half*); Bath Half-Marathon, 11.00.
 Sun 28 Combe Gibbet–Overton 16M MT, 3.00. (See below.)

APRIL

- Mon 5 Yeovil Easter Bunny 10K, 11.00.
 Sun 11 AVR Over the Hills 7M MT, 11.00.
 Sun 18 London Marathon.

Memory Lane

COMBE GIBBET: A PLACE WITH A PAST

A favourite event during my early years in this area was the annual Combe Gibbet–Overton 16-mile multi-terrain race, in which the March or April weather and the terrain conspired to make it one of the toughest but also most satisfying on the calendar.

Competitors assembled at the village hall in Overton, from where they would be transported by old charabancs (surely relics of another era) along winding country lanes through picturesque Hampshire villages, eventually arriving at the start point on one of the ancient ridgeways or old highways, where for many years had stood the gibbet from which the race takes its name. The original hanging-tree was last used a century or two ago for the execution of two lovers who had murdered the spouse of one of them, the third member of their “eternal triangle”. In recent years a replica was erected to remind visitors to the spot of its dark history.

A brief warm-up gave one a chance to admire the fine views over neighbouring counties, and then the runners were sent on their way along a variety of clayey roads, muddy fields and ancient hedge-lined bridleways, sometimes including a ploughed field to get to the tunnel under the busy A34. Over that distance, competitors soon spread out, but the views were so long that it was possible to see those ahead from a long way behind, encouragement in perhaps coping with an icy headwind.

With a couple of miles to go the course took athletes along a stretch of tarmac, followed by a gravel road which eventually led downhill to the finish on the grassy field in Overton. My first time there (1978) was my best, 17th out of 100 in 1:37:54, and my slowest time was 1:50:53 in 1983 – but in seven appearances in the race I never got near one of the coveted trophies unique to this special event – each one a little wooden gibbet mounted on a base with plate suitably inscribed. – *Tim N.*

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED

It's not your money we're after, but a little time and effort (of the non-running kind). Everybody has a story to tell, so let us read yours! Next time you're reminiscing about an interesting race or an amusing incident, or expressing your opinion about any aspect of running – whether you're out on a run, in the shower, or in the Beehive – make a mental note to write it down, give it to Stan or send it to me, and space will be found for it in *Valley News* (but please don't submit copy written in the shower). Remember: this is YOUR newsletter! – *Tim N.*