



Valley News

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS

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Kevin and Liz are 2003 club champions

Forty-nine-year-old Kevin Sparey and Liz Ringham (not yet a veteran) enter the new year as Avon Valley Runners champions of 2003. In a well-contested competition, thirty-five members completed the required races over the three distances of 10 kilometres, 10 miles and half-marathon. Results reveal a good spread over the age-groups in both sexes.

Martin Connor, soon to be 50, was 13 minutes adrift of Kevin's aggregate to be second in the men's contest, with comparative youngster Alistair Bartlett only 70 seconds away in third place. The women's championship was equally close. Liz (who incidentally finished ninth overall) was just over four minutes better than veteran Sue MacGregor, who was less than five minutes ahead of Tina Vivian, who in turn edged out Rosemary Barber by only 42 seconds. Congratulations to the winners, and well done all who took part.

Championship winners: MEN – overall: 1 Kevin Sparey, 2 Martin Connor, 3 Alistair Bartlett; 40–44: Doug Barber; 45–49: Kevin Sparey; 50–54: Mike Brain; over-60: Danny Kay. WOMEN – overall: 1 Liz Ringham, 2 Sue MacGregor, 3 Tina Vivian; 40–44: Sonya Stephens; 45–49: Sue MacGregor; 50–54: Rose Barber. **Performance awards:** 10 kilometres: Kevin Sparey 34:45, Liz Ringham 43:30; 10 miles: Kevin Sparey 56:06, Liz Ringham 1:11:47; half-marathon: Kevin Sparey 1:16:10, Jackie Rockcliffe 1:33:14; percentage: Kevin Sparey (Bromham 10K) 85%, Rose Barber (Yeovil 5K) 81%. (Additional special awards will be announced at the club presentation party in the Farmhouse Inn, Southwick, on Saturday evening, 7 February; get your tickets from Stan or Judy Farr.)

DETAILED RESULTS

Pos.	Cat. pos.	Name	Aggregate	Pos.	Cat. pos.	Name	Aggregate
1	1M, 1M45–49	Kevin Sparey	2:47:01	19	14M, 1M65–69	Anthony Hickson	3:48:55
2	2M, 2M45–49	Martin Connor	3:00:06	20	15M, 2M55–59	Glyn Phillips	3:49:53
3	3M	Alistair Bartlett	3:01:16	21	16M	Laurie Irwin	3:51:41
4	4M, 1M40–44	Doug Barber	3:04:02	22	6W, 1W40–44	Sonya Stephens	3:58:51
5	5M	Darren Wrintmore	3:07:37	23	7W, 2W50–54	Susie Phillips	3:59:40
6	6M	Bob Ellis	3:17:22	24	17M, 1M50–54	Mike Brain	4:01:05
7	7M, 3M45–49	Les Unsworth	3:24:30	25	18M	Mike Pratt	4:04:52
8	8M	Chris Atkinson	3:26:14	26	8W	Denise Ellis	4:05:08
9	1W	Liz Ringham	3:30:12	27	9W	Linda Unsworth	4:07:32
10	9M, 1M55–59	Ted Rockcliffe	3:33:15	28	10W	Julia Cox	4:10:32
11	10M, 1M60–64	Danny Kay	3:33:35	29	11W	Julia Scott	4:12:39
12	2W, 1W45–49	Sue MacGregor	3:34:18	30	12W, 1W55–59	Viv Toms	4:14:56
13	11M	Nigel Evans	3:36:09	31	19M, 1M70+	Dennis Mellor	4:22:09
14	3W, 2W45–49	Tina Vivian	3:39:10	32	20M, 2M65–69	Tony Griffith	4:22:48
15	12M	Mark Edwards	3:39:48	33	13W, 3W50–54	Jan Hunt	4:26:53
16	4W	Vanessa Morey	3:39:50	34	14W, 1W60–64	Joyce Field	4:27:00
17	5W, 1W50–54	Rosemary Barber	3:39:52	35	21M, 3M65–69	Tony Bartlett	5:37:51
18	13M	Simon Ringham	3:42:36				

PREPARATION

by Tony Bartlett

1. This weekend is the race he's been looking forward to,
But where is all his gear? — He hasn't a clue!
"I can't find my vest and I've only one sock."
What a champion he is — your linchpin, your rock!
2. With mounting panic from the airer he flings
Clothes left and right to get the correct things.
"They must be here somewhere!" he wails in dismay.
Oh, why does he leave it to the very last day?
3. "I've just found my shorts and tracksters and top,
But with only one shoe — I can't bleeding-well hop!"
Your patience is exhausted, so to him you now say,
"Come on, get out of it — you're just in my way."
4. With no trouble at all his complete kit you find —
A tribute to your logical, neat, tidy mind.
With a sheepish grin he begins then to dress.
(A sardonic smile you can barely suppress.)
5. Last week as well his mind was in doubt,
As the entry form details he tried to make out.
Has he correctly completed it, you idly now wonder,
Or spelt something wrongly (a usual blunder)?
6. For breakfast, is it cereal or just bread to chew?
(The old git's still looking desperately for his other shoe.)
"Just tea and two rounds of lightly buttered toast —
My diet and race plan are important" is his boast.
7. He checks all his kit into the big running-bag:
His vitamins and his sprays and athletics mag.;
A drinks bottle also with Isotonic content —
Something he takes to every single event.
8. He gives you a kiss and goes out to the car,
His trusty machine for travelling afar;
But, horror of horrors, a front tyre is dead flat!
He lets out an oath and kicks at the cat.
9. Out of the boot is hurled all his gear:
"The spare wheel and jack — they must be in here."
The time flashes by as he tries to complete
A Grand Prix-like pitstop in a suburban street.
10. Finally he's off with a cheer and a wave. . . .
Now it's your turn to relax, your sanity to save.
Come autumn, come winter, come spring, come summer,
You're the long-suffering wife of a long-distance runner.

Secretary's Report

TWENTY-SEVEN NEW MEMBERS joined last year, which is the largest influx since we were formed in 1986. Those of you new to the area may not know that we parted company with Trowbridge Athletic Club when they decided to move club training to the Christie-Miller track at Melksham; they are now part of Wessex and Bath AC.

For the benefit of new members, you are now insured against serious injury during training or racing. We also run a subsidized coach to certain popular races.

The club championships, which are decided over 10-kilometre, 10-mile and half-marathon races run on certified courses, proved very popular last year, with thirty-five members completing the required three events.

During the year we organized or helped with the Trowbridge Lions' 10K, the Over the Hills 12K multi-terrain as well as two handicap races and the Boxing Day 5K with a record field of thirty-six.

With the winter halfway gone, there are still two Wessex cross-country league meetings remaining [see *Fixtures*, p. 4]. Your club has paid £30 season's affiliation to give members free participation in this challenging and varied branch of the sport. Every course is different, and all you have to do is turn up with your club vest and suitable shoes to enjoy keen competition and a healthy change from road running. Go on, try it!

— Stan Farr

Welcome to the Valley!

Three new members signed on during the last quarter of 2003: **Mitzi Barber** on 16 October, **Daryl Spicer** on 2 December, and **Llewelyn Jones** on 14 December (Llewelyn had just become a 40-year-old veteran on 24 November). We wish you all happy days and good times in "Happy Valley"!

MILESTONES

Birthday greetings and good luck to the following members, who all move up into the next age-group this quarter: **Jan Hunt** on 2 January; **Ray Withey**, 60 on 10 January; **Martin Connor**, 50 on 22 February; **Bob Sales**, 50 on 5 March; **John Millichip**, 65 on 6 March; and **Bernie Hobbs**, 55 on 21 March.

RESULTS: October-December

Sun. 5 October - CLARENDON WAY MARATHON: D Kay (2nd M60) 3:47:07. **CRICKLADE HALF-MARATHON:** 3 K Sparey 1:16:21, 10 M Connor 1:20:36, 14 D Barber 1:22:46, 19 D Wrintmore 1:24:43, 123 G Thwaites 1:44:15, 154 M Edwards 1:49:30. **BREDA HALF-MARATHON** (Holland): 167 L Harding 1:38:53. **BOX 3¼M:** 7 Sue MacGregor (2nd female vet.) 23:10, 8 Stuart MacGregor (3rd male vet.) 23:10, 11 S Phillips (3rd female vet.) 24:46, 20 G Sharam (3rd woman) 29:59, 24 I S Farr 30:39; **6¼M:** 2 A Bartlett 38:36, 13 A Hickson 48:53, 14 R Barber (2nd woman) 49:23, 2 D Mellor 57:32, 28 J Farr 1:01:56. **ALTON 10K MT:** 136 D Cox 56:02, 141 J Cox 56:55. **CRANBOURNE 10K:** T Vivian (1st W40) 47:06.

Sun. 12 October - GREAT SOUTH 10M (Portsmouth): 894 Sue MacGregor 1:13:49, 898 Stuart MacGregor 1:13:50, 2859 Denise Ellis 1:26:04.

Sun. 19 October - ABINGDON MARATHON: D Kay (4th M60) 3:34:47. **HARDLEY HALF-MARATHON:** 97 Les Unsworth 1:32:53, 197 Linda Unsworth 1:48:49. **A.V.R. OVER THE HILLS 12K MT:** 5 K Sparey (1st M45) 46:20, 10 D Barber 47:48, 23 M Connor 50:24, 39 S Williams 52:09, 87 I White 58:29, 101 A Wood 59:32, 103 S Ringham 59:38, 118 L Irwin 1:01:21, 178 P Clark 1:08:51, 186 J Pomroy-Smith 1:10:05, 201 B White 1:12:42, 210 Dylan Ellis 1:14:55, 215 D Mellor 1:16:54, 219 T Grigsby 1:17:46, 229 T Bartlett 1:31:29.

Sun. 26 October - STROUD HALF-MARATHON: 51 M Connor 1:19:25, 365 C Atkinson 1:35:06, 392 S Noyes 1:35:53, 393 G Fice 1:35:54, 432 D Kay 1:37:07, 462 L Ringham 1:37:49, 473 Sue MacGregor 1:38:13, 549 T Vivian 1:40:19, 603 V Morey 1:41:56, 627 T Wood 1:42:25, 763 L Irwin 1:46:33, 839 T Simpson 1:48:45, 853 M Pratt 1:49:04, 941 S Stephens 1:51:47, 1126 V Toms 1:57:09, 1145 J Field 1:57:33, 1152 D Mellor 1:57:44, 1252 J Hunt 2:00:44. **LAUSANNE HALF-MARATHON** (Switzerland): 176 D Wrintmore (1st Briton) 1:25:23. (Report, p. 4.) **FORDINGBRIDGE 10M:** R Barber (1st female vet.) 1:16:36.

Sun. 2 November - NEW YORK MARATHON: L Harding 4:01:38. **LORDSHILL 10M:** D Kay (3rd M60) 1:13:23, Sue MacGregor (2nd W45) 1:15:22, V Morey 1:16:44. **ILMINSTER 10K:** 5 K Sparey (2nd M40) 36:31.

Sat. 8 November - CHEDDAR HALF-MARATHON: K Sparey (3rd vet.) 1:10:10, 51 S Bryant 1:29:07, 65 Les Unsworth 1:33:25, 74 D Kay 1:34:54, 76 L Ringham 1:34:55, 98 Sue MacGregor 1:36:48, 117 T Vivian 1:39:21, 126 R Barber 1:41:18, 174 G Phillips 1:49:13, 176 J Cox 1:49:22. **BOXHILL BALLBUSTER DUATHLON:** 177 N Whitehead 8M run 1:00:12 + 24M bike 1:39:22 + 8M run 1:03:52 = 3:43:26. **VICTORIA PARK 4M** (Bath): 28 M Connor 23:27, 132 T Bartlett 46:26.

Sun. 9 November - SODBURY SLOG 9M MT: 70 M Connor 1:11:01, 170 I White 1:17:16, 362 L Irwin 1:27:56, 611 B White 1:40:51. **WESSEX CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE**, Salisbury: 116 T Northwood.

Sun. 16 November - LEICESTER MARATHON: 58 (2nd M60) D Kay 3:40:18.

Sun. 23 November - LANZAROTE 10K: 58W S Phillips (2nd W50) 49:49, 17 G Phillips 50:09, 88W J Field (3rd W60) 53:25, 104W J Hunt 56:30, 216 I S Farr 1:05:42

Mon. 24 November - LANZAROTE 13K RIDGE RUN: 54W S Phillips (2nd W50) 1:08:07, 173 G Phillips 1:09:20, 77W J Field 1:12:11, 96W J Hunt 1:15:35.

Tue. 25 November - LANZAROTE BEACH 5K: 47W S Phillips (2nd W50) 28:03, 180 G Phillips 30:03, 80W J Field 31:31, 91W J Hunt 32:31, 196 I S Farr 37:09.

Wed. 26 November - LANZAROTE TRANSISLAND 23K: 55W S Phillips 2:01:22, 63W J Field 2:06:01, 179 G Phillips 2:06:02, 83W J Hunt 2:13:45. (S Phillips placed 2nd W50 in Lanzarote Four-Race Challenge.)

Sat. 29 November - LANZAROTE HALF-MARATHON: 124 S Phillips (1st W50) 1:52:18, 193 G Phillips 2:03:08, 228 A Meadow 2:32:35.

Sun. 30 November - BENIDORM MARATHON: 135 D Kay (2nd M60) 3:38:51. **HAYLING ISLAND 10M:** 18 K Sparey (1st W45) 56:06, 94 A Bartlett 1:03:01, 105 D Wrintmore 1:03:40, 152 R Ellis 1:06:42, 195 Les Unsworth 1:08:45, 211 C Atkinson 1:09:22, 225 N Evans 1:09:58, 243 T Rockcliffe 1:11:03, 25W L Ringham 1:11:47, 37W V Morey 1:13:23, 285 P Hunt 1:13:41, 42W T Vivian 1:14:07, 43W R Barber (1st W50) 1:14:15, 325 T Wood 1:15:46, 372 L Irwin 1:18:12, 82W D Ellis 1:20:09, 107W J Scott 1:23:44, 113W V Toms 1:24:21, 457 M Brain 1:24:40, 496 T Griffith 1:28:00, 138W J Hunt 1:28:58, 507 D Mellor 1:29:44.

Sun. 7 December - LUTON MARATHON: 106 D Kay (1st M60) 3:35:38. **THE FULL MONTY CUTE 10K MT:** 2 I White 1:25:51. **WYVERN CHRISTMAS CRACKER 10K:** 315 S Phillips (3rd W50) 47:46, 526 Denise Ellis 52:55.

Sun. 14 December - MAJORCA MARATHON: D Kay (2nd M60) 3:36:54. **BROMHAM 10K:** 4 K Sparey 34:45, 9 M Connor 36:44, 22 A Bartlett 38:41, 25 D Wrintmore 39:31, 44 S Noyes 41:08, 45 R Hudson 41:09, 55 C Atkinson 41:46, 60 P Syms 42:03, 61 G Fice 42:09, 62 N Evans 42:14, 78 L Ringham 43:30, 79 T Rockcliffe 43:36, 80 Sue MacGregor 43:41, 88 R Barber 44:25, 91 S Ringham 44:36, 98 L Jones 45:00, 106 T Vivian 45:42, 126 L Irwin 46:54, 133 S Phillips 47:26, 146 M Pratt 48:30, 161 J Betteridge 50:12, 171 A Meadow 50:57, 173 J Pomroy-Smith 51:12, 191 V Toms 53:26, 200 D Mellor (1st M70) 54:39, 243 T Bartlett 1:12:12. **WESSEX CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE**, Newbury: 62 R Ellis, 101 T Northwood.

Sat. 20 December - GADDESBY GALLOP 5M MT: 24 I White 44:49, 60 B White 58:13.

Fri. 26 December - BOXING DAY 5K, Bradford-on-Avon: 1 Kevin Sparey 17:17, 2 A Bartlett 18:08, 3 D Barber 18:17, 4 D Spicer 18:38, 5 P Harding (Swansea) 18:59, 6 M Bryant 19:03, 7 S Bryant 19:09, 8 R Ellis 19:17, 9 S Williams 19:47, 10 R Carey 19:49, 11 R Bown (Frome) 19:51, 12 N Whitehead 20:12, 13 R Barber 20:59, 14 Sue MacGregor 21:05, 15 L Jones 21:28, 16 C Howard 21:52, 17 M Pace (u/a) 21:58, 18 V Morey 22:01, 19 R Matthews (u/a) 22:12, 20 L Irwin 22:33, 21 Neil Fyfe (u/a) 22:55, 22 S Phillips 23:12, 23 J Betteridge 23:45, 24 Denise Ellis 24:00, 25 J Pomroy-Smith 24:45, 26 T Robinson (u/a) 26:40, 27 Stuart MacGregor 26:41, 28 G Phillips 26:42, 29 D Mellor 26:44, 30 P Chapple 2:51, 31 T Griffith 27:37, 32 V Bartlett (u/a) 27:45, 33 S Reeves 28:18, 35 I S Farr (& Helga) 31:34, 36 T Bartlett 36:47.

For inclusion in Valley News, Wiltshire Times and The Book, send results to Stan Farr, 01225 755605, or avonvalleyrunners@yahoo.co.uk.

FIXTURES: January-April

JANUARY

- Thu 15 Annual General Meeting, Clubhouse, Pound Lane, Bradford-on Avon, 9.00.
Sun 25 Slaughterford 9M MT, 9.50.

FEBRUARY

- Sun 1 Blackmore Vale Half-Marathon, 11.00.
Sat 7 * Club Presentation, Disco & Buffet, Farmhouse Inn, Southwick, 7.30. *
Sun 8 Wessex Cross-Country League, Wimborne; Dursley Dozen 12M MT, 10.30.
Sun 15 Weston Tough 10M MT, 10.30; Lytchett 10M, 10.30.
Sun 22 Salisbury 10K, 11.00.
Sun 29 Pewsey Hill 10M, 10.30; Babcary 7½M, 11.00; Bramley 10M & 20M, 10.30.

MARCH

- Sun 7 Gloucester 20M, 10.00; Reading Half-Marathon, 10.00;
Wessex Cross-Country League (presentation meeting), Dorchester/Weymouth.
Sun 14 Grizzly 18M MT, Devon, 10.30; Bath Half-Marathon, 11.10.
Sun 21 Calne 10K, 11.00; Eastleigh 10K, 2.30.
Sun 28 Marshfield Mudlark 5½M MT, 10.30; Combe Gibbet-Overton 16M MT, 2.00.

APRIL

- Sun 4 Trowbridge Lions' 10K, 11.00; Taunton Half-Marathon, 10.30; Bournemouth Half-Marathon.
Fri 9 Maidenhead 10M, 9.30.
Sun 18 London Marathon.
Sun 25 Shakespeare Marathon, 1.00; Frenchay 10K, 11.00; Corsham 10K, 11.00; Marwell Zoo 10K.

Cold Running

by Darren Wrintmore

Following a great run in the Cricklade Half-Marathon, where in a field of over 200 runners I managed to record my fastest time for the distance, since my debut at the event back in 1985 — when I was a naïve nineteen year old who just fancied a long run. On this occasion my 1:24:43 (still nearly five minutes slower than my run eighteen years previously) secured me 19th place and a very positive approach to the following week's Great South Run. Unfortunately within a few days of the lurgy had struck me down and with my feeling all over rotten, reluctantly withdrew from the Portsmouth event. After more than a week of coughing, spluttering and passing the bug onto family and friends — I was all clear and able to take up the invitation that I had received from an old running acquaintance of mine to take part in the Swiss half-marathon championships in Lausanne. Not having forgiven me for passing on the lurgy, my family decided to join me for the trip.

Things got off to a rather shaky start on the plane when I was struck full on the knee by a hostess trolley. After much cussing and swearing in French, the stewardess finally forgave me for blocking her route along the aisle! On arrival in Geneva, I collected the hire car and made for the village of Ondaliez — which, as I was to discover, is halfway up a mountain overlooking the exclusive resort of Montreux at the far end of Lake Geneva. What I also discovered was that my host's chalet was located above the snowline (1,100m) and a ten-minute climb from the nearest parking bay. After several trips from car to chalet and back carting cases and children, I began to realise why altitude training benefits Kenyan athletes so much. I was to follow this up with a trip to 3,000m to visit a glacier in the Alps on the day before the race.

Wishing to gain more than a little information about the course, I had been trawling the Internet over the course of the past few weeks, and in a runners' forum I got in touch with "Swiss Bobby". Against all the good advice that I was being given by those who had my wellbeing at heart, I agreed to meet "Swiss Bobby" in Lausanne for a run. After establishing that he was not an axe-wielding homicidal maniac or related to the Boston strangler, as feared by my family (or was that hoped by my family? — they still hadn't forgiven me for the bugs), but an ex-pat from Glasgow, we enjoyed a seven-mile run over the final stages of the course that we were to run in three days' time.

The big day came at last, and I lined up in the town of La Tour de Peilz on the shore of Lake Geneva along with 2,500 other runners, predominantly Swiss but also from France, Germany, Italy and another 25 countries. After several days living on a mountain at -10°C, the chilly 5°C for the race seemed positively tropical and I dispensed with my thermal running gear to wear my regular Avon Valley Runners club singlet and shorts. Knowing that the first half of the course was quite undulating as it passes through the towns along the edge of Lake Geneva I decided to start conservatively, but surprised myself by going through 10 kilometres well under 40 minutes. Then on what should have been the "easier" half of the course as it passed slightly downhill through the suburbs of Lausanne, my stride started to shorten, but not before allowing me to pass through 10 miles (16K) in a season's best time. Receiving encouragement in the form of ringing cow-bells and shouts of "Allez, allez!", I managed to cross the finish line in a very pleasing 1:25:23 in 176th place overall and the first Briton home — a fact that the organizers relayed to my mobile phone through an SMS message (the wonders of modern technology!).

Following the race, I rewarded myself with a relaxing few days in Switzerland, visiting Gruyere, famous for its cheese and H. R. Giger (think "Alien" movies). I also made a point of climbing the mountain (Les Pleiades) on which I was staying.

This is your newsletter! Items for inclusion to: Tim Northwood, 45 Hilperton Rd, Trowbridge; Tel. (01225) 769929; tijono@tiscali.co.uk