



Valley News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS
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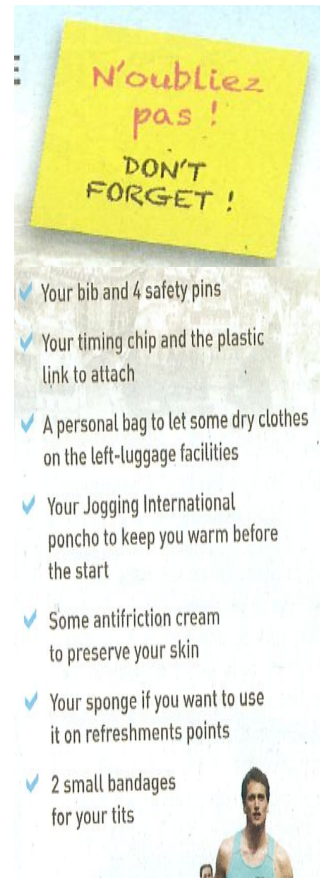
“N'oubliez pas le marathon de Paris”

The day before...

Probably not the ideal preparation as this involved a 5.30am start and a long, hot journey in a minibus (with an air con malfunction!) with 7 other marathonians, from Chippenham, across to Paris via the Eurotunnel. In hindsight it would have been less hectic to have arrived on the Friday to allow a day in Paris beforehand. However, we eventually navigated our way to the centre of Paris to the ‘Expo’ at around 5pm, just about avoiding colliding with the crazy French drivers. We picked up our numbers and a Marathon Guide. Check out the very informative last minute pre race advice – note the last bullet point!!

Marathon day...

Up at 6am, quick breakfast and shoot across Paris on the Metro packed with runners going to L’Arc de Triomphe. I arrived in good time prior to the start, however, I made the unfortunate mistake of following the crowds to what I thought was the baggage area, only to find that I was following everybody to the start area! This meant I had to leg it back up L’Avenue Champs-Elysees, battling with most of the oncoming 35,000 runners who were going to the start! I eventually found the baggage area with 15 minutes to spare before the start – Now a major panic on to do everything and not miss the start! In my haste I tripped over on the pavement, but luckily no damage done! I make it to the start just before the gun sounds and have a moment to reflect that I feel like I have already run a marathon!



The sun is shining, the atmosphere is buzzing, the clock is ticking and we edge forward slowly. There are so many people it is hard to manoeuvre around everyone and after 5K we are drawn to a complete stop due to being bottle necked around a corner. The drink stations prove to be the next hurdles – with stations only on one side of the road, it is complete chaos as the crowds of runners veer across everyone. A few more km’s done and still it is hard to find space to run. The temperature is rising and I use every opportunity to get a water soaking to try and keep cool. At various points there are also people with hoses which are very welcome in the 25 degree heat! Some of the drinks stations also have pieces of orange and sultanas for refreshments. At around 10 miles I twist my ankle on an empty water bottle and lurch into a guy to try and stabilise myself, which I’m sure he wasn’t too pleased about! But keep going – the crowds are supportive and it helps having your name on the bib – ‘Allez-Claire’, ‘Courage-Claire’, ‘Go Girlfriend!’ ...!

It is a good course and running along the Seine opposite the Eiffel Tower at 18-miles is particularly spectacular. The bands are also a good distraction – especially the band playing ACDC’s ‘Highway to Hell’ at the 24-mile mark – absolutely brilliant! It all feels surreal eventually seeing the finish line ‘L’arrivee’ and seeing ‘L’Arc de Triomphe’ again. My time reads 3-hours 33-minutes 10-seconds which I am pleased with for a first marathon.

On reflection, I think some of the organisation could have been better to handle the amount of runners, especially in the start and finish areas and it was crowded all along the course. Nevertheless, it was definitely a great, memorable experience, if not completely chaotic at times!!

Claire Howard

Member Profile – Richard Morgetroyd

Date of Birth:	25 th September 1969	Residence:	Melksham
Height:	6' 1"	Occupation:	Railway Signalling Design Engineer
Weight:	11st	Shoes:	Nike
PBs:	5K: 17:25 – Chippenham 2003	10K	37:54 - Southend 2003
	10 Miles: 1:02 – Weymouth 2007	Half Marathon	1:23:21 - Bath 2007

My sporting endeavours span four decades with my first taste of success being at the Yearsely Grove Junior school sports day in 1979 where my good friend at the time, Andrew Derbyshire and I beat some stiff competition in the three legged race. We trained hard that year and even harder the following year to maintain our crown. Oh how we basked in the glory of the Yorkshire Evening Press sports headline “*Morgetroyd and Derbyshire a formidable bound duo....*”

The following decade was slightly more fallow however; despite partaking in numerous cross country events in the inter schools league I couldn't quite maintain the pace of the lead pack and could be easily persuaded by some of the less keen runners to diverge from the trodden route for a sly B & H.

During the 90's following several years working away from home where I regularly stayed in hotels and could be found most days tucking into a full english, I found I could no longer squeeze into my 26" waist trousers and zip them closed. So in my desperation to rectify this situation I sought an activity that was easily accessible and cheap. So I bought a pair of Adidas Sambas and some grey marle joggers and started pounding the streets early in the morning. To my amazement it wasn't long before I saw results!

In 2001 I finally decided to enter a race, **The Poole 10K**, which I have entered every year since. I then entered various half marathons, Bristol, Reading, Bath, etc with increasing levels of success and ever diminishing times so my confidence and determination grew, I have also done the **London Marathon** twice; however it wasn't until 2009 that I joined a running club fearing elitism but I can now happily say that AVR is an all inclusive and friendly club and am proud to say I am a member!

For the future, I still need to get back to those 26" waist trousers so I guess I'll just have to jog on....



All Those Years Ago

Tales from the "Valley" 5, 10, 15 & 25 years ago:

<p>2006: AVR entered teams into the Cotswold Way Relay for the first time, with our Vets team taking third in their category; AVR Ladies placed fifth and our Mixed team seventh.</p>	<p>2001: AVR claimed both the Men & Ladies team titles at the Warminster Forest 10 with fifth placed Kevin Sparey leading home in a time of 65:04 and claiming the 1st MV40 prize.</p>
<p>1996: AVR Ladies claimed a 1-2-3 at the Christie Miller 10K with Rosemary Barber, J. Lewis and Judy Farr taking the honours. Joby Hobbs finished runner-up in the Area Sports 1500m at Bath, recording 4:52.</p>	<p>1986: 15th placed Tim Northwood recorded 1:19:07 at the Midsomer Norton Half Marathon and led home Mike Hehir, Danny Kay and Ron Whittle to the Vets team prize. Judy Farr was the second lady to finish the race recording 1:34:06.</p>

L-Plates

1. We've all been there, we've all done that
Hit the wall and flattened the cat
But this was after we had passed our test
What happened before was by far the best

3. A professional instructor, I now had to find
With letters after his name, you know the kind
I looked in the phone book and on the internet
To select a master of the trade, the best that I could get

5. The very next day did my training begin
He had a ram shackled old car and a hip flask of gin
He explained all the instruments and how to operate the clutch
Release it gently he cautioned, with a delicate touch

7. With a screech of brakes I slammed to a halt at the red light
With a vice like grip on the wheel my knuckles gleaming white
"Put it into gear" old Skiffy said, his words tinged with fear
I did as I was told, let out the clutch and we shot off to the rear

9. The farmer then appeared, his face set with murderous intent
As weakly by the car door I just lent
His words to me, and the phrases he used i could just not repeat
And through the gap I had made, some cows beat a hasty retreat

2. "Why don't you learn to drive?" my best friend said
"It's a piece of cake really, just take it as read"
I decided to take up the challenge and hit the open road
But first to purchase a copy of the Highway Code

4. Finally i picked on a Mr Skiffington-Browne
This I told to my mate, he replied "Oh no, not that clown"
He of the tweed suits and fruity voice
But the decision had been taken, i had made my choice

6. So, in the driving seat I sat, my nerves all a quiver
Praying that i'll stay on the road, and not go off in the river
Now my animated actions caused others to honk their horn
I began to wish that i'd never been born

8. Skiffy jumped from the car, his face drained of blood
His tweed suit covered in mud
For my reversing technique had sent us through a field gate
And in my panic I began to accelerate

10. Poor old Skiffington-Browne, his career has ended
And my driving licence had definitely been suspended
My driving skills became legendary, people are still talking
But between you and me it's for the best you see; these boots
are made for walking

Tony "the bard" Bartlett

Member Profile – Sarah Jewers

Date of Birth: 29 June 1971

Height: 5' 6"

Weight: 9 stone 12 pounds

PBs: **1M:** 6:44 – Bradford on Avon 2010

5K: 22:36 – Melksham 2010

Residence: Melksham

Occupation: Medical Secretary

Shoes: Asics

10K: 48:30 – Poole 2009

Half Marathon: 1:50:55 – Chippenham 2010

I have always enjoyed running, but in my previous life, I was a swimmer and trained hard, representing the County in a few events. As I got older, fatter and more unfit, and not really liking spending time in the gym, I started running with a group who started at Christie Miller.

Having made some firm friends there, we continued in our own sweet way once the Christie Miller had decided we were too much of a health and safety hazard to continue our club. Not long after I had a call from Darren who was starting AVR sessions from Christie Miller and asked if I wanted to come along.

Having met some more enthusiastic and sociable bods there I was motivated to carry on and start entering races which spurred me on further to challenge myself to improve my times a little.

I have also attended the Run Leaders Course at Bristol which means I now help out with Beginners Groups, trying to inspire the newer runners to get the bug.



Fixtures

Sunday, June 5 th	Forest 10** - Warminster
Tuesday, June 7 th	Melksham 5K – Christie Miller @19:30
Saturday, June 12 th	FOSM5 - Chippenham
Saturday, June 19 th	Mendip Mashup – Charterhouse Mendip
Saturday, June 25th	Cotswold Way Relay – Chipping Campden to Bath
Thursday, June 30 th	The Great Chalfield 10K – Broughton Gifford @19:30
Saturday, July 9th	The Avon Valley Relay – Melksham to Winsley @14:00
Wednesday, July 13 th	River Run 5K***++ - Chippenham @19:30
Saturday, July 16 th	Melksham Carnival 5K & Fun Run – Melksham @17:30
Sunday, July 17 th	TBAS 10K – Castle Combe @11:30

** Race Series Event ++ Off-Road Championship

The Shaw Stampede 10K

Sunny conditions greeted the one hundred runners who lined up at the Beeches for the sixth running of the Shaw Stampede 10K multi-terrain race which traverses the trails around the villages of Shaw, Whitley, Neston & Atworth.

The race saw a close fought battle between last year's winner, Simon Nott of John Bentley School and Bertie Powell of London's Woodford Green AC. In the final mile Bertie managed to open up a twenty metre lead over Simon but managed to miss the final turning into the Beeches allowing Simon to take the lead. However in a magnanimous sporting gesture Simon refused to cross the finish line until Bertie had caught up and so the Race Referee (Wrinty) awarded a dead heat with both runners recording 34:07.



In the ladies race Michelle Maxwell of Chippenham Harriers took victory ahead of Suzanne Clare from Atworth and Magdalena Powell of Woodford Green AC.

Chippenham Harriers claimed the Mixed team prize but Richard Morgetroyd (1st MV40) and Tina Towler (1st FV50) ensured that Avon Valley Runners were represented at the prize giving.

It is hoped that the event has raised over six hundred pounds for CLIC Sargent.



Pictures courtesy of www.theracephotographer.com