



Valley News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS

#139 – September 2012



AVR at the Olympics



Darren awaits his knighthood for services to athletics at London 2012

Within hours of the opening ceremony ending at the Olympic Park in Stratford a group of AVR members were heading down to London to help out at the cycling events in central London. On that first weekend of the games sleep deprivation and long hours on our feet was the order of the day spent in the company of the worlds cycling elite and the friendly folk of old London Town; it was a bit like endurance training for an *Iron Man* event except we were manning road closures and directing a bewildered public to the nearest tube station or how to get south of the river!

Some of us were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the action as the riders sped past us on the Fulham Road whilst we held our respective posts. Some of us even managed to consume an *Olympic* breakfast purchased from a very popular 24 hour eatery in order to keep their energy levels up.

Saturday merged with Sunday as we travelled home to Wiltshire and then back to London for the women's cycling event where our numbers were swelled by more AVR members, the race savvy stewards who had done the Saturday shift knew what the order of the day was and came suitably equipped with enough energy giving foods to get us through the day and also bagged the best marshalling points along the 'field of play' (the course on which the race takes place as it's known in Olympic parlance).



Only a couple more hours for the Community Payback Team and they'll have paid their dues....



Sonnet Wenlock seeks AVR membership...

A bit of R & R was allowed for at the end of the Sunday shift and the weary team adjourned to a local hostelry for a rejuvenating beverage and a spirit lifting view of the beach Volleyball which was being displayed on several large screens. Following this, some restful sleep was in order on the coach back to Melksham.

Back to work for a couple of days and full of Olympic tales to regale to our work colleagues then more crazy coach travel at ungodly hours was to be had for some of us as we headed off yet again, this time to do our bit at the cycling time trials at Hampton Court on 1st August where Team GB spectacularly gained gold and bronze in front of our very eyes!

Team AVR was once again represented on Sunday 5th August as the women's Marathon snaked its way through the streets of London, a considerably easier shift for most of the team as we manned footbridges over the course near the London wall. Likewise for the men's Marathon the same footbridges were monitored by AVR members in their fetching hi-viz jackets and 2012 steward armbands.

The atmosphere at all the events at which we helped out was amazing and it was great to say we played a part at London 2012; the crowds spectating were very friendly and the whole Olympic buzz got everyone talking to each other, something for which Londoners are not usually renowned!



Tim poised for crowd trouble at London Wall



Warren stands guard at mile 5 and waits for the laydeez with the light eyes...

Richard Morgetroyd

Club Vet 60 Records Broken

As reported in the July edition of the Valley News, competition has recently been hotting up between our Vet 60 men. Frank Lamerton can now lay claim to the club 5K record for his age category having taken part in the August round of the Yeovil Town Running Club 5K series and completing the course in 21 minutes and 4 seconds.

Andy Lawrence now heads the MV60 10K rankings with a time of 40:14 which he attained at the Castle Combe 10K on 29th July.

Congratulations to both on these great achievements!

Please send Reports or Articles to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk



Swiss Connection for Club Super Vet



On Saturday 4th August off road secretary and super vet runner Anthony Hickson took part in a mountain race in Switzerland. Following the race the Valley News caught up with him and got the lowe down via the Alpine Horn....

I got up at 5am, had breakfast, jumped in the car and drove up the mountain through two tunnels. At Fionnay, 1489 metres altitude, I registered for the 6am start (there were starts every ten minutes until 9am and the same on Sunday). Thirty of us started in my group, although there were a total of about 300 this morning.

We started by running up a field and soon reached a sharp rise made up of many rocks. I walked, no, I climbed; after about 2kms the terrain gave us a little respite, but not for long. We came out of the trees and after just over 3kms there was a plateau, a table covered with drinks and oranges. What a welcome break!

The oxygen was very thin as the altitude rose further. The next two or so kilometres were very undulating, with many rocks but occasionally it was even possible for me to run. There were several downhill sections but the track was very narrow with sheer drops off to the right; however the views were wonderful. One of the runners came prepared for these views as he had even taken a camera and a pair of binoculars!

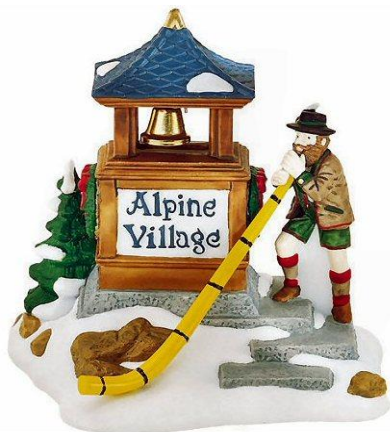
We came to a couple of streams which we crossed by stepping on the rocks in the water and then started the climb up the last 2kms; very twisty and almost as steep as the first 3kms. At the top we ran along a ridge with a huge glacier nearby, until the finish is reached at 2671 metres altitude, and a total distance of only 7.8kms.

Drinks, chocolate and other energy restoring food along with somewhere to sit and relax were the reward after all that effort; another bonus was that there lots of people to talk to, in English as well. After resting awhile it was only another 7.8kms back to the car!

My time? - I would not find out until Sunday at the fete and presentation of prizes. Dawn on Sunday was broken by a thunder storm with great flashes of lightning. Feeling smug that I had chosen wisely in running on Saturday I spoke to some of those who did run on Sunday who said that earlier the weather had been OK but when they got to the finish they had to go and shelter in the *Cabane* – a bit like a miniature youth hostel, until the lightning had ceased. They all said they were well looked after but coming back down the mountain was a bit tricky as the rain had made the terrain very slippery.

When I finally got my time I found that I had taken much longer than in previous year's but was 23rd in the VetIII category in a time of 2:18:35, some 1 hour and 47 minutes behind the winner of my category, another Englishman and friend. He asked me, after the race, for advice on how to stop getting slower as age advances to which I didn't have an answer!

Well done Anthony, keep it up and thanks for sharing your *Toblerone*, and race memento with us, you are too kind and how typically Swiss..!



A Slightly Delayed Cotswold Relay Catch Up!!

Short and sweet and rather late .. er no make that in fact very late, post race comment. My apologies. Well done to all end of June - it was an outstanding effort by all 4 teams.

Overall team positions: Senior Men 25th, Vet Men 34th, Ladies 57th and Mixed and Marvellous 67th. Individual categories: Senior Men 8th, Vet Men, 8th Ladies 6th and Mixed and Marvellous 34th - too many people to mention but particularly to Mike Towler for leg 10; massive first place and leg record of 59.50 - Amazing. A big thank you to those who have only just joined the club and ran, to those who were a bit under par/injured etc - who made the big push on the day through sun and rain and got to the finish post, those who also persevered with tricky routes/signage and in all weathers this year and would not give up till they were happy with it and those who ran to help us out at the last minute. Very much appreciated, we did have lots of changes this year but it all came together in the end. Sorry of course to those who could not compete due to various injuries and illness lurking.

I am aware some of you have not got your shirts yet and I am still trying to sort this out. The supply was short for some reason this year and I've tried to obtain some extras from the organisers and will keep you posted. I'm missing one myself so am hoping to get this sorted for us!

A few lessons learned - I've suggested that it may be an idea to have some signs and/or marshals on the A46 points and at the end of the Lansdown straight. It's very exposed to the traffic and can be a bit scary. With regard to the evening celebrations, I'll find a set menu for you all next year! I do hope you enjoyed the Italian feast nevertheless.

Here's to the rest of the year races for all of you and the forthcoming relays. My next production will be organising the AVR Xmas supper evening after club night again so I'll be back in due course!

In the meantime thank you once again for competing in the Cotswold 2012.

Kathy Kinsey

All Those Years Ago

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

2007: Sixteen Avon Valley Runners suffered for their sport in the 7 mile multi-terrain **King Alfred's Torment** on Sunday 23rd September. First to get the ordeal over with was Alistair Bartlett in a time of 46:34 ahead of Mike Pace in 51:42 who was almost 2 minutes clear of Darren Wrintmore whose distress was over in 53:32.

Our current Chairman Mr Andrew Hoddinott even made an appearance covering the course in a time of 1:02:13.

1997: It was reported in a September edition of the Wiltshire Times that AVR member Danny Kay was approaching his 100th Marathon race. – In fact this was a misprint and the figure should have read 140!

Brian Dunn flew the Avon Valley Runners flag in France on 28th September as he took part in the **Paris – Versailles 17K** race. He completed the Gallic course in a time of 1:14:27.

2002: Kevin Sparey powered to 22nd place at the **Oldbury Power Station 10** on Sunday 8th September in a time of 1:00:48 ahead of club mates Alistair Bartlett, 1:02:48 and Neil Whitehead, 1:08:06.

An electrifying performance by Sue MacGregor saw her lead our ladies contingent home in a time of 1:22:00 ahead of Viv Toms, 1:24:01 and Sonya Stephens, 1:25:39.

1987: Three AVR members had a busy weekend on 12th and 13th September when Alan Jonas, Tom Roberts and the mysterious I. Craig ran back to back races on Saturday and Sunday. The first was the **Sutton Benger 5** where Alan led the team home in 28:44 to claim 6th position ahead of Tom who ran 30:22 followed by Mr Craig in 34:31.

On Sunday Alan was on top form again and claimed 28th place at the **Newbury 10** in a time of 1:00:00 ahead of Tom and enigma Craig who ran 1:03:56 and 1:12:55 respectively.

Warrens Tarmac Tearaways



Welcome to speedy September in the Valley; hope all your running aspirations are coming to fruition!

I'm pleased to say that our men's 'A' team still hold top spot in the Wiltshire Race League following the **TBAS Castle Combe 10K** on 29th July and also the **Foxtrot 5** on Sunday 26th August. Our Ladies 'A' team are doing well too tying with Chippenham Harriers 'A' with 152 points. - Well done teams and let's keep it that way!

The next race in the AVR/WAA race league is the **Melksham 10** on Sunday 16th September. Entry details are [here](#). This event is also hosting the Wiltshire County Championships over the ten mile distance so get in training and claim your place in the County Team!

If you have a bit of spare time on Saturday 8th September and you are in the Swindon area, why not have a go at the **Broad Town 5?** – The race starts at 14:30 with entries in advance costing £8.00 and a pound extra on the day. Check it out [here](#).

Tim Lowrie is our club captain for AVR team entries into the **North Somerset Road Relay** event being organised by Clevedon AC on Sunday 9th September. Please contact Tim directly or let me know via roadrace@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk if you would like to be part of a team. The legs are 5k each and we need either teams of 5 men or 4 ladies or 4 mixed (2 men, 2 ladies). The club are picking up the tab for entries to this so come on let's see some support.

Also on the subject of relays, Richard Hudson is still looking for participants to take part in the Uphill to Wells relay on Saturday 22nd September. For those who are unfamiliar with the event it is a self navigated multi-terrain relay with legs varying in distance between 3 and 7 miles. Full details can be found [here](#). Please drop me a line at roadrace@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk or track Richard down at a club night.

As it looks like we will have a good presence at **Bristol Half Marathon** on Sunday 30th September, we are looking into providing coach or mini-bus transport. In order for us to gauge numbers for costs, etc, please let me know if you would like to be on the team coach.

It was good to see some Olympian efforts at Southwick Country Parkrun recently; pictured right is Richard Newman finding time to stop and do his best Usain Bolt impression as he ran by on a flying lap!

Warren Wade (Road Race Secretary)



Hickson's Dirty Tracks



Tim Lowrie now leads the men's off road championship after gaining 18 points at the **Roundway Rampage** on Sunday 12th August.

Tina Vivian still holds top place for the Ladies; however Amelia Oughtibridge and Fiona Price are closing fast, with both tying in second place with 40 points.

Our next race in the off road series is the **Corfe Beast** on Sunday 2nd September. See the link below for details.

Unfortunately it looks like we will have one less race in the off road schedule this year as the **Clench 8** is not going ahead.

As you all know I am organising the White Horse Relay at the end of September so this will be my main focus this month. As it is being held on the same day as the Bristol Half this has reduced the number of available AVR runners who can take part. I am therefore offering to let individual runners enter for a stage without a team. I will try and make a team up, if possible, from these individuals but I must emphasise that no stage will be allowed more than 24 runners due to car parking restrictions. - Drop me a line if you are interested.

Some multi-terrain events in September which you may be interested in are as follows:

- **Corfe Beast** – Sunday 2nd September. Follow [me](#) for details.
- **St Arvans 10** – Sunday 16th September. 10 mile multi-terrain race over the bridge in Chepstow. Details are [here](#).
- **Barefoot Beach Bound** – Thursday 20th September, 3K beach run in aid of the Stoke Association in Bournemouth. Details can be found [here](#)
- **King Alfred's Torment** – Sunday 23rd September sees yet another running of this favourite off road 7 miler organised by Yeovil Town Road Running Club. Details are [here](#)

Hope to see you at one of these events soon, happy running!

Anthony Hickson (Off Road Race Secretary)

Situation Vacant....

It is with some regret that I am informing you of my intended departure from the role of Newsletter Editor of the Valley News after just over a year in the job. However I've been headhunted to leave Valley Towers by *Wood Turner's Weekly* where I'll be reviewing their Readers Tools submissions and giving them a rating from frankly blunt, give it a sharpen on an oil-stone, to my word, that's so sharp you'll have someones eye out....

So if you think you can take on the mantle that is the VN and breathe new life and vigour into it to keep it fresh and constantly on the minds of West Wiltshires finest band of runners, then please contact either myself or a member of the committee and we'll get you on course to alliteration greatness.

I'd like to thank all the contributors during the past twelve months and also **you**, the readership, for sticking with it and reading my ramblings....

Richard Morgetroyd