



# Valley News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS

#152 – October 2013



## An Insight into Triathlon



After taking timeout of running last year due to injury I had dusted off the cobwebs on my bike and started doing more cycling. I slowly made a comeback to running late last year, but managed to maintain some training on the bike. After doing the London to Brighton bike ride I needed something else to aim for so decided to give a Triathlon another go (having not done one for four years due to lack of time to train) therefore I decided to enter the **Westonbirt Sprint Triathlon**.

The day before race day I started packing my kit:- swim goggles, cycle helmet, cycle glasses, cycle shoes, Garmin watch set for a triathlon, running shoes, socks, energy gel, talc, towel and a box to put it all in, and thanks to a tip from Ian Isaacs a spare pair of shoes for transition from pool to bike.

On a sprint triathlon you have staggered start times according to your estimated swim times with the slowest swimmers starting first and they group you with people of a similar standard. My start time was 11.02 which gave me plenty of time to get there without getting up too early. After checking and re checking that I had everything we headed to Westonbirt and arrived over an hour early. That hour soon flew by, by the time I had registered taken the bike to transition, laid out my kit, checked out the pool – transition area and had changed. As the transition on this triathlon from pool to the bike was on rough stones you could wear trainers between the two areas, so the trainers were laid outside the pool and I was ready to go with 10 minutes to spare before the race briefing.

The race briefing is held on the poolside 10 minutes before your swim start time and everything has to be done to the exact second on a triathlon due to the chip timing, and before you know it we were in the pool and were off. The pool is sectioned into lanes of which four people are in each one, each person is started 10 seconds apart; this is all programmed into your chip which is why it is so important to run on time. Luckily I have a natural swimming ability so do not struggle on the swim like so many other people do and before I knew it I was out of the pool and running to get my bike at the transition area.



Once in transition you are not allowed to touch your bike until you have your helmet on so it's a quick change of shoes, helmet on and race number, then take the bike from the rack and run to the bike start line. Once I was on the bike it is head down a go for it, unfortunately biking is my weakest element in a triathlon so I was over taken by a few people. After 14.5 miles it was back to transition for the 5km run. Again the rules are very strict here you are not allowed to remove your helmet before your bike is racked and then a quick change of shoes and I was off again. On the run I managed to overtake a few people, but in a triathlon it doesn't matter as much because you are mostly racing yourself as you don't know what the person in front's start time was, but it does give you someone to aim for.



I finished the race in a time of 1 hour 34 minutes and 52 seconds; I was 14<sup>th</sup> in my category out of 32 and was 27<sup>th</sup> out of 68 females. I have now got the bug for triathlons and hope to do one more this year and more next year. I would recommend anyone who can to give one a tri!

*Liz Gard*

## Lacock Relays

For those who have not yet had the pleasure of this event yet it is a four race series over an undulating 2.6 mile loop around the picturesque village of Lacock which starts and ends just outside the Abbey a stone's throw from the Red Lion pub. I decided this year to attempt all four events as a means of monitoring my progress and as it turned out I'm glad I did.

The first three events are held as relay events with teams of three being chosen by the organisers, Chippenham Harriers, based on a recent 5k or 10k time for the first race and then by previous race results on subsequent races.

The teams are organised according to the rules of one fast, one medium and one slow runner. I, as expected was classified as a slow runner in all three events.

These first three events were very well attended by Avon Valley Runners and we even managed to get some runners in the top three teams on two occasions. Holly Newman put in a great first leg run at the May event to help her team to a first place finish. David Bagshaw put in a good last leg effort in the June event to bring his team home in second place by the narrow margin of a few seconds.

As for my own efforts, I managed to achieve my goal of improving my times consistently at each of the four events.

At the last event in August, due to holidays etc only 45 runners lined up for the race. The format for the last event being slightly different as it was an individual handicap event with runners starting according to their best time over the previous three events. I lined up in tenth position and waited for my allotted time.

I started well enough and by the bridge on the start of the last incline I had caught up with all but four runners and by the top there were just two in front of me. As I started the descent back into the village a voice from behind me broke the silence. "Are those two in the lead? You can take them it's all downhill from here get on their shoulder and go for it!" A glance behind me saw another runner tracking my every move and based on his ability to talk I figured he could have breezed past me had he wished.



Anyway I took his advice and dug in down the hill and managed to get passed one and side by side I turned into the final straight. As we passed the Red Lion I kicked on and sprinted for the line with everything I had. I had done it and won my first ever race, albeit a handicapped race but more importantly I did it with a new CPB of 19:19 an improvement of 2:11 over the four race series. At the end I found the owner of the voice who had urged me on and found out he was from Chippenham Harriers and had been given a guesstimated time due not having run any of the previous events. He realised he had been given an over generous time and had no interest in winning given that his time was not fair, sportsmanship all the way.

Chippenham Harriers Lacock Relays are a good event to consider for the summer months and at only one pound for entry it's a bargain. I for one will be returning next year.

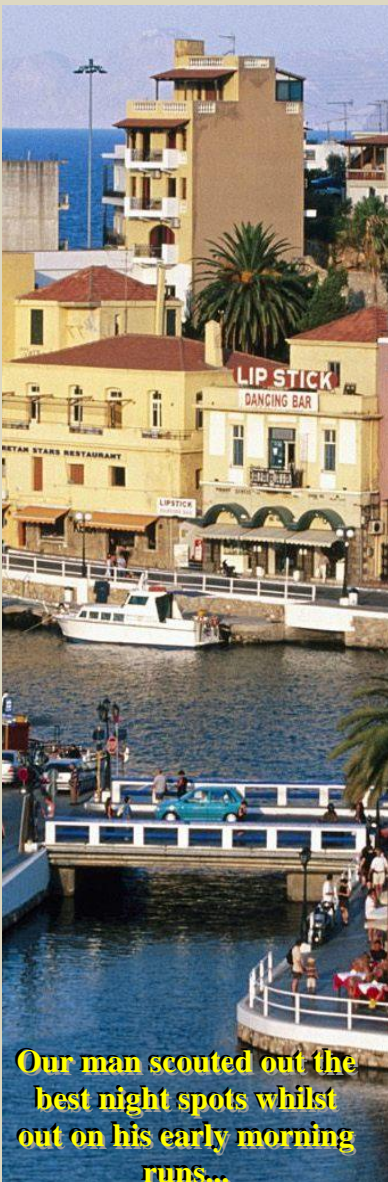
**Ian Isaacs**

## Our Man in Heraklion

AVR kit man **Richard Southgate** recently had a family holiday to Crete and to get away from the excesses of the all inclusive resort and to find some 'me time' he took off into the local landscape and found it's a treat to run in Crete; here's his report.

While on holiday, what does a runner do but look for a chance to run around the local area. So my first task was to take a walk and get a general idea of the lie of the land. I'd looked on Google Earth before we went (sad I know), so I knew roughly where I wanted to go. With a bottle of water and a camera, off I trekked.

The start was a gentle uphill, and I soon realised the earlier I went for the run the better. Scenery is a bit different abroad, instead of apples on the ground, they have lemons, and instead of blackberries on the side of the road, they have grapes, hmmm tasty. After about an hour wandering I headed back to the pool with an idea of where I wanted to go.



**Our man scouted out the best night spots whilst out on his early morning runs...**

The 06:45 start the following morning was met with a slightly rough feeling, as I had had a bit too much of the red grape the night before, but as the air was cool, shoes went on and off I went. There are quite a few farm dogs around, and it must have been a pain for the owners as I ran by, each mutt warning me to stay away.

After the initial lanes and hill, I then headed onto a main road, brief stop to have a grape, then onwards, passing the locals with a wave. I also found that there were quite a few other runners about, and as usual everyone said hello in some language or other. My initial plan was to run towards the main town, parallel with the sea, find a road or track to the beach and run along the sand and then back to breakfast. I think it took about 2 miles before a local pointed out..."Further, Further". Meanwhile I had a companion, a sort of white collie cross, who seemed to enjoy the running bit, but after about half a mile got bored and went off on his/her own thing.

I had now found a track leading to the sea, great, should be a bit cooler I thought. Wrong, what I found was that there wasn't any hard packed sand at the edge of the sea; it was either stones or just soft sand. So my pace went from steady to head down, mindless no-nonsense boogey pace (basically a lot slower).

Early morning dips seemed to be the norm for many people, as there were plenty of holiday makers in the sea, plus the sight of the local holiday staff watering the sand, which I couldn't grasp.

So there I was plodding along and all of a sudden these 3 people in blue t-shirts start telling me to stop and watch out! I had seen before, some small fences coming from back up the beach to about 10 feet from the water's edge. Looking down I saw some baby turtles making their way into the sea. It seems that there are a few of these fenced corridors, and the 'blue t-shirt' people had marked where the turtles had come ashore to lay their eggs, some 8 weeks earlier, and so protect the run for the youngsters on the way to the sea. A bit more exotic, as when I usually have to watch my step there are cow pats in the way.

So onwards, ploughing through the shingle, and low and behold, my mate the white collie appears, well for about 20 yards, got bored and ran back into the real estate. Plodding further on, I eventually come to my route back; I have never been so relieved to see some road, well, dirt track with some dusty inflatable animals and lilo's by a local gift shop. This eventually led back to the main road, and passing a few groups of people waiting for their trips out, I start the final leg of my jaunt. Under the bridge, turn right, then up the hill, just as the sun starts to burn through. As you can see down the road from the restaurant I thought I'd better not stop half way up, so I dug in and managed to the hotel entrance. Getting my breath back, I walked through reception and back to the room as cool as you like.

I really enjoyed that, so a cold shower (due to lack of hot water) and onto breakfast. Shall I do it again? Why not?

## *Thanks Received for AVR Pace Setter*

Club Secretary Fiona Price recently received a thank you email from Phil Withers of Almost Athletes Running Club following the Cheltenham Half Marathon. It is repeated here so that the AVR star in question can share the glory and undoubted adulation that must surely come.

On Sunday 15th September I ran the Cheltenham half marathon. In recent runs I have experienced a loss of belief in my ability, despite putting in the training. When I saw an official pace maker I thought that this may be the way to keep my focus throughout the run and so, from about half a mile into the run I stuck with the 1hr 45min pacer. I believe this was Tim Dodwell from your club.

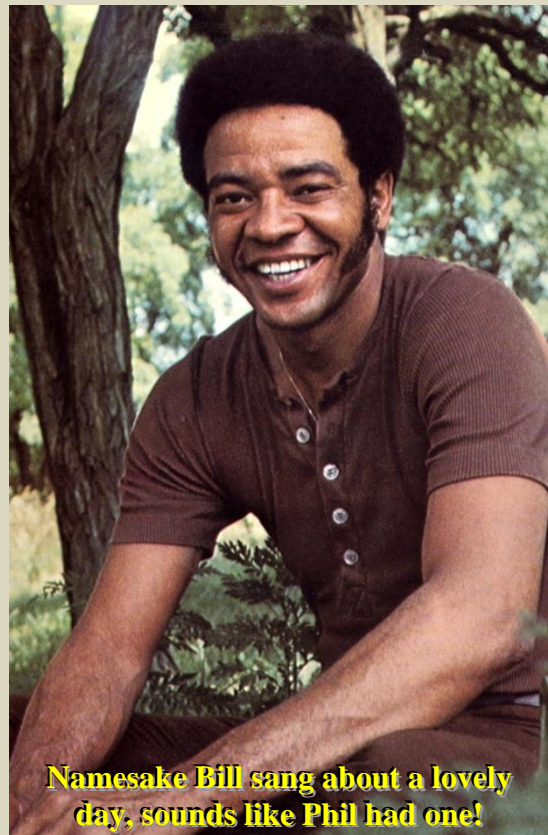
I managed to stick with Tim despite the last few miles being a struggle. I so wanted to slow it all down and in the last mile I was starting to drop behind, but Tim didn't allow that to happen; encouraging me to keep pushing on. I finally went over the line in 1hr 44mins 00 secs!

I wasn't able to talk much during the run and feel that I only said a brief thank you to Tim at the finish and therefore wanted to pass on my thanks through you. I had a great day and felt a great sense of achievement; Tim made this possible for me.

Thank you very much Tim, hope your arms don't ache too much from carrying the pace makers stick.

Very best wishes

Phil Withers (Almost Athletes running club, Cheltenham)



## All Those Years Ago

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

**2008:** Mike Maidment wrote all about racing a little train in the rain in the October 2008 edition of the Valley News and spoke of a Dunkirk like spirit as he celebrated beating the narrow gauge steam train that traverses the Fathew Valley, by a full two minutes. Mike Pace coincidentally arrived at the same time as the train....

In the same edition Darren Wrintmore told a tale of woe about losing his way and two toe nails at the **Salisbury 5-4-3-2-1** trail run.

**1998:** Avon Valley Runners saw success at **Warminster 10K** on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October when Richard Hudson brought home the 1<sup>st</sup> men's team and Linda Brown the 1<sup>st</sup> ladies team.

Linda also claimed the prize for being 3<sup>rd</sup> lady overall and Anthony Hickson the 1<sup>st</sup> MV60 award.

**2003:** Sue MacGregor, Stuart MacGregor and Susie Phillips showed that being in your 40's doesn't mean that you are over the hill as they scored highly at the **Box Fun Run** on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

Sue was 7<sup>th</sup> overall in the 3 ¼ mile event and claimed 2<sup>nd</sup> FV40 in a time of 23:10; Stuart was just behind Sue coming home in 8<sup>th</sup> and claimed the 3<sup>rd</sup> MV40 prize whilst Susie was 3<sup>rd</sup> FV40 in 24:46.

In the 6 ½ mile race, Alistair Bartlett was the second runner home in a time of 38:36.

**1988:** According to the Autumn edition of the Valley News, membership stood at 91 which was encouraging for a club still in its infancy and which didn't pressure its members to compete in races. In the second sentence there was then a call for members to run the **Bradford 7**; pressure? – You decide...

## Fiona Wins British Silver Medal

At the British Masters Championships, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham on 15<sup>th</sup> September, Avon Valley Runner Fiona Price won a silver medal on the track at 5000 metres. Fiona only took up running 5 years ago and it was her first attempt at the British Masters Championships and the 5000 metre track event.

Fiona took silver in the Vet 45 category and hopes to do more running on the track which involves travelling quite a distance to take part in 5000 and 10000 metre events. Although Mo Farah dominates the events at Olympic and World level, it is still a marginalised sport at local level.

Fiona ran a good race and finished 26 secs behind the winner, in a time of 19:25 to take the silver medal which goes with her 10 mile silver that she won earlier in the year at the Lytchett 10 mile road race. Fiona currently lies fourth in the Ladies Wiltshire Road Race League running for AVR. She also represents South West Vets AC at British age group level.

Fiona is being coached by Martin Rush who is confident that she can improve on her running at all distances. She hopes to enter events at European and maybe World level for her age group in the next two years.





## JAVR News # 4



### JAVR CONTINUES TO GROW

A record number of juniors were in attendance to be put through their paces at last week's training session. Our coach, Rich, is now being kept well and truly on his toes with the latest headcount totaling 21 juniors. With the 'odd' adult thrown in for good measure Wednesday night training sessions at the University of Bath are thriving.

### AND THE NOMINATION FOR...

Junior Avon Valley Runners were recently nominated for the 'Most Innovative Club of the Year' at the Wiltshire and Swindon Sports Awards 2013. The nomination was exciting news and recognition of the hard work and dedication of all involved with the junior section of the club.

Congratulations must go to Wiltshire Martial Arts who were presented with this award at the ceremony that was held at County Hall, Trowbridge, on the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**JAVR CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE 2013** Race number three has now taken place and the league continues to go from strength to strength. Thirty six boys and twenty eight girls have now taken part. As always the JAVR results can be found in the results section below. Andrew Tipple has a narrow two point lead at the top of the boy's league with Robert Warner in second place. Five boys occupy 3<sup>rd</sup> place, all level on forty points, but still just five points behind top spot. Top JAVR scorer is still Robert Warner with forty three points. In the girls league Freya Buglass has now taken top spot with a two point lead over JAVR's Ellie Isaacs. Polly Allan and Caitlin Wosika lie in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Details of the league can be found in the junior section of the Avon Valley Runners website.

**SCHOOLS OUT QUIZ** So how many did you get right? Here are the answers for last month's quiz:

1. The clubs favourite stamping ground has always been the valley of the River Avon – Avon Valley Runners
2. Mo Farah
3. Bob Roots – 10 mile club record (53.38). Recorded in 1987.
4. Seven
5. Michael Towler (4.37).
6. Kelly Holmes (3.57.90).
7. It was invented by **Bernie Hobbs** and **Colin Williamson** – The BernCol Relay.
8. Usain Bolt
9. 2012
10. Linford Christie (9.87)
11. 27 years old
12. Alistair Bartlett and Rosemary Barber
13. Steve Cram (3.46.32).
14. 23.40 (Fauja Singh).
15. Golf.

### Southwick Country Parkrun (31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2013)

Holly Newman – 26.13

### Southwick Country Parkrun (7th Sept 2013)

Holly Newman – 24.57  
Robert Warner – 26.35

### JAVR Monthly 2km (31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2013)

Robert Warner – 8.20 (B12)  
Kieran Beardmore – 9.22 (B12)  
Harrison Trevor – 9.27 (B12)  
Ellie Isaacs – 10.07 (G13)  
Jamie Lee Curtis – 18.04 (G12)

Send your latest results to:

[my\\_avr@yahoo.com](mailto:my_avr@yahoo.com)

For inclusion in JAVR News

### UPCOMING EVENTS

EVERY SATURDAY: Southwick Country Park Run 5km, Southwick (9.00am)  
28<sup>th</sup> September: Monthly 2km run – Southwick Country Park, Southwick (10.00am)  
26<sup>th</sup> October: Monthly 2km run – Southwick Country Park, Southwick (10.00am)

### WANTED...

Your contributions for future editions of JAVR News.

Have you got any news to communicate to JAVR or perhaps you have a story to tell? Send your articles to: [my\\_avr@yahoo.com](mailto:my_avr@yahoo.com)




### DON'T FORGET...

Training every Wednesday,

7.00pm @ University of Bath Athletics Track

Expert coaching from Rich Ayling.

£1 per session.

(adults welcome - £3 per session)