



Valley News

THE NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS
#153 – November 2013



Grand Pier Half Marathon

Back in March I managed a PB at the Bath Half and was so encouraged that I decided to book another one as soon after my approaching 60th birthday as possible. Bristol and Chippenham were one day too soon and Cardiff clashed with a harvest service that my wife and I usually organise at St Mary's, Wingfield.

I chose the Grand Pier half at Weston Super Mare - described as mostly flat and good for PBs - with three targets in mind; a new PB, an AVR record or a sub 1:40. None of them involved breaking any world records but for me, any one of them would have represented a significant achievement; the least being a free place at next year's Bath Half.



Unfortunately my right knee had other ideas. After completing my very first duathlon back in April there were times when I could barely run fifty metres without it screaming at me to stop and go home. That's not a recipe for success and I succumbed to an MRI scan at the Bath Clinic in late July. It proved inconclusive and was put down to wear & tear, inflammation and "what do you expect at your age?" Slowly and gradually over the summer months I managed to put in the odd few miles and a slow parkrun. My longest run during that time was about six miles which anyone training for a half marathon will tell you, is not nearly enough.

My birthday came and went and I decided to do the race anyway. I had to get up pretty early for a sixty mile journey and a 9am kick-off. The weather was perfect and it was a lovely cool summery day on the promenade. I was tempted to succumb to a deck chair and a bag of chips rather than subject myself to thirteen miles of pain and disappointment but that's not why I had come.

Half a mile in and that "mostly flat" claim was quickly dispelled. There was an undulating rise for the next two miles such that by the time we reached the turning point we were looking out over a veritable cliff face down to the sea below. Despite the knowledge that I had to do that gruelling hill a second time, I was going pretty well until around nine miles. At that point the lack of training began to tell and my speed varied between a walk and a slow jog. Several times I tried to pick up the pace but to no avail. Before the race I'd tried to program my new Garmin but couldn't figure it out so I gave up and at the end of the race I had no idea how I was doing. When the clock eventually came into view it showed a time approaching 1:40 so I knew I'd missed all my targets. The print out I was given on the finish line showed a time of 1:40:20; the ultimate disappointment. I'd missed my free place by 21 seconds – but at least I'd finished a half marathon, injury free. That was something.

I was about to screw up the print-out and limp off to my car when I took a closer look and noticed my category position. After missing all the targets I'd planned, I'd somehow managed to come away with the first MV60 prize with which I was presented shortly after the race. So the first outing in my new category proved far more successful than I had imagined. I'm looking forward to upping my training over the winter months and throw in a few longer races - ready for my next half in Bath, which for 2014 will be that bit sweeter as I have been awarded that longed for complimentary good for age place.



Ken Marshall

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

Tough Mudder South West

For the last couple of years there has been an explosion of events categorised as 'Obstacle Races'. Typically, they involve cross country running whilst negotiating natural hurdles such as rivers, ditches, hills, mud and climbing over walls. But it's the man-made obstacles that set these events apart from all the other off-road races.

The Tough Mudder series prides itself on the courses being designed by British Special Forces and bills itself as being '*probably the toughest event on the planet*'.

Whilst I'm not entirely sure of these credentials, it's certainly not for the faint hearted. With names like The Arctic Enema, Electroshock Therapy, Boa Constrictor and Walk the Plank, they are true challenges for even the bravest cross country runner.

The events are not offered as a race but as a challenge, there are no timing chips, splits or results. The aim is to conquer your fears and help your fellow 'Mudders' complete the course.

At DBMax Triathlon Club we are always keen to try something new so we set about entering the South West event based at the Glanusk Estate in the beautiful Breacon Beacons, South Wales.

After being treated to a highly charged pre-race warm-up to blaring dance music we were put into the 'start zone' by a very enthusiastic MC. He urged us to take the Tough Mudder Pledge and amongst others we would recite "I help my fellow mudders complete the course" "I do not whine – kids whine!" and "I overcome all fears!" We were now ready.....

So we all set off at a steady pace, chatting away, excitedly if not without apprehension, towards the perils ahead. After 2 miles our first obstacle arrived, **The Kiss of Mud**; onto your belly to crawl through mud, rocks and stones beneath a cage of barbed wire. Not too bad but your knees and elbows were now leaking the red stuff.

Soon we were upon the ice filled skips known as **Arctic Enema**, jump in, then fully submerge yourself to go under a foot wide barrier and re-appear, head frozen, unable to breath and desperate to get the hell out!

Another good mile of running to get warmed up and we were now raging with bravado, adrenalin pumping, able to take on anything the Tough Mudder could throw at us; so onto my biggest fear the **Electric Eel**. Similar to the earlier mud crawl with the added bonus of dangling wires ready to zap you with 10,000 volts of electricity. OK you're not going to die but they certainly packed a punch and if you were unlucky enough to get one to the head it gave you what is known as 'brain re-boot'. Oddly all the girls complained they were mostly zapped on their backsides?

And so on it went, more hilly, muddy running scattered with more challenges, **The Berlin Walls** – each one 3 metres high, teamwork needed here to get us all over. **The Funky Monkey** – greased monkey bars 1.5 feet apart, inclined over a water filled pond. **Cage Crawl** - flip over on your back into water and pull yourself across under 60 feet of cage with only 6 inches of breathing room.

After a slight detour due to us going off course for a mile or so before we had to U-turn back again, we were upon the last three big ones. Walk the Plank – jump off a 5 metre high platform into freezing water, it was a lot higher than it looked and took a lot of courage to actually step off the edge.

Everest – time to sprint, if you can after 14 miles, up a greased half pipe and clamber to safety before you slide back down. The finale was **Electroshock Therapy** - sprint again through a field of live wires whilst trying not be tripped over by the mounds of mud under foot. We all went through together and that was it, Tough Mudder done, some serious high fives and hugs all round, we did it, and more importantly we did it as a Team, all helping each other. No medals here, just a free pint of cider and an orange headband. Brilliant ☺





The *Tough Mudders* in all their filthy glory; Back row Left to right: Simon Robinson, John Kingwell, Alex Chesterton, Ian Isaccs, Nigel Evans, Adam Robbins.
Front row: Ruth Barnes, Leanne Tiley, Mel Ward-Nicholls, Rebekah Scott, Sue Kingwell

John Kingwell

Wiltshire Off-Road League

With the 2013 **Wiltshire Road Race League** reaching its conclusion at the Salisbury Half Marathon with Avon Valley Runners collecting their county title and the "Marshfield Mudlark" signalling the start of the **Wiltshire Off-Road League**, Wiltshire Athletic Association would like to announce another League initiative.

So that younger runners don't feel left out, the inaugural **Wiltshire Junior Race League** will start on Sunday 9th February at Longleat with a run over two miles of the course used by the Longleat 10K (which will be the first race in the 2014 Wiltshire Road Race League). The League will be sponsored by Wiltshire and Swindon Activity and Sports Partnership (WASP). Further races targeted at athletes aged between the ages of 11 and 16 include: Swindon Park Run, St Georges 2K at Corsham, Trowbridge "Sci-Fi" 5K, Frome 5K and concludes with the Castle Combe 4K in August.

The League will utilise a cut down version of the successful formula used in the **Wiltshire Road Race League**, where clubs receive points based on the relative finishing positions of their athletes with the best five of six races to count. Awards will then be made to the highest scoring Club and the leading individual runners.

More details can be found at wiltshire-athletics.org.uk

AVR Parkrunners Top 2000 Runs at Southwick

156 Avon Valley Runners members have taken part in over 2000 runs at our local Parkrun at Southwick Country Park since the inception of the event back in September 2011. Check out [this link](#) for further information on the runner's stats.

Come along to the event on Saturday 2nd November in your best Halloween fancy dress.

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

Stewards Enquiry?

In 2010 I led two teams of Avon Valley Runners up to the Duke of Beaufort's 1,500 acre estate for the Badminton Horseless Trials and was pleased to bring home the 5-mile team award with Michael Towler winning the race. A year later and Warren Wade took two teams, with Dan Woolford winning the 5-miles, the Men's team won the 9-miles and would have collected a fine trophy too had the organisers remembered to have brought it with them. So onto this year and I was taking four teams up to South Gloucestershire, including Wozza, just what could we achieve together?

Back in were the horsey names, as the AVR Stallions & AVR Fillies lined up for the 5-miles and the AVR Thoroughbreds & AVR Mares the 9-miler; albeit behind a pack of baying hounds that had taken over the entire front row of the start line in readiness for the Cani-X event that was also taking place. The first mile therefore found us weaving around dog leads as we tried to get onto the racing line. Once Carl "Crazy Horse" Davies, Richard "Hi-Ho Silver" Morgetroyd and Pete "Pegasus" Veleski had managed to break through the canine ranks they were away.

Just before two miles the first of the jumps was encountered and easily cleared. Another XC mile and the first real jump – downwards, a real jar on the knees from which we had about half a mile to run off before tackling a flight of giant steps, for which the race organisers had thoughtfully placed stray bales to aid the ascent. A few more logs to clear and then the water jump against the magnificent backdrop of Badminton House – but where had the water gone? Splashing through the muddy puddle I knew that I had about half a mile to go before having to do it all again. It was around this time that "Crazy Horse" had crossed the 5-mile finish line in 3rd place overall with "Hi-Ho Silver" thirty seconds behind in fourth. With Kev "Kentucky Derby" Bush in 35th place, Dave "Desert Orchid" Bashaw in 40th and Richard "Red Rum" Newman in 44th we just missed out on the Men's team prize. The Fillies however were determined to go one better and Sarah Jewers led the Ladies home in 51st place overall, with Mel Nicholls in 53rd, Liz Gard 60th, Fiona Newman 201st and Sarah Bailey answering the long standing question about how does a Dalek climb the stairs.



Back to the 9-miler and the second lap had thinned out the field and I was pleased to see that Tim "Lamrei" Lowrie and Warren "Wooden horse of Troy" Wade were still within sight, with a single Bristol & West AC runner between them and me. At six miles I caught the bearded B&W runner and as I passed he turned to me and 'sportingly' said "*don't worry about me I am doing the 13-miler*". If I hadn't have been focused on chasing my two club mates I may have eased back, but a good job that I didn't, as at 7-miles 'Beardy' reappeared alongside me with a B&W club mate and then started to go past. I had already counted a few B&W runners ahead of me on the first lap so I couldn't risk letting them get ahead. As we moved into the final mile our pace had increased as we sensed that this was the battle that would determine the team race. As we crossed the muddy puddle of the water jump and headed into the finishing straight I am pleased to say that I managed to split the pair with 'Beardy' proving to be doing the 9-miler too, despite his sporting comment to the contrary and I had 12-seconds on him as fourth scorer for AVR – the team prize was ours! Andy "Aldiniti" Gibbs came in for 18th place to bring home the AVR Thoroughbreds.



Oblivious to my battle to be the all important fourth scorer, "Pegasus" had managed to take overall victory in the race recording 59:01, over a minute ahead of another pair of B&W runners. The AVR Mares were then led home by 59th placed Kay "Kalypso" Middleton, followed by Tina "Topsy Trotter" Vivian, Natasha "Najinski" Drane, "Lady" Lisa Berrington and Denise "Wonky Donkey" Ellis but just missed out on the awards to Grittleton AC.

We then waited with great expectations for the prize giving and were somewhat surprised when the winner of the 5-mile race was declared, as he had been running alongside me in the latter stages of my first lap and so must have been a good couple of minutes behind “Crazy Horse”. Then the Ladies team prize winners was called – “AVR Fillies”, not certain if he was a filly or not and in the absence of the girls, Carl “Crazy Horse” Davies decided to claim the prize!

There was then a pause in proceedings that seemed to last an eternity before the presentation resumed with the 9-mile event and it was a massive relief when I got my hands on the cup for the Men’s team race. Then the presentation descended into something of a farce with trophies being awarded seemingly at random with race winner Pete “Pegasus” Veleski being overlooked as runners from further down the field were being declared as winners, some in categories that I am certain never appeared on the entry form. Another lengthy pause was endured with now a very sparse crowd in attendance – actually I think that it was only the AVR contingent that remained.



Time for a steward’s enquiry and the AVR delegation approached the organisers to make representation, which resulted in Pete getting his well deserved trophy and also Carl came back clutching an award – the reason, *“well the two blokes in front of me were being pulled along by dogs, so I must have won the 5-miler”!*

Despite the rather flaky organisation, did I mention the passive marshalling and the fact that they ran out of cups at the finishing line and requested that runners retrieve them from the litter bins if they wanted a drink? It remains one of the best off-road courses that I have run on and I hope to be back next year – Does anyone want to join me?

Darren “Dobbin” Wrintmore





Wiltshire Athletic Association present:
The Wiltshire Road Relays

Sponsored by DB Max & Stampede Sports



Sunday 10th November 2013

A Road Relay around the famous
Castle Combe Motor Racing Circuit

Senior / Vets / Super-Vet Men: 3-legs of 2 laps
 Senior / Vets / Super-Vet Ladies: 3-legs of 2 laps
 Junior (U17) Boys / Girls: 3-legs of 1 lap

1 lap = 2,937m (~3K)

Held under ARC Rules

Advance Entry Fees: £18.00 per team (£10.00 Junior teams)
 £25.00 on the day

Awards to:
 Winning Teams & Fastest individuals



More race details at WWW.WILTSHIRE-ATHLETICS.ORG.UK

Two Champs

Over two hundred and fifty runners lined up in less than ideal conditions for the Salisbury Half Marathon organised by Total Buzz Events. The 13.1 mile course leads out around the foot of Old Sarum hill fort before following an undulating route out through the Woodford Valley to Great Durnford before following the River Avon back to the finish outside of Salisbury Fire station. This year's race was also hosting the county championships for the distance as well as providing the finale of the Wiltshire Road Race League sponsored by Newsquest International, so at the sharp end a number of the county's top athletes were in the field.



Leading from the start was our very own Michael Towler who had an untroubled run despite the conditions to claim victory and the county gold medal in a winning time of 1:15:45 ahead of James Gillanders of London Frontrunners and Eliot Haines of Salisbury A&RC who took the county silver.

Making it a double championship victory for Avon Valley Runners, Ruth Barnes added to her county 10K title by winning in 1:24:21 ahead of Jo Meek from Tavistock AC. Our defending county Half Marathon champion, Fiona Price had to settle for a silver medal this year and 2011 county Half Marathon champion, Diane Hier took the bronze this time around.



With Pete Veleski, Richard Morgetroyd, Tim Lowrie and Andy Lawrence all featuring in the top thirty and along with good runs from Juliet Coulson & Suzann Large ensured that it was Avon Valley Runners who once again took maximum points to lift the First Division title for the second successive year ahead of Chippenham Harriers and our 'B' team came good for third place overall.



Finishing in fifth place Stuart Henderson of Corsham Running Club leap frogged over Joby Hobbs and Thomas Coney (*having opted to run the Amsterdam and Abingdon Marathons respectively*) to become the League's top individual point's scorer. Jill Westwood also had headed out to the Amsterdam Marathon but had already secured her place at the top of the Ladies rankings after the Malmesbury Half Marathon and left Tina Towler and Rosemary Barber to finish second and third respectively. All of the top-10 highest scorers were recognised by Wiltshire Athletic Association along with the highest scorers in the V40, V50 & V60 age categories.

The 2014 season of the Wiltshire Road Race League which will once again be sponsored by Newsquest International will kick off on February 9th with the Longleat 10K.

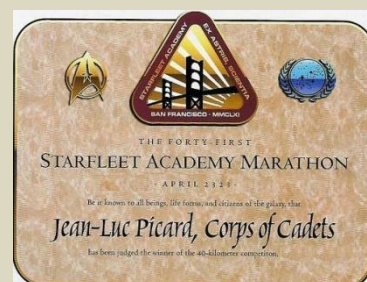
Darren Wrintmore – Chairman, Wiltshire Athletics Association

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

Another Swift 10

Following the success of the “Swift Ten” quiz that I put together for the Valley News in February 2010, I have wasted no time in responding to the calls for putting together another to stretch the grey matter.

1. Who was the first athlete to run a four minute mile?
2. If you were unfortunate enough to have Hoffar's Syndrome, what would be hurting when you ran?
3. What is the fastest marathon time run by an English athlete?
4. What was unusual about the Gold Medal winner in the Women’s 100 metres at the 1932 Olympic Games held in Los Angeles?
5. How many gold medals were won by Avon Valley Runners at this year’s Wiltshire Track & Field championships?
6. During the 2013 Wiltshire Road Race League, at which event did Avon Valley Runners achieve their highest score?
7. One for the Trekkies amongst you....Jean Luc-Picard won the Starfleet Academy Marathon in 2323, but on which planet did it take place?
8. Which Avon Valley Runners have been outright Stage winners at the Cotswold Way Relay?
9. In which year was the “Boxing Day Run” now known as the “Stan Farr 5K” first run?
10. What distance is to be run by Senior Ladies and U20 Men at the Wiltshire XC Championships on 8th December?



All Those Years Ago

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

<p>2008: November was a month for the AVR ladies teams, when first the trio of Liz Ringham, Rachel Bown and Kathy Kinsey claimed the 1st team prize at Cheddar Half Marathon then Jo Mumford, Tina Giles and Ali Atkinson were the 3rd ladies team at Wimborne 10.</p> <p>Liz was 2nd female overall in her race and Ali Atkinson claimed a PB for the 10 mile distance.</p>	<p>2003: America was calling for Liz Harding on 2nd November as she took part in the New York Marathon. Just before replenishing her energy stores with pancakes and maple syrup, Liz ran the 26.2 mile race in 4:01:38.</p> <p>Susie Phillips claimed 2nd FV50 at three separate races in Lanzarote. Firstly the 10K followed by the 13K Ridge Run and finishing off with the Beach 5K.</p>
<p>1998: Kevin Sparey claimed the male vet prize at Iminster 10K on Sunday 1st November whilst club mates Susie Phillips and Judy Farr were awarded 1st and 2nd FV45 prizes respectively.</p> <p>Kevin’s time was 37:26; Susie ran 50:37 and Judy 51:25.</p>	<p>1988: Darren Wrintmore left his horse and heavy armour at home to campaign the Silver Knight 5K and 10K races. Sunday 20th November saw him battle the 5K distance in 17:22 whilst on Sunday 27th he fought and pillaged his way round the 10K course in a time of 35:09 to claim 12th place overall.</p>



JAVR News # 5



NEW JUNIOR RACES IN WILTSHIRE

With the Junior Avon Valley Championship League proving a fantastic success and growing in popularity, junior runners in Wiltshire are to be provided with another fantastic new competitive running opportunity from February next year. **The Junior Race League** (The League) sponsored by Wiltshire and Swindon Activity & Sports Partnership (WASP) has been launched by Wiltshire Athletics Association for junior runners from clubs in Wiltshire. Points will be scored by teams according to the finishing positions of the first five male athletes and first five female athletes belonging to the same Wiltshire affiliated club, with the points being determined by the overall position of the runners against those of other Wiltshire based club athletes. The league will provide an exciting new team event, with juniors running to score points for their club, as well as aiming to score individual points. An award shall be made to the club with the highest scoring team in the First Division of The League. An award shall also be made to the highest scoring Boys and Girls within The League in the U13, U15 & U17 age categories. The fixtures have been confirmed for the first season of the new league and are as follows:

- The Longleat 2M** – Longleat, Warminster – 9th February
- Swindon Parkrun** – Swindon – 15th March
- St Georges Day 10km** – Corsham – 20th April
- The Trowbridge 5km** – Trowbridge – 4th May
- Frome 5km** – Frome – 20th July
- The DB Max 4** – Castle Combe – 10th August

For more information visit: www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk

WINTER WARNING!

As the clocks change and the evenings get darker, winter draws ever nearer. This means it's going to be colder! Please make sure that you wear tracksuit bottoms and a warm top over your running gear to training to warm-up in.

We don't want any pulled muscles!



JAVR CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE 2013

The results are in for race number 4 of the league and we are now over half way through the first season with three races to go. As always the JAVR results can be found in the results section below.

Andrew Tipple has extended his lead to five points at the top of the boy's league setting a new PB in race 4 of 10:50. An amazing 46 junior boys have now participated in the league. Only 3 points separate 2nd-5th place so all is set up for an exciting second half to the league. In the girl's league 33 juniors have now participated and only 7 points separate the first 5 runners, so just as with the boy's league it is all still to run for. Polly Allan leads with Ellie Isaacs in second spot.

A special mention must go to **Ellie Isaacs, Jorja Warner, Andrew Tipple, Kai McGarry, Robert Warner, Jack Wosika, James Pickford, Harry Cade, and Scott Pickford** – who have completed all four league races.

Details of the league can be found in the junior section of the Avon Valley Runners website.

RESULTS - Send your latest results to: my_avr@yahoo.com for inclusion in JAVR News

Southwick Country Parkrun (14th September 2013)

Robert Warner – 25.40

Southwick Country Parkrun (5th October 2013)

Robert Warner – 26.24

Southwick Country Parkrun (21st September 2013)

Robert Warner – 25.45

Southwick Country Parkrun (12th October 2013)

Cameron Price – 23:41

JAVR Monthly 2km (28th Sept 2013)

Robert Warner – 8.30 (B12)

Ellie Isaacs – 10.16 (G13)

Jamie Lee Curtis – 16.32 (G12)

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVERY SATURDAY: Southwick Country Park Run 5km, Southwick (9.00am)
 10th November: Wiltshire Road Race Relays, Castle Combe Race Circuit
 30th November: Monthly 2km run, Southwick Country Park, Southwick (10.00am)
 26th December: The Stan Farr Boxing Day 5km, Trowbridge (11.30am)
 9th February: The Longleat 2M, Longleat, Warminster (10.05am)