



# Valley News

The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners



#155 January 2014

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## A note from the editor.

Having read almost every edition of the Valley News since I became aware of its existence, I never imagined I would one day occupy the post of editor – that actually means the volunteer/mug who badgers you lot into writing articles and then puts together the few that have been submitted. Now that I occupy that prestigious position, I shall expect all the same respect that you've shown to Richard in the past – at least superficially anyway.

I have no aspirations to be as successful as Richard was, nor to produce as fine a publication; but I will do my best to make it interesting. One way to achieve that is to liven it up with your experiences – no matter how mundane they might seem to you, so please contribute from time to time.

I must express my thanks to Richard for carrying the baton thus far and for giving me a standard to aim at. Richard deserves our thanks for his tireless efforts in producing the News month after month and it stands him in good stead with his recent job application for editor of *Runners World*. He'll get a good reference from me if ever they ask I've kicked off the first News of 2014 with a contribution from me after being persuaded to do so by our beloved Hoddy – so moved was he, by my confession of OCD.

*Ken Marshal*

## Just in case you didn't recognise us.

Richard's the one who looks like the real athlete. I'm the one who looks like the little fat man on a new year's resolution!



## Did you know?

In March 2013 The Bath Half Marathon registered its very first world record. Welshman Martin Rees finished the race in 1:11:32; A very good time indeed, but by no means world shattering..... until you realise that the week before the race Martin had celebrated his sixtieth birthday. Martin started serious running in his mid-forties, so all you hardened veterans out there, still in your forties or fifties; there might be life in the old dog yet!

### ***A Touch of OCD***

Apparently it's something that grips many runners. I'll leave you to decide if the following brief account falls into that category.

Back in August I decided to emulate the legendary British distance runner Ron Hill and run at least one mile every day – come what may. He's done it for the last fifty years; I was on day 98, looking forward to reaching my first 100 when the drama started.

The day before, my wife Heather had gone into the Bath Clinic to have major back surgery after an unscheduled dismount from her horse. I decided to stay in her room after the operation and sit by her bedside. If you've ever tried to spend a night sat upright in a chair, it's torture; I kept nodding off and waking myself up with violent head jerks – sometimes quite painful. During one of these waking moments I started to feel desperately nauseous and close to passing out. My wife called the night staff and they managed to get me onto a bed in the next room where the symptoms passed as quickly as they had started and I slept like a bear for the rest of the night. (If you think this is getting a bit Kevin Turvey, please stay with me, it's all relevant.)

In the morning they insisted on wiring me up to their ECG machine and the resulting read out was enough for them to ambulance me on a stretcher to the RUH with a suspected heart attack. My daughter left her teaching post in Chippenham to rush to my bedside. My son caught the next flight out of Amsterdam to get home. My poor wife felt absolutely stranded, trying to cope with her pain as well as being worried sick about me.

Given that I felt absolutely fine I was kind of hoping it would be enough to warrant a payout from my insurance company, while still allowing me the relatively active lifestyle I've been used to; although I began to imagine it would have an inevitable effect on my training for next year's Bath half; and more immediately - how would I get my mile done with all those wires hanging off me!

To cut a painfully long story short, by late afternoon they'd diagnosed Carotid Sinus Hypersensitivity which basically means that if there's any excessive pressure on the carotid bits around my neck, the brain starts to grab as much blood as it can, diverting it away from less important areas like the digestive system; hence the nausea and sweating. It was all a result of those head lollops in the early hours – you see; it **was** relevant!

By late evening I'd got back to my wife's bedside; apologised profusely to family and friends for NOT having had a heart attack and was eventually persuaded by everyone including my wife, to go home and get a good night's sleep.

Once in the car, this puerile obsession for achieving that meaningless target kicked in and I realised I could get home by 11:45, giving me enough time to throw on some gear, run up to Holt post office and back and nobody would be any the wiser.

That was when the irony hit me. What idiot goes out running at nearly midnight, after spending all day wired up to a cardiac monitor with a suspected heart condition? I really didn't care. My target was intact!

Please let me know if you've had any similarly surreal or OCD moments – even a brief paragraph might help others out there understand that they're not alone!

***Ken.***

#### ***Benefits of a mile-a-day.***

Ron Hill has run a mile-a-day since the mid 1960s. This was the challenge I needed to make me do more – a mile a day, no matter how slowly. In the past there were times when I'd go for more than a week without running at all. Now a “nothing” week represents at least seven miles and given that the hardest part is getting my backside off the sofa, that “mile” often ends up being two or three; so a “nothing” week may bring up to fifteen or twenty miles that I wouldn't have done otherwise. You can see why it's beneficial.



Ron Hill

## **A note from our coach *current* head coach Andy Hoddinot**

### **Hello AVR Coaches and Leaders, Just a quick update of what's been happening with AVR coaches.....**



As some of you may know I took over the role of Head Coach a year or so ago when Alan retired. Despite 'officially' retiring Alan has remained a coach at AVR and still turns up regularly to help out, offer advice and stay in touch with the sport he loves. I speak to Alan regularly and always value his opinion and he's now moving on to help Richard Ayling on Wednesday nights at the Bath track with the juniors, using his expertise in coaching track athletes.

Due to personal circumstances this year I have had to take a step back from coaching and I would very much like to thank Alan, Mike Pace and Richard Newman for taking over the Tuesday sessions from me.

Back in the Summer Steve Williams joined the team. Initially Steve started a Thursday interval session and he has now taken over the Tuesday speed session with Mike Pace. We now have more members taking part in structured training each week than ever before. Steve has produced training plans for a few of our members and the benefits are really starting to show in their results.

Rich Southgate continues his great work on Wednesday nights, building confidence in our newer and steadier paced members enabling them to run faster and further.

Rich Ayling has been coaching the juniors at Bath track on Wednesday evenings. We now have 20 or more juniors training each week. Anyone thinking of coaching juniors in any sport could learn a lot from Rich whose enthusiasm and management of the session is second to none.

AVR applied to WaSP (Wiltshire and Swindon Sport Partnership) for coach bursaries and as result we currently have Steve Williams, Carl Davies and Ian Isaacs studying to become Level 2 coaches with Rich Southgate and Mike Pace lined up to start courses next year.

I am looking to reduce my involvement in AVR – I currently have 3 posts! As a result I have decided to step down as head coach. I will still be around to take sessions, to help out with beginners or to give advice but I think the role needs to be developed further.

Our new head coach is Rich Ayling. I have known Rich for many years from the time he started at Christie Miller Gym; and many of you may know him from when he started running with AVR at the tender age of 13!

.....*Cont.*

Rich brings a wealth of knowledge not only from a varied sporting background, but also of regulation, funding and the way local authority works. These are important factors for coach education, developing safe practices and development of club facilities. Rather than giving Rich the roles and responsibilities of the position, I look forward to working with him developing and defining the role to benefit the whole club - juniors and seniors.

Rather than trying to remember all of Rich's qualifications, skills and athletic background I asked him to write a brief résumé which I attach below.

*I'm sure I speak for us all in welcoming Rich as head coach.*



## Curriculum Vitae – Rich Ayling

### Running history with AVR:

I started running with Avon Valley Runners when I was approximately 13 years old, and after football practice I would go running on a Thursday evening with the club! I have competed in junior races all the way through to the marathon distance which I completed in Amsterdam in 2008. Earlier this year I decided to hang up my football boots and prioritise my running training and I'm hoping to take part in various races during 2014. I have also started attending weekly swimming coaching sessions with a view to attempting sprint triathlons during 2014, so if any of you would be kind enough to stop me from sinking in such events it would be greatly appreciated! I was really proud earlier this year to take on the role as lead coach for the junior Avon Valley Runners and have been delighted with the progress they have made since the summer.

### Brief Professional History:

I have been working professionally full time within the fitness, sports coaching and sports development sectors since I was 19. I initially worked as a gym instructor for Christie Miller Sports Centre after qualifying as a fitness instructor through Premier Training. I continued working there full time for three years and delivered circuit training, personal training and also worked on the GP referral programme. I was promoted to the role of fitness manager which I occupied for 2 years and focused on increasing our community and school links by developing a sports development programme that local schools participated in. I left Christie Miller to join Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (WASP). Initially I was appointed as a health and well-being community coach and my job mainly consisted of sports coaching within a variety of settings. During my five years with WASP I have been promoted to a Sports co-ordinator and now to a Sports Consultant. As well as coaching I have tutored on national sports programmes and have been the strategic lead for volunteering and mass participation initiatives.

### Qualifications:

- Sports Coach UK Qualified Tutor (Specialising in the Fundamentals of movement)
- Level 3 Advanced Fitness Instructor
- GP Referral Consultant
- Level 3 Instructor in Speed, Agility & Quickness
- Level 2 Athletics Coach (Specialising in endurance training)
- Level 2 Football Coach

## Member's Profile

A few years ago I remember seeing the addition of a new name to our race results and thinking *he might be young and slim but he's got a way to go yet!* Since that time he's come on in leaps and bounds, achieving times some of us can only dream of and seems to be getting faster every race. He's also thrown himself into the AVR committee and is already proving to be a very valuable and enthusiastic addition to the team



**Name:** Tim Lowrie    **Age:** 36

**Domestics:** I Live in Trowbridge with my partner Claire my dog Beth and my cat Rufus.

**Work:** I am the Carpet Department manager at H J Knee Ltd Trowbridge.

**Other interests:** When time allows, my other interests are playing the guitar, cycling and D.I.Y.

**Favourite Food:** Hot and Spicy Chinese or a Hot Curry.

**Favourite book:** *Feet In The Clouds* by Richard Askwith. It's all about Fell Running.

**Philosophy** I have no particular Philosophy on life other than to make the most of the good times deal with the bad and move on.

**AVR Role:** Membership secretary, committee member. Over The Hills Race Director/Organiser.

### Tell us a bit more about your running:

I got into running when I was at the gym on the treadmill which reminded me how much I enjoyed running at school. After a few years of treadmill running and gym work I decided to take the next step and join a running club. I used to see AVR training in the park and had already attended their beginners' session at Clarendon in 2010. I finally joined in December 2010 and ran my first 10k race at Longleat in 2011.

### I notice you have a personal trainer. How has that helped you?

I train five times a week and my training regime is set by my coach Steve Williams. Meeting Steve this year has been the best thing to happen for my running. He has running in his blood and is extremely knowledgeable and passionate about the sport. I find training to a specific plan very beneficial so whatever Steve plans for me I follow it to the letter. All my PBs have come since Steve has been coaching me.

### Amy words of advice:

To any one starting out with running I would say what ever your reasons for running just enjoy it first and always remember why you started running. Join a running club as this will be your best source of information and you will make lots of great friends. To avoid injury start off slow or run/walk and progress from there. From experience if you enjoy competing and your club has a coach then use their experience.

**PBs:** This year has been a great year for PBs but I will improve on all of these next year.

5k	18:30	Melksham	2013
5mile	29:54	Foxtrot 5	2013
10k	37:32	Bromham	2013
10mile	1:05:51	Brecon	2013
Half Marathon	1:25:01	Bristol	2013
Marathon	3:40	London	2012

## *XC Champions 2013*

Avon Valley Runners produced a fantastic double Team victory at the Wiltshire XC Championships held at Bath University on 8<sup>th</sup> December. The Ladies team of Jackie Rockliffe, Fiona Price, Jill Westwood and Diane Hier acquitted themselves well to secure the county Team Title for the fourth time in five years, ahead of Chippenham Harriers and Team Bath. In 60<sup>th</sup> place Rosemary Barber claimed a county gold medal in the F55 age category.



The Men's race saw Michael Towler heading the Wiltshire athlete's home defend his county XC title and led the team of Chris Roxburgh, Joby Hobbs, Tim Lowrie, Thomas Coney & Pete Veleski to the clubs first Team title since 2010 ahead of Chippenham Harriers and Swindon Harriers. In 77<sup>th</sup> place Stuart Arguile was the 1<sup>st</sup> MV60 over the line and took a county age group gold medal.



Alongside the Wiltshire XC Championships were the championships of Somerset and Avon, unfortunately with Team Bath being able to call upon their wider pool of athletes and with very strong teams from Bristol & West AC and Westbury Harriers pushed our Ladies team out of contention for Tri-county honours. Our Men however stood up well and secured a Tri-county bronze medal behind Bristol & West AC and Westbury Harriers (*we were just 10-points off of silver*) and ahead of Team Bath and Wells City Harriers.

Avon Valley "Tri-County" Results...

- 21<sup>st</sup> Jackie Rockliffe
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Fiona Price
- 27<sup>th</sup> Jill Westwood
- 31<sup>st</sup> Diane Hier
- 32<sup>nd</sup> Jennifer Ford
- 57<sup>th</sup> Adele Cooper
- 60<sup>th</sup> Rosemary Barber

- 5<sup>th</sup> Michael Towler
- 26<sup>th</sup> Chris Roxburgh
- 36<sup>th</sup> Joby Hobbs
- 45<sup>th</sup> Tim Lowrie
- 46<sup>th</sup> Thomas Coney
- 56<sup>th</sup> Peter Veleski
- 63<sup>rd</sup> Richard Morgetroyd
- 67<sup>th</sup> Warren Wade
- 77<sup>th</sup> Stuart Arguile
- 84<sup>th</sup> Frank Lamerton
- 98<sup>th</sup> Bernard Hobbs
- 99<sup>th</sup> Richard Newman



***Darren Wrintmore – Vice-President***

## Wiltshire Road Race League Preview 2014

February sees the start of the 2014 Wiltshire Road Race League (WRRL) sponsored by Newsquest International. Following their successful defence of the League title with a maximum 200-points score line, Avon Valley Runners will set out as favourites to achieve a third successive title with Chippenham Harriers threatening to upset the party and also the newly promoted Devizes Running Club and Frome Running Club teams both having serious intent on marking their mark in the top flight.

Just as interesting as the fight for First Division title honours will be the scrap to avoid relegation as four teams will be in the frame for losing status in 2014. The Second Division could see Calne Running Club bid for promotion with county 10K champion Simon Nott leading the charge and also City of Salisbury A&RC will no doubt be attempting a return to the top flight.

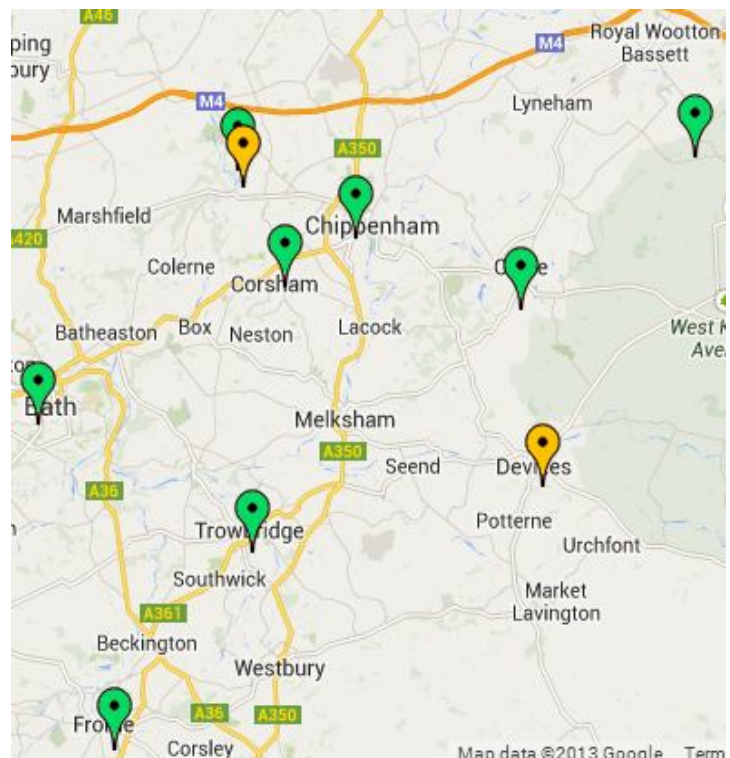
The new season will also see the introduction of individual awards for athletes competing in the WRRL, these awards will be graded with Bronze = 600-799, Silver = 800-899 and Gold = 900+ with the best ten performances out of the available twelve races to count.

The first race in the 2014 campaign will be the Longleat 10K on Sunday February 9<sup>th</sup>, followed by the inaugural running of the Castle Combe Half Marathon in March.

The fixture list for 2014 is as follows:

- #1 Longleat 10K - Warminster - Sunday 9th February
- #2 Castle Combe Half - Castle Combe - Sunday 9th March
- #3 St Georges 10K - Corsham - Sunday 27th April
- #4 Trowbridge 5K - Trowbridge - Sunday 4th May
- #5 Bath Hilly 10 - Bath - June
- #6 Broad Town 5 - Broad Town - Saturday 21st June
- #7 Frome 10K - Frome, Somerset - Sunday 20th July
- #8 The DB Max 10K \* - Castle Combe - August
- #9 Malmesbury 10K - Malmesbury - Saturday 30th August
- #10 Chippenham Half - Chippenham - Sunday 7th September
- #11 Devizes Half \* - Devizes - Sunday 19th October
- #12 Clock Change 10K - Calne - Sunday 26th October

*\* The TBAS 10K & Devizes Half Marathon will host the county championship road races over the distance in 2014 and so individual county medals will be on offer as well as League points.*



Full details of the Wiltshire Road Race League can be found at [www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk](http://www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk)

**Thomas Coney**  
*Wiltshire Road Running Secretary*



## JAVR News

No. 7



**2014 is GO!**

**What a fantastic year 2013 was for JAVR! Everyone at JAVR HQ is delighted with how the junior section of Avon Valley Runners has developed this year...**

- **Weekly training secured at University of Bath Athletics Track**
- **Structured coaching provided by our very own Rich Ayling**
- **Membership numbers continue to rise!**
- **Funding support including reduced training fees for juniors**
- **Nomination for the 'Most Innovative Club of the Year' at the Wiltshire and Swindon Sports Awards**
- **JAVR Championship League**
- **Five teams at the Wiltshire Road Relays**
- **Represented at the Avon Valley Relay**
- **Represented at the BernCol Relay**
- **Represented in three age categories at the Wiltshire Cross Country Championships**
- **The first edition of JAVR News... and 7 editions later!**
- **Park Runner of the Week – Holly Newman**

**And none of the above could have been achieved without the dedication and enthusiasm of every Junior Avon Valley member through training and racing. So a big thank you to the juniors and here's to another great year in 2014... more of the same? Yes please!**

### **REMINDER - NEW FOR 2014**

**The Junior Race League**, launched by Wiltshire Athletics Association for junior runners from clubs in Wiltshire, gets under way on the **9<sup>th</sup> February**. 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 first race is the Longleat 2m. For more information visit: [www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk](http://www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk)**



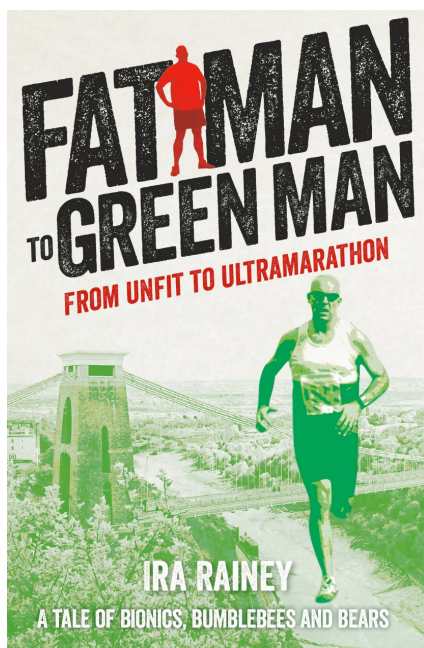
## *The Melksham 10 Mile*

If you are looking to start the New Year with a challenge of your fitness then the Wiltshire 10-mile run takes place on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February. The event which starts from King George V Playing Fields in Melksham takes runners on a course through the heart of rural Wiltshire and around the historic village of Lacock before finishing back alongside the River Avon in Melksham town park. The run makes ideal preparation for those aiming to compete in the Bath Half Marathon or the London Marathon later in the Spring, though for many completing a 10-mile run is a goal in itself which will be rewarded with a race memento on crossing the finishing line and also saves on the mad end of year rush to bag a 10-mile time for the club championships!

At the sharp end the certified accurate course has a record time of 52-minutes 14-seconds which was set at last year's event by Simon Plummer of City of Salisbury A&RC with Holly Rush of Team Bath holding the current Ladies course record time of 60:14. Last year's race also saw victory by Team Bath in the team race of four Men and Avon Valley Runners with three Ladies.

Once again the event is sponsored by The Wiltshire Times and full details of the event, including online entry can be found at [www.stampedesports.co.uk](http://www.stampedesports.co.uk)





### ***From unfit slacker to ultramarathon runner***

*Fat Man to Green Man* by Bristol author Ira Rainey tells the story of how an overweight forty-something trained for and completed the Green Man ultramarathon and the Bath Half Marathon over the same weekend – a total of 60 miles.

An honest and light-hearted chronicle, *Fat Man to Green Man* is the tale of Ira's journey from fat to fit, and everything that came between the two. It is a story of fields and friendships; mud and maps; but more importantly learning how to push yourself to achieve what you would never believe you could – and how to deal with the consequences.

*Fat Man to Green Man* is published by Tangent Books, Bristol on January 27, 2014 (£9.99, ISBN: 978-1-910089-01-9)