



Valley News

The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners

#164 October 2014

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Half Marathon season seems to have arrived in the last month or so and gives many of us the opportunity to attempt a decently long distance while not having the weary training regime that a Marathon demands. They seem to be very popular, some of them attracting many thousands of participants and a few of them attracting some very fine professional athletes. We've covered two of them this month and maybe some of you who haven't ventured beyond a 10k might decide to give it a go. While the race itself might be gruelling, crossing that finish line for the first time is immensely rewarding. Steve's training tip might help if you ever decide to have a go.

Our profile this month looks at one of AVR's most prominent members and someone who has contributed a huge amount of time and effort to the club over his years in office. Once again Joby has highlighted some recent impressive performances amongst our juniors - always good to see enthusiasm within our future potential athletes.

Did you know?

The Marathon des Sables is a gruelling 156 mile race across the Saharan sand and rocky terrain. It takes place over six days and is equivalent to running six consecutive marathons in appalling conditions. Famously, the British Olympian rower James Cracknell competed in 2010, finishing 12th, the highest position ever achieved by a Brit. His training regime and his achievement were broadcast on TV and can be watched on you-tube if you're interested. Earlier this year Danny Kendall snatched away Cracknell's record, finishing 5th. Perhaps the most notable performance in the event was achieved by a Moroccan, Lahcen Ahansal who was born into a nomadic tribe of the Ait Atta in southern Morocco. He didn't take up running until he was nearly twenty years old but his physical capabilities were soon recognised and developed by the Royal Moroccan Athletics Federation. Lahcen first took part in the race in 1991 but it seems he competed unofficially and allowed the second place runner to cross the line before him to avoid the embarrassment of winning. The next few years saw good performances but no wins, until 1997. He finished second in 1998 but then took the victory for the next nine consecutive years. Finally defeated in 2008, the event was won by his younger brother Mohamad who went on to win the event six times.

Half Time



Seventy two Avon Valley Runners made the trip to Bristol for the Half Marathon and some pretty impressive times were cut, with our Men taking second place in the team race courtesy of Michael Towler, Rich Ayling, Chris Roxburgh and Mike Rose. Fiona Price and Diane Hier achieved podium positions in their respective age categories. Personal Bests were a-plenty, but how do they stack up against AVR performances past.....

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| 1. Maureen Laney* 1:19:17 – Great North Run 1995 | 1. Tom Fisher 1:12:53 – Bath 2011 |
| 2. Ruth Barnes 1:19:44 - Bristol 2013 | 2. Michael Towler 1:13:45 – Bristol 2014 |
| 3. Mandy Spedding 1:25:22 – Sturminster 1999 | 3. Martin Connor 1:14:43 – Devizes 1990 |
| 4. Jackie Rockliffe 1:25:50 – Bath 1996 | 4. Keith Elsey 1:15:25 – Fleet 1990 |
| 5. Laura MacGregor 1:26:45 – Oxford 2013 | 5. Tim Northwood 1:15:51 – Ranelagh 1986 |
| 6. Liz Ringham 1:26:51 – Bath 2008 | 6. Andy Robertson 1:15:51 – Bath 1996 |
| 7. Fiona Price 1:26:58 – Bath 2014 | 7. Rich Ayling 1:15:53 – Bristol 2014 |
| 8. Rachel Bown 1:27:20 – Bath 2004 | 8. Kevin Sparey 1:16:10 – Cheddar 2003 |
| 9. Diane Hier 1:27:51 – Bath 2013 | 9. Terry Chappell 1:16:36 – Devizes 1989 |
| 10. Linda Brown 1:28:08 – Bath 1994 | 10. Chris Roxburgh 1:16:45 – Bristol 2014 |

*Maureen was first lady at the Bristol Half back in 1995.

AVR boasts the current Wiltshire Half Marathon champions in Michael Towler and Ruth Barnes who both took victory at the 2013 Salisbury Half Marathon. This year's county Half Marathon championship takes place at Devizes on Sunday October 19th in an event that also hosts the penultimate race in the 2014 Wiltshire Road Race League.

Darren Wrintmore

Member's Profile

I remember back in 2006 after taking part in the Christchurch May Fayre 3 mile race, the V40 winner - who finished way ahead of me - spoke to me after the race and suggested I join Avon Valley Runners. So, thanks Darren, you're the reason I suffer sleepless nights getting later and later with the Valley News. I must say I rely heavily on Darren firstly for material - at times he's prolific - and also for literary integrity. He can pick up the merest split infinitive or punctuation mistake and he's forever correcting my factual inaccuracies. For that I'm immensely grateful and I'm happy to tell him so. Darren seems to have been a key member of the club since time immemorial and deservedly has been awarded life membership of the club.



Name: Darren Wrintmore

Age: 48

Where do you live: Shaw near Melksham

Where do you work: I have a grand job title of "Global Transition Manager" with Fujitsu and am based in Baker Street, London but for all intents and purposes I am a Project Manager.

What's your role in AVR: Vice-President, though previously I have been Honorary Secretary, Club Captain and Editor of the Valley News.

What are your interests - apart from running: Apparently I do not have interest's just obsessions, some lasting longer than others. After taking the opportunity to marshal the cycle road races at London 2012, I decided to take up cycling and have a few Sportives now under my belt and cycle several times a week; my other major obsession is Geo-caching (see Valley News #134).

Favourite food: Pork pie with potato salad and a crusty roll is a good lunchtime treat, though sometimes I quite like a "Bombay Badboy" pot noodle.

Favourite book: Lord of the Rings, which I was introduced to at the age of eleven and then read the trilogy every year until the films were released. I am refusing to allow my two children to watch the films until they have read Tolkien's literary masterpiece.

Favourite book about sport: I must confess to being pretty disappointed with sports books, especially biographies.
(See "Ever had a coach" below...ed)

Personal background: I have been married to Andrea for the last 21-years, who incidentally I met on an AVR night out in Bath back in 1989. We have two children Kira (14-years) and Jaret (12-years).

Do you have a philosophy on life: Just do it!

Tell us how you got into running: I was a reasonable middle distance runner at secondary school but always managed to finish second, with a different winner each time apart from when I took part in a Wiltshire & Dorset championships which I won in 1980. I then took running back up again as a teenager after reading that it could help clear acne and with a healthier complexion I started to take on local races before 'retiring' in 1989. I then took running back up again in the late-90's when Andrea suggested that we should get fit in readiness for starting a family, within a few weeks I was re-hooked and joined up with Cambridge Harriers in South East London before re-joining Avon Valley Runners when we moved back to Wiltshire in 1999.



Presenting AVR Ladies with the Wiltshire XC Championship trophy



What are your PBs:

5k:	16:42	- Midsomer Norton in 1988 (an AVR club record at the time)
10k:	34:31	- Devizes in 1988
10Mile:	60:16	- Christian Malford in 1988
Half:	81:15	- Salisbury in 1985
Marathon:	3:03:11	- Dublin in 1999

What tips would you give someone starting out: Set a goal with a measurable outcome and establish a schedule with incremental milestones. Above all enjoy it, as you will be no doubt be dedicating a lot of time to reaching that goal.

Ever had a Coach? Tell us about how it benefited you: Although I have never been coached in the formal Athlete/Coach relationship, during the 1980's, Paul Rossiter known in Westbury at the time as the "Running Postman" passed the book "Be Fit or Be Damned" by Percy Cerruty-Wells and suggested that I follow the recommended sessions. This mainly involved running up hills, lots of hills and for me in Westbury that was the White Horse. Within six-months I had cracked 17-minutes for 5k and 35-minutes for 10k, representing PB improvements of 30-seconds & 90-seconds respectively. I still run hills but no longer with anywhere near the same frequency or intensity.

Other stuff: I am a qualified member of the Association of UK Course Measurers and as well as discovering a reason to use Pythagoras theory for the first time since leaving school I have been responsible for the measuring of several road races in the area including The Malmesbury, Frome, Devizes and Salisbury Half Marathon courses.

In an attempt to introduce structured training into Avon Valley Runners (hard to believe that less than 10-years ago we didn't have any) I qualified as a Level-2 Endurance Coach with UK: Athletics and then went on to qualify as a Race Referee and Event Adjudicator.

Putting my Project Management skills to good use, I organised my first race in 2004 "The Sport Relief - Woolley Street Mile" with the late great Stan Farr and have gone on to organise approaching a hundred races, including the Avon Valley Relay, Avon Valley Mile and the Shaw Stampede on behalf of AVR, as well as those for Stampede Sports.

A few years ago I was approached to become the Road Running Secretary of Wiltshire Athletic Association and during my appointment established the Wiltshire Road Race League and the Wiltshire Road Relays that Avon Valley Runners have been successful in. I now hold the office of Chairman and pleased to see that Avon Valley Runners have continued to be the dominant club in the county both on and off the road.

This Month's Training Tip

Tapering for Non-Marathon Races

Tapering is the decreasing of the volume and/or intensity of your training as you approach a race event. For a marathon this will normally start some 3 weeks before the race (see previous article on this topic – April issue). For shorter races the general rule of thumb is to start tapering some 2 weeks prior but this all depends on how seriously you wish to take the particular race. More on this later.

To some of you, these may seem like inordinately long periods. However, research has shown that a training effect takes some 2 to 3 weeks to feed through into your race performance. Therefore, and this is very important, **there is nothing you can do to improve your race day performance in the 15 to 20 days preceding it.**

Whilst you cannot improve your performance during the last week or so prior to a race you can certainly do a whole lot of things that can adversely affect your performance. Not easing down early enough on the volume/intensity of your training; squeezing in a couple of extra runs 'just in case'; doing a long run the week before just to make sure that you will be OK on race day...

The whole point of tapering is to make sure that you arrive at the race start properly nourished and hydrated; physically and mentally refreshed and raring to go; without any vestiges of fatigue or tiredness in your legs or body. As mentioned in the marathon article, if you haven't done the training you expected to do for an event then either don't start it or reassess your objective for it e.g. forget about a 'time' and make finishing it the objective.

The main difficulty for athletes during the tapering period is psychological. Because you aren't doing your 'normal' volume of training then there is a tendency to worry about losing your edge or some fitness. In a two week period this will not happen unless you radically alter your lifestyle e.g. suddenly start consuming 12 pints of Guinness and 6 meat pies every day! Providing this doesn't happen then it will take 3 to 4 weeks of 'resting' before there is any significant deterioration in fitness levels.

To return to the point raised previously, regarding how long to taper for, if the race is a significant key target for you i.e. you are looking to do a PB, then a 2 week taper is called for. If the race is important as a stepping stone but not one of the half dozen or so that you have identified as key targets for the current 6/12 months, a week's taper will do. If the race is seen as an integral part of the training week and is to be used for conditioning purposes then there is no need for a taper but you may consider doing slightly easier runs the couple of days or so preceding it.

The type of running undertaken during the taper will depend on what you have been doing up to that point. Certainly some fast running, such as intervals, can be included but the volume will be greatly decreased. Normally, you would reduce the length of your weekly long run. How the taper is constructed can also help address some of the psychological 'issues' referred to above. As there are a lot of variables to consider, please feel free to talk to me about how you can taper properly for a key race. *Enjoy your stress-free tapers!*



JAVR News # 16



NEW PB FOR MAX

The Yeovil YTRRC Series on the 10th September saw Max Davies set a new 5km P.B. with a superb time of 17:55 finishing in 32nd place.

TOP THREE FINISHES

Four JAVR athletes took the short trip to Rode on the 14th September to run in the 5km multi terrain fun run. Niall Thorne finished 3rd in his category and 7th overall in a time of 20:54. Max Davies finished 1st in his category in a time of 18:41 and in 3rd place overall. In 21st position was Sam Beaverstock in a time of 23:35 and with a time of 23:57 and in 24th position was Robert Warner.



SEPTEMBER – THE MONTH FOR RUNNING FAST

So while Dennis Kimetto was resting up in Berlin the day before setting a new marathon world record in a time of 2:02:57 it was P.B's galore at the JAVR 2km race at Southwick Country Park. Max Davies set the tone for the day setting a new B13 record and a new P.B. with a time of 6:55 in first place. James Pickford followed for JAVR in 3rd place with a new P.B. of 7:32. In hot pursuit Robert Warner took 4th position with a P.B. of 7.42. William Purcell recorded a time of 8.28, a new P.B, in 8th place. Katie Duffy and Mia Ralph finished with equal times of 8:48 both setting new P.B's. Abbie Brown set a new P.B. with a time of 9:20 in 18th position and sealing a fantastic day of performances from JAVR with a total of eight personal best times was Harry Cade recording a new P.B. of 10:26 in 30th position.

UPCOMING RACES

Sat, 25th Oct - JAVR 2K League, Southwick Country Park

Sat, 29th Nov - JAVR 2K League, Southwick Country Park

Sat, 27th Dec (TBC) - JAVR 2K League, Southwick Country Park

More information @
www.junior.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk



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Get in touch with JAVR News...

Do you have any news or perhaps an article or a story
for inclusion in the next edition

email **my_avr@yahoo.com**

RESULTS

Full results available at:

www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Full junior results including Junior Championship League 2km results available at:

www.junior.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Full Wiltshire Junior Race League results available at:

www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk

The Cardiff Half Marathon

It seems to have been a season of Half Marathon's recently, with Chippenham, Bournemouth, Cheltenham, Weston-super-mare, Bristol and Cardiff to name just a few, and by the time you read this, Salisbury will very likely be over. Avon Valley Runners seemed to occupy a prominent place among many of them, the most prolific being the bus trip to Bristol which has already been highlighted by Darren. A few of us made our way across the bridge to Cardiff in early October and being my home town I decided it would be nice to give it a go. My wife Heather and I went for the weekend and stayed in the lovely St David's hotel in the bay. That was close enough for me to do a gentle warm up jog on my way to the start line and as the race progressed around the bay, Heather could enjoy a leisurely breakfast before strolling down to the historic Norwegian Church to join the crowds and cheer me on around the six mile mark. With around 16,000 runners, some were privileged to be allowed access to the Cardiff Castle grounds to warm up prior to the race and also to make use of the much in-demand loos. The huge queues suggested it might be an idea to provide more in future.

After leaving the bay - which is very much more salubrious than the old Tiger Bay I used to know - we wound through the streets of Cardiff town centre and up around the perimeter of Roath Park Lake. There were very few uphill sections and none of them covered any significant distance, finishing with a nice flat to downhill mile or so at the end of the race. It's certainly the flattest half I've ever done.

During the race I was pleasantly surprised to spot Jules Green, Gary Daniell and Jules (Juliet) Coulson heading towards the Penarth Marina. I'd have missed them if it wasn't for Juliet loyally wearing her AVR vest!!

Michael Towler was fastest of all of us as usual, finishing within the top sixty, in a very impressive time. An equally impressive time for a super-vet was that of Robin-Mark Schols who, wearing his extravagantly multi-coloured socks, was very pleased to achieve a personal best by a massive six seconds! Robin was accompanied by wife Judy - wearing correspondingly opposite coloured socks. Judy did very well to sneak under the two hour mark. Unlike Jules and Gary, we can excuse new member Lee Allen for not wearing his AVR colours; he looked very athletic in black and white.

As for me, I should be pleased, but missing a PB by less than half a minute over all that distance was a little disappointing. However I thoroughly enjoyed the occasion and can only be grateful that I still have the ability to cross a finishing line at all. I'm not sure how much longer it will go on. but I'll enjoy it while I can.



59	Mike Towler	1:13:48
352	Robin-Mark Schols	1:24:22
1352	Ken Marshall	1:34:54
1668	Lee Allen	1:37:10
1639	Jules Green	1:38:01
1640	Gary Daniell	1:38:01
2505	Jules Coulson	1:42:55
6703	Judy Schols	1:59:29