THE VALLEY NEWS



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This issue is dedicated to Mike Holland

It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of Mike Holland.

Mike passed away on 16th June aged 89.

Most of you will not know, or have ever heard of Mike, but without him there would possibly not have been Avon Valley Runners.

If you read "The History of Avon Valley Runners" in the "About us" section of the AVR web page you will realise what a great part Mike played in the early years of the club.

Mike was President from the club founding (1st January 1986) until 2011.

Mike's son Miles, was club Treasurer from 1986 until 1992.

When the club was in its infancy, it needed expert advice about legal, financial and constitutional matters – these were all provided by Mike who had been a leading light in Trowbridge Athletic Club.

Mike succeeded his late wife Cynthia (who was also a supporter of the club), and leaves a son Miles and a daughter Angela.

Written by Bob Washbourne

Limited Training has resumed

We are happy to announce that training sessions restarted on Tuesday 28th July!

Keep a look out on the members' only Facebook page or your emails for sessions to be announced over the weekends, then places must be booked on the Run Together website:



https://groups.runtogether.co.uk/AvonValleyRunners/BookClass/5d115183-d428-4c0f-8c9d-cc5382dfe3fcc



If the session is full, please do not attend. If more people turn up than are booked on, then the session will have to stop. For those of you that do manage to get a space on the session, please try and arrive warmed up where possible.

Running and Mental Health - by Jay Sims-Bagshaw

We have all felt the impact of lockdown and some of our AVR runners have shared how running has helped their own Mental Health throughout lockdown and beyond.

Decreases symptoms of depression

Multiple studies have concluded that regular aerobic exercise reduces the symptoms of depression. Running has also been found to be an effective partner to therapeutic intervention for treating depression.

Running has taken the edge off of my depression, I'm happier in general and when I have a low patch I still try and go out for a run to get rid of my frustrations.

Regularly running (and the other exercise I do alongside it) does help me to sleep better, which in turn makes it easier to cope with bad/low moods. It also gives me motivation to get out of the house and take part in runs e.g. club night runs, buddy runs and coached sessions. Activity encourages me to try and eat more healthily, with regular mealtimes too. Having a run/race to focus on helps me challenge negative thoughts. Making new friends at both AVR and parkrun helps me feel less lonely and is motivation to keep coming to club even when I might not feel like I it.

Some of the hardest days were when I was restricted from leaving the house, I was very afraid that I would sink into my darker thoughts. I am so thankful, and I appreciate more than ever how much running keeps me balanced, I wouldn't want to be without it.

Improves your learning abilities

Both high-intensity running, in the form of sprints, and low-impact running can improve your capacity to learn and retain new information and language. These benefits seemed to be more pronounced in the case of high intensity running but there are still known benefits across the board.

Going along to beginners group last year showed me that I am capable of taking on a new challenge and completing it. I'm still learning about what suits me best about running and aim to improve my distances and pace. I always thought I couldn't be a 'proper runner' because I was never any good at P.E. at school. Learning about correct running techniques etc is interesting and helps me see I'm still able to learn new things.



Sharpens your memory

The mental health benefits of running can also include a sharper memory. Running can be a buffer against the effects of aging on the brain.

I feel running has made me far more alert and aware. I do feel years younger not just physically but mentally too.

Helps to Alleviate or combat anxiety

Running and other vigorous forms of exercise can reduce anxiety symptoms and help you relax, for some people running can work as well as medication to relieve anxiety however always take guidance from a GP or medical professional.

When I'm overthinking and can't stop the negative thoughts, I find that running with other people takes my mind off of things. When I'm running hard and pushing myself it helps to clear my mind. I can start to focus on the challenge ahead rather than on my anxiety.

After getting over the initial anxiety of joining the club and meeting lots of new people I do think running helps me deal with my anxiety more easily. I can escape from my anxious thoughts when I'm out running, especially when I run off road and can enjoy the beautiful countryside and peace and quiet of being away out of the house/ away from work. Running is time for me.

Helps you sleep better

There are evidenced benefits to sleep include regulated rhythms, heightened daytime alertness, quicker onset of sleep, deeper sleep, and the reduction of symptoms in those with insomnia and obstructive sleep apnoea.

While I have been injured and unable to run, I have noticed my sleep pattern has been poor, I know that when I've had a day with good activity I have always slept better.

I used to suffer with restless legs but now I'm more physically tired that has reduced and I can sleep easier.

The physical exhaustion definitely helps me sleep! And needing to be up and out for runs motivates me to get to have a better sleep pattern.

Some days it's not about speed or miles.

It's just therapy.

Boosts self-esteem

Running can be a good way to gain confidence in yourself and your body and to improve self-esteem.

I am my own worst critic and I do struggle with believing that I'm good enough, that my achievements are significant and of value. Running with other people and having my accomplishments recognised helps me to feel seen and appreciated.

There have been times when I have run, and I feel stronger more capable and better able to face the world. Running gives, me achievements and goals and enables me to feel that "I can do it".

My self-esteem was so low, I felt that I was not good enough and had to prove myself. Running has given me a community and what feels like family, I feel like I'm not judged, it's a safe place.

Running has definitely improved my self-esteem, self-confidence and has helped me build resilience to challenge. I have definitely learnt more life lessons through participation in sport than I ever did at school.

I feel like I look after myself and I'm getting healthier with running, this helps boost my selfesteem. Needing and wanting to put my needs first so I can join in runs and races helps too. (Realising I do deserve time to myself).

Increases your creativity

People have said that running can increase creativity

Being more social and active allows me to feel more energetic and I am then able to use my creativity in the garden.

I am more adventurous than I have ever been, not just with running but in other areas of my life. It is like a whole world has opened up to me and I find myself saying yes more than I ever have.

Helps the brain heal from substance abuse and can decrease cravings for unhealthy foods and substances

Whether your cravings are for junk food or for drugs and alcohol. A study found that after one hour of running, participants were more likely to opt for healthy dietary choices that included fruit and vegetables over junk food. Results were similar when marijuana, not junk food, was the substance of choice. Heavy marijuana users experienced a marked decline in both cravings and daily use after just a few sessions of running.

When I run, I don't feel the need to overeat and I'm starting to see food as fuel.

I have a history of treating myself and my body badly doing everything to excess and not thinking about the repercussions. Having to have discipline in running to remain injury free has helped me to gain more balance and to treat my body more with more care, yes I still beast myself with a hard run but I know I have allow myself to fully recover if I want to continue to train.

Avon Valley Runners have a safeguarding and welfare team welfare@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

AVR Virtual Relay

Thanks to race director Holly Newman, this year's relay wasn't completely cancelled and still allowed many runners to take part. With this year's restrictions, the relay was offered out as a virtual event so that legs could be run at different times and along any route chosen to help runners distance themselves from others and to avoid the handing over of the baton.

After 2 weeks of running around the country (or in some cases, the World!) the results were sent in and the winners are...

Overall winners	vinners Lowrie's Legends 1:26:31 (Avon Valley Runners)	
Male teams	TBAces 1:27:02 (Team Bath Athletics)	
Female teams	The Shifters 1:44:16 (Swindon Harriers)	
Mixed teams	Lowrie's Legends 1:26:31 (Avon Valley Runners)	
Junior teams	Ginger's Nuts 1:39:59 (Chippenham Harriers)	
2.5km winner	James Donald 7:58 (Team Bath Athletics)	
5km winner	Ethan Pierce 15:16 (Swindon Striders)	
7.5km winner	Rich Ayling 24:51 (Avon Valley Runners)	
10km winner	Ed Knudsen 31:54 (Avon Valley Runners)	

There was also an additional couple of competitions this year to take the best socially distanced team photo and the team with the best fancy dress. Below are a selection of the submitted photos along with the winners.

Thank you so much to everyone who took part. Hopefully the relay can return next summer in its usual format but the virtual version may stick around too and become a winter race – watch this space!

The Mad Archers



Super Spreaders



Lockdown Ladies, Home Before Dark



Wrinty's Globetrotters



Scrambled Legs



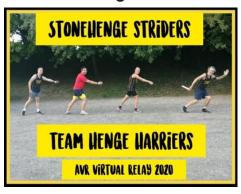
The V'Dubs



The Ladies of Lockdown



Stonehenge Striders



The River Runners – Team photo winners!



Bath Super Socks – fancy dress winners!



Westbury Virtual 5k

As many of you know, the Westbury 5k series had also gone virtual this year. Runners are set the challenge of running the real, 3-lap route in reverse which is now a segment on Strava and the leader boards are re-set at the start of each month. There are also start and finish markers to help runners make sure they run the correct distance.

Unfortunately the planned August event has now also been cancelled, so the virtual event is extended for the final month. More details can be found on Straya:

https://www.strava.com/clubs/673285?fbclid=lwAR0TXluGj_yZ3dR_CMnqZSneme6_aaOpLbBGV9cGFw6-rgtb0qabq6Q6uQE









DB Max Rainbow Run

Week 11	AVR finished 3 rd in the Club V Club competition.
	1st AVR male: Gary MacAlister (top 10)
	1st AVR female: Jen Marlow
	Robin- Mark Schols was 1 st MV50, Jen Marlow was 1 st FV40, Fiona Newman was 2 nd FV50, Sharon Firkins was 3 rd FV50 and Carrie Almeida was 3 rd FV60.
Week 12	AVR finished 3 rd in the Club V Club competition.
	1st AVR male: Robin-Mark Schols
	1st AVR female: Rebekah Carrivick
	Robin-Mark Schols was 3 rd MV50, Mel Ward-Nicholls was 3 rd FV40, Sara Robert was 2 nd FV50 and Carrie Almeida was 3 rd FV60.
Week 13	AVR finished 6 th in the Club V Club competition.
	1st AVR male: Gary MacAlister
	1st AVR female: Mel Ward-Nicholls
	Sharon Firkins was 2 nd FV50, Sara Robert was 3 rd FV50 and Carrie Almeida was 3 rd FV60.
Week 14	AVR finished 5 th in the Club V Club competition.
	1st AVR male: Robin-Mark Schols (top 10)
	1 st AVR female: Sara Robert
	Robin-Mark Schols was 2 nd MV50, Lil Morris was 3 rd SEN, Sara Robert was 1 st FV50, Sharon Firkins was 2 nd FV50 and Carrie Almeida was 3 rd FV60.



Avon Valley Segment of the Month

With lockdown starting to lift the lure of the "Avon Valley Segment of the Month" has somewhat waned as 'real' competition is hopefully just around the corner. Participation as a result has been very low this month and so the final sets of results are:

The **New Hilperton Bypass downhill** segment attracted sixteen Avon Valley Runners with the leaderboard finishing as so:

New Hilperton Bypass downhill

This Month ▼

Rank	Name	Date	Pace	Time
	Daniel Piper	Jul 17, 2020	5:16/mi	3:43
2	Brad Arberry	Jul 3, 2020	6:29/mi	4:35
3	Gary MacAlister	Jul 20, 2020	6:38/mi	4:41
	Carly Hodgson	Jul 22, 2020	6:29/mi	4:35
2	Jo Farion	Jul 6, 2020	6:57/mi	4:55
3	Kat Taylor-Laird	Jul 2, 2020	6:59/mi	4:56

No Avon Valley Runners decided to run **<u>Down Woolley St</u>** in Bradford on Avon and just four ran along **<u>Semington Road</u>** in Melksham:

Semington road

This Month ▼

Rank	Name	Date	Pace	Time
	Owen Lythell	Jul 16, 2020	5:21/mi	3:25
2	Richard Newman	Jul 6, 2020	7:44/mi	4:56
3	Sarah Jewers	Jul 8, 2020	8:04/mi	5:09
4	Helen Donnelly	Jul 10, 2020	9:35/mi	6:07

The Virtual Westbury 5K segment tempted ten Avon Valley Runners to the start line:

Virtual Westbury 5K

I nis Month

Rank	Name	Date	Pace	Time
	ed knudsen	Jul 2, 2020	5:09/mi	16:08
2	Ray Pemberton	Jul 1, 2020	7:26/mi	23:14
3	Simon Reeves	Jul 4, 2020	7:28/mi	23:20
Be	Bethan Francis	Jul 18, 2020	6:09/mi	19:15
2	Carly Hodgson	Jul 18, 2020	6:56/mi	21:42
3	Diane Hier,	Jul 18, 2020	7:08/mi	22:18

The cycle routes also suffered somewhat in numbers with the 2.7-mile undulating segment of the **Edington to Westbury town sign sprint** tempting just six club members:

Edington to Westbury town sign sprint

Rank	Name	Date	Speed	Time
	Darren Wrintmore	Jul 11, 2020	22.8mi/h	7:11
2	Paul Banfield	Jul 18, 2020	20.0mi/h	8:10
3	Paul Thorne	Jul 20, 2020	18.9mi/h	8:40

For the 1.8-mile segment from **Farleigh Wick into BOA** only two members made this effort:

Farleigh Wick into BOA

This Month ▼

Rank	Name	Date	Speed	Time
	Darren Wrintmore	Jul 11, 2020	26.1mi/h	4:14
2	Tony Dunford	Jul 11, 2020	24.1mi/h	4:36

Virtual Endure24 2020 - Totally Addicted to Pace-by Gary MacAlister

With Endure24 cancelled this year, the organisers looked for a way to allow us to still take part in some form of group activity over the Endure weekend (13/14th June 2020). The challenge was free to enter but they were asking those taking part to make a donation to the NHS Charities Together fund via their Just Giving page. If their spectators or followers would also like to donate, they were also able to do so.

AVR are regular participants at Endure24, and of the 12 runners taking part in the team this year, 7 were from AVR, along with a few runners from Frome RC & and some other friends.

The concept is that our team of 12 runners will have a start time on the hour, every hour of the 24 hours Endure24 normally run the event for, so 12pm Saturday until 12pm Sunday. This could include running at night time, either outside, in gardens or on treadmills. We all ran a 5 mile route (the same as a lap of Endure). A key part of the challenge is the social media aspect, and the whole team was great at sharing pictures, videos and messages about their runs throughout the challenge.

There were a few issues throughout the event with a few injuries creeping in, and the team coped amazingly with adjusting their times and distances to make up for their "Fallen" team mates.

The runners were Gary MacAlister, Justine MacAlister, Carly Hodgson, Pippa Brewer, Jen Marlow, Hayley Southgate, Rich Southgate, (All AVR) Kat Uphill, Peter Reed (From RC), Andy Thomas, Ella O'Neill. Janis Cadby was also in the team but had to drop out at the last minute due to injury.

The Facebook page that the team set up was a hive of activity over the 24hrs with loads of videos, comments and likes form everyone following the event over the 24hrs. The whole team really appreciated all the feedback and support from everyone. It really helped encourage us all throughout the event.

In total, Endure24 raised just under £20,000 for the NHS, so a massive achievement from the Virtual Running Community.



The Challenges and Rewards of Running Through Lockdown-by Liz Mason

When lockdown loomed, I thought I will make the best of it, discover new running tracks from my village. The routes would need to be off-road as our house is sandwiched between 2 busy main roads and we have only 100 yards or so of pavement. On the first day, I pulled on my running gear just as the farmers got out their tractors. By the end of the week we were surrounded by ploughed fields and the pungent smell of liquid fertiliser (this isn't a dig at farmers, I know they had to diversify too). The paths, already difficult to find, were now covered in a liquid goo. I eventually found some new routes and was rewarded by meeting a new neighbour (actually he had been here for over two years), and discovered he is also a member of AVR, a seasoned fell runner who clearly finds the rutty paths a doddle.

My next challenge was to see if I could find a round loop to run from Wingfield to Southwick Park and back again. Sounds easy, but I was initially chased off a deserted

> public footpath by a Covid fearing man. The bull was much easier to navigate and provided the perfect excuse to walk slowly and discreetly across the field. The horses were another matter, they also wanted to run, so I had to stop and have a chat with them before moving on. I finally found a viable route (for the summer anyway), and was rewarded this time by a neighbour who left some runner bean plants for passers-by to take. What a perfect reward, how could they have known?

I was missing the challenge of races to motivate me, so, encouraged by the AVR do anything, anytime triathlon, I took the plunge and had my first river swim of the season and played a game of tennis for the first time in 10 years. Here I had the fortune to bump (SD style of course) into Holly Newman, who as ever, was so encouraging. Just after she left, I knocked the ball clean over the tennis court and into

the main road....now I was hungry to do more with my AVR companions.

The AVR virtual relay came just at the right time, and teaming up with Theresa Edwards, Anne-Marie Gibson and Jackie Hall, I elected to do the 2.5k in order to spend a week or so devising my own interval training and improve my speed. This evolved into finding the longest downhill stretch to run down which massively improved my confidence until the last attempt, when I set off so fast I nearly collapsed after 4 minutes. Please bring back the Wednesday night training sessions!

The finale though, was the Hilly Helmet challenge where I actually got to run in person with Anne-Marie and Theresa one very early morning. Donned with our helmets we met in Westbury and ran roughly in the direction of the prescribed route. The sun was still burning off the early morning chill as we ran through the woodland and followed footpaths upwards. We couldn't resist running (ok, sometimes walking) the extra mile to the top of the White Horse where we were rewarded with spectacular views across Wiltshire.

This is why I run, to be immersed in nature, and to honour what my body is still able to do. And this is why I joined AVR, to be part of a diverse community, all cheering each other on. Thank you for keeping me going, I can't wait to get back to the club runs and the races, and hope to meet in person again soon.

Virtual Cotswold Way Relay 2020 - by Gary MacAlister



Unfortunately, as with many events in 2020 the ever popular Cotswold Relay had to be cancelled this year. AVR was supposed to be fielding 3 teams for the race, which cover the length of the Cotswold Way from Chipping Campden down to Bath Abbey.

There was still a lot of interest from the teams entered to host a virtual version of the run. The way this worked is that runners in the team could run their leg at any time during the month of July and then the team results were submitted at the beginning of August.

After an appeal for runners to put together an AVR Virtual team, we had a great response and were able to get 10 runners sorted and put into appropriate legs to run the event.

Seeing some of the feedback from the team has been fantastic, and all the posts on Facebook have hopefully inspired other to take part in the relay on its return in 2021. It may even have inspired you to go and walk / run some of the route yourself during lockdown.



LEG	Runner	Result
	Gary	
1	MacAlister	01:35:19
2	Ed Knudsen	01:25:21
3	Stuart Sellers	01:15:29
	Andrew	
4	Jefferies	02:45:00
5	Ian Harryman	02:22:56
6	Ali Atkinson	01:51:18
7	Joby Hobbs	01:06:12
8	Rich Harding	01:47:07
9	Fiona Gibbs	01:45:42
	Jackie	
10	Rockliffe	01:33:49
Total tir	17:28:13	





We had runners meeting runners from other teams on their runs, some runners were joined by friends for some company and a few runners took some wrong turns (always part of the fun of the event!) There were plenty of hills, cows, more hills, stunning views and scenery, and did I mention the hills!

I would like to extend a massive thankyou to everyone that took part, and to everybody that gave us positive feedback and comments on the FB page. It really did help us all feel that little bit more rewarded and motivated.



AVON VALLEY TRIATHLETES

By AVT secretary, Lil Morris

For those who haven't seen the announcement on the AVT Members only page the decision has been made to cancel the AVT League for this year. The Wiltshire Road Race league for this year has already been cancelled and our own Goal Getters scheme has been extended to the end of 2021. This decision has been made for a number of reasons.



Firstly we're mindful that during the last few months many of our members' personal circumstances may have changed

dramatically. Whilst some will have found themselves in the position to train more others will have found their time reduced due to work or family commitments. Secondly the multi-sport season is already short and there will be very few events happening this year, it would be unfair to expect all members to attempt to squeeze in events into a short period of time.

The last few months have proven that AVR and AVT has the best community spirit and I'm sure will support this decision. In the meantime please keep enjoying your training, there are plenty of virtual events still running and we'll make 2021 a great one.



Andy Cook Cycling - Castle Combe

It's great to see cycling back at Castle Combe again on Tuesday evening however Andy Cook Cycling need to remind everyone of some important rules, which were forgotten by some. If we don't all make an effort to follow the rules of the Circuit Management, the guidelines set by the government, and the terms and conditions they set in order to ensure we can run the sessions, then it is likely Andy Cook Cycling will not be able to continue using the circuit. Please read the following carefully and remember for your next session:

- Please do not use inappropriate language in line at the gate, the coffee van, the loos, or whilst out riding on the circuit. There are always families and children about and they had several instances of swearing on Tuesday which just isn't conjusive to the family-friendly atmosphere of these sessions
- NO URINATING AT THE SIDE OF THE CIRCUIT. Please do not use the wooden marshal huts situated around the track to relieve yourself. The toilets are well-signposted and positioned behind the Tavern restaurant next to the car park
- Do not wear headphones whilst riding. You must be able to hear clearly at all times whilst out on the track. By wearing headphones, you are breaking the terms and conditions of your membership, as agreed to on registration
- You must wear a helmet this is a rule set by the Circuit Management. There are no exceptions. Unfortunately, due to hygiene reasons, we are unable to lend helmets out, so please make sure you bring your own
- Due to the need to keep gatherings to a minimum, and maintain safe social distancing, they do not encourage spectators. If you have no choice, the spectator must register as a member of the Castle Combe Cycling Organisation for track and trace purposes

Westonbirt Triathlon

DBMax are still planning to go ahead with the rescheduled Westonbirt Triathlon on the 31st August however with a shorter swim of 200m instead of 400m. The bike and run sections will remain on the same courses as previous years with some changes. There will be a reduced "race village", more space per competitor during transition and hand sanitizer for competitors on site.

- Race numbers will be sent out in the post prior to the event
- Only one spectator permitted per entrant
- Timing chips to be collected from the bike racking area on the day
- There will be no aid station on the run, entrants will need to bring their own hydration and store these at their transition spot
- Race results will only be available online, there will be no paper slips

Upcoming events for 2020

- DB Max 10 mile TT at Castle Combe (5th, 12th, 19th and 26th August)
- Westonbirt Sprint Tri (31st August)
- Westonbirt House Duathlon (31st October)
- Bath Duathlon (31st October)

• The "Chilly" Duathlon (22nd November)

When entering events, it really does help if you enter any multisport events as **Avon Valley Triathletes**; this makes it easier to check results whenever needed. Please remember that if you are a paid up AVR member, then you are already automatically a member of AVT. Please note, when we start the league again in 2021, you need to email your results to me at avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk by the 31st December 2021. You can do this in one email rather than ad-hoc throughout the year. Virtual events do NOT count towards any AVT league, newcomer or HHDYT places.

When submitting your results you MUST include:

- Total number of finishers
- Your overall finish position
- Your category position
- The time for each sport discipline
- The time for each transition

If any of the above is missing I will come back and ask for the detail as I need this to be able to complete the results at the end of the year.

