



Welcome to The Valley News

Our cover image this month comes from Gary MacAlister who had a mixture of his cool looking t-shirts and ones that held special memories converted into a blanket, courtesy of [@toomanyt shirts](#)

The deadline date for articles, results or any other submissions to make the next edition is the 25th of the month.

In this issue:

- Wrinty's Ramblings
- To new Members
- The Stickler
- Over the Hills
- Avebury 8 Nine
- Yarnbury Yomp
- All those years ago
- #Social Gallery

The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners

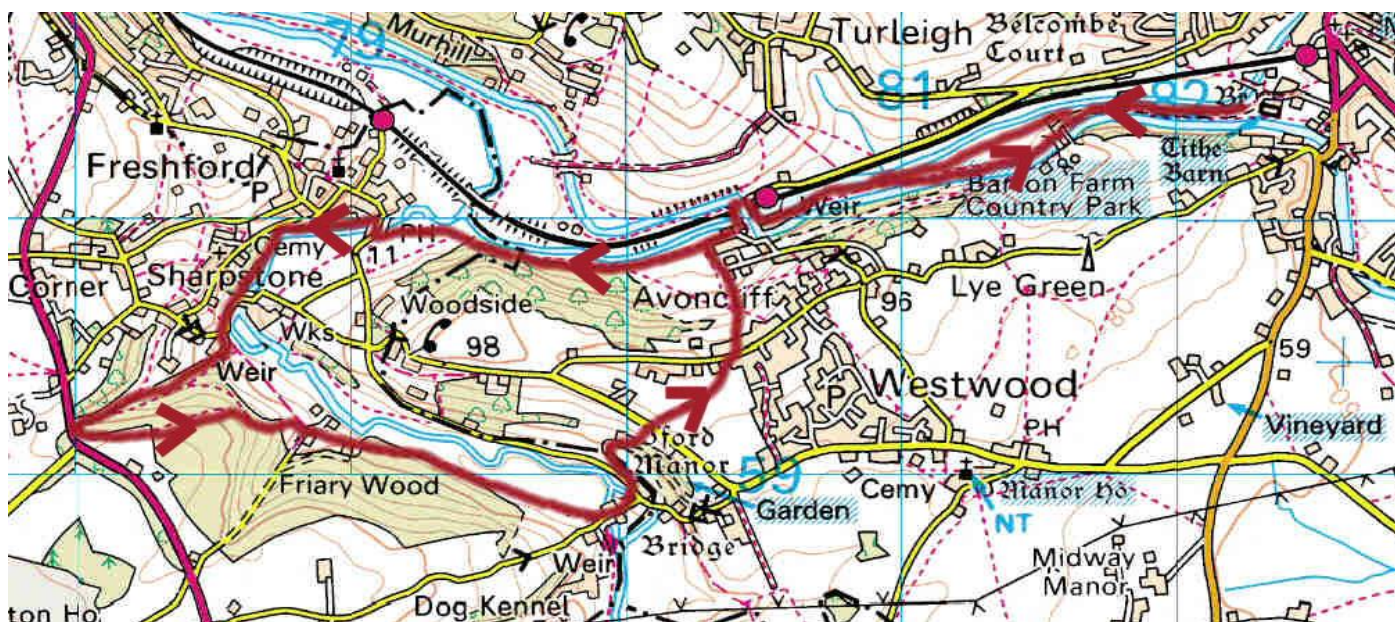
Issue #272 – December 2024

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners



Wrinty's Ramblings

November was a busy month for AVR with the hosting of our **Over the Hills** race for the twenty-fourth time since its inception in 1998 (*we like a lot of races skipped an edition or two to accommodate COVID*). The race was originally under the stewardship of Simon Spedding as the Race Director and it made a good alternative to the Trowbridge 10K which the club had been organising since 1991 and was falling victim to increased traffic levels around the roads of our county town. It also enabled us to showcase our beautiful Avon Valley to the wider running community. Since its inaugural run the course has remained largely unchanged out from Barton Farm Country Park in Bradford on Avon, though it was initially held in April and only moved to its current spot in the race calendar in 2004 with a brief three-year flirtation in October between 2000 & 2003. Oh, and the entry fee for that first edition...just £2.00 and don't forget the cakes - the ladies from Alzheimer's Support make nearly 500 of them for this race and it proves to be one of their biggest fundraisers.



At the other end of the month, we were planning on holding the twelfth edition of the **AVR Wiltshire Half Marathon** out of Edington. The race which was first run in 2012 has proven a popular road race amongst the local road running population.

Unfortunately for us and the 250 runners who had signed up for the event it was not to be, with storm Bert disrupting our carefully laid plans, leading to a late but understandable cancellation with 40+mph winds and driving rain buffeting the course and a Met Office Weather Warning in effect.

Edington Sunday 24th November

Today ▲

17°
9°

Strong winds and heavy rain

▲ **Weather warnings issued**

1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500
16°	15°	15°	15°	14°	14°
97%	97%	100%	90%	90%	90%
53	49	48	47	45	25

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

In terms of longevity, we cannot beat the **Stan Farr 5K**, formerly called simply the “**Boxing Day Run**” and was renamed in 2008 in memory of our late Secretary (who had taken part in 45 editions of the race and even won it in 1968) and which will be held for the 64th time later this month and only cancelled for COVID in 2020.

It was first run in 1960 when hosted by Trowbridge & District Athletics Club and moved under the stewardship of AVR when the Road Running section broke away in 1985 to form AVR.









Stan running in the 43rd edition held in 2002

The race is staged once again over the 5K course out of Trowbridge RFC at Hilperton and is open to members of Avon Valley only (and their guests).

Darren Wrintmore (Wrinty)

Where to Run...or Ride...or Swim

A selection of forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Date	Event	Distance	Details	
Sunday 8th December	Tri-counties XC Championships	various	Wiltshire XC Championships at Bath Uni alongside Avon & Somerset.	
Sunday 22 nd December	Hullavington Secret Santa	10-miles	Flat course and a gift from Santa’s sack when finishing.	
Sunday 29th December	Plain Crazy	12’ish - miles	Redfish Events challenge you to burn off the festive excess with this trail run at Warminster, dropping by Imber.	
Sunday 26 th January	Slaughterford 9	9-miles	A popular off-roader hosted by Chippenham Harriers.	
Sunday 2 nd February	The Lungbuster	9-miles	A challenging multi-terrain race organised by Royal Wootton Bassett Hounds.	
Sunday 9 th February	The Wiltshire 10	10-miles	Stampede Sports race held out of Melksham.	

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

A message to New Members

As we come to the end of 2024, it is worth pausing to reflect on just how far we've both come - both literally and figuratively. For us, September last year marked the beginning of our AVR journeys: starting the Couch to 5K programme, little did we know then how much the club would come to mean to us. For Adrienne, having barely run since 2012's London Marathon, she signed up last year, encouraged to do so by her dad as a means of finding something for herself and outside of taking care of her two young girls. Realising how incredibly welcoming and encouraging AVR was (and is), she suggested Sonia should also give it a try. Despite initial reservations and repeated rebuttals to Adrienne's recommendation, responding with, "I am not a runner!", Sonia also joined the programme a fortnight later. Now fast forward fifteen months, and both would credit the club with quite literally with being life changing.

In our opinion, the biggest strength of the club is the structure and support it provides. Weekly sessions tailored to all abilities, including paced runs, interval training and target race training, ensure that every member is catered for. For those who want it, training alongside others creates a level of accountability and motivation that solo runs can't always replicate. The level of encouragement is second to none, whether you're considering signing up for your first ever race or going along to a weekly Parkrun, the backing is there in abundance. All this combined, has helped not only us, but others in the club too, to hit new milestones. For this year's Goal Getters, we have both achieved Gold for Me vs. Me, smashing our targets and achieving many PBs along the way. Give it another week, and we'll both also have Gold for the Goal Getter Challenges. This challenge is not just about running, and has opened both of our eyes to volunteering, AVT and so much more that the club has to offer.

If you like the social element as well, AVR has that for you. There are Monthly Socials, the Summer and Christmas parties, the annual Awards Night, and many organised trips to various running, training and raced events, not least AVR does Parkrun, trips to Bath University racetrack, and the Street 5K. These have contributed to such genuine friendships forming, and we have seen it so vividly amongst others too.



Not least, Sonia tackling her second half marathon, and Adrienne taking on her second full. Our calendars for the start of the year are already filling up with races which we are super excited about. For those that are new to AVR, and those considering joining, we cannot recommend enough, just how much of an amazing club AVR is. Whether you're chasing a personal best, looking for motivation, want to share your love of running with others, or just be involved and meet some great people along the way, AVR has a place for you. - **Sonia Pateman & Adrienne Barthram**



Whilst running might be the thread that brings us together, it's the friendships too that keeps us coming back. We are both excited for what 2025 has in store for us and know that AVR will play a huge part in it.

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

The Stickler

Over 500 runners took part in The Stickler hosted by Dorset Doodlers, including nine members of AVR. The tough 10-mile course including Dorset 3 peaks and over 1500ft of climb. Not for the faint hearted!

Weather and ground conditions were good.

Gary Day came home as 1st AVR, 15th overall and 4th Male MV40 (something to celebrate there). Jon Naish came in 2nd AVR, 82nd overall, 31st MSEN. Not far behind (approx. 20-seconds) Andrew Trigg came in 86th overall, and 2nd MV60 (nice one Andrew). Kevin Glover and Dave Bagshaw both put in strong performances.

Pauline Bradley came home as 1st AVR lady, 404th overall, 10th FV60. Fiona Gibbs came in 2nd AVR lady, 455th overall and 51st FV50. Tina Vivian and Denise Ellis came in 16th and 17th FV60 (good going).



Andrew Sharratt

Over the Hills

A perfect setting for a Sunday morning off road race, Race #3 in the Wiltshire Offroad League 2024. Both the river path and the crossing at Iford were open, the path was more than a bit sticky and I am told the shark was disappointed (again) at the river crossing. 339 completed of which 19 runners were in yellow and green. A very fast race with the overall winning time being 3-minutes quicker than in 2022. The whole event was supported by great 39 marshals, you can get your name down for 2025!

Good to see some AVR faces not seen for a while, stand up Richard Southgate, Stuart Argyle and others.

To business! Ben Mees came 1st AVR and 10th overall, 6th MSEN and made a spectacular river crossing at Iford. Stacey Harries came home as 1st AVR lady, 7th AVR overall, 8th FSEN and 103rd overall. Gary Day came in 5th MV40 overall, 2nd AVR man, 1st AVR MV40, Dan Jewell came in 3rd AVR man, Andrew Trigg came in 6th MV60 and 1st AVR MV60, Colin Sawyer came in 1st AVR MV50. Amelie Higgins came in 2nd AVR lady, Isabella McNally came in 3rd AVR lady, Sam Grant came in 1st AVR FV40, Annalie Ibison came in 1st AVR FV50, Pauline Bradely came in 1st AVR FV60 and 10th overall FV60.

Determined (there is no other!) performances by Katie Laming, Maria Harryman, Fiona Gibbs, Dan Coleman, John Naish, Kevin Glover, Mark Spiers, Stephen Clark.

At Over the Hills we had 19 runners, Chippenham Harriers had 40, Corsham Running Club had 31. It would be great to get wider participation in off road. If you are reading this then I am preaching to the converted, but have to start somewhere. Would be good to spread the word. Yes, off-road can be muddy, can be fun and you know when you have done it!!



Ben makes a splash



Andrew Sharratt

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

Avebury 8 Nine

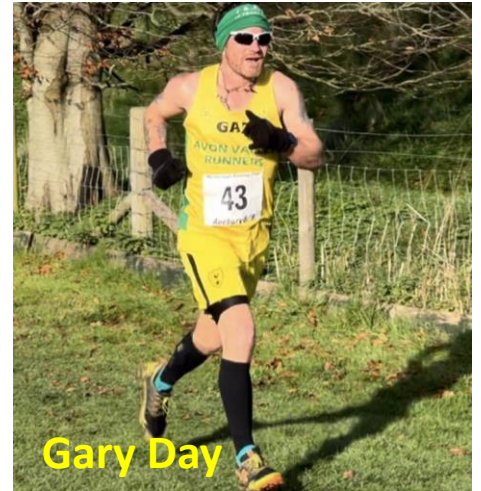
Avebury 8 Nine was a sellout weeks before the actual race (around 160 crossed the start line). Approx 9 miles off road distance with good ground conditions but some very slippery stiles to climb!

Bright blue sky (lots of vapour trails), chilly first thing (early start 09.30) but warmed up. Excellent cake at the finish!

Gary Day came in 9th overall, 2nd MV40, 1st AVR, and finishing in less than an hour. Isabella McNally came in as 1st AVR lady, 4th Senior Female and 51st overall. John Naish came in 18th overall and 11th Senior Man. Fiona Gibs came in 25th FV50.

Yarnbury Yomp

It didn't look good at the race briefing for a Sunday morning 10k run, high winds and rain squalls, but 16C (*it's supposed to be Winter*). As runners crossed the line, amazingly (an overused word but appropriate in this case) the rain stopped, the wind didn't add minutes to previous years times. Ground conditions were challenging with wet chalky tracks covered in wet leaves, the tank tracks up on the Plain were full of water, some people chose to swim, I am told! This was an out back route in places so on the out bound leg you knew you had to do it all again!! A total of 111 runners took part including five of our best.



Gary Day came in 7th overall, 2nd MV40, 1st AVR. John Naish came in 17th overall, 9th Senior Man and the 1st AVR to swim in the tank tracks I am told. Close behind came Andrew Trigg in 20th overall, 2nd MV60. Dave Bagshaw came in 61st overall and 15th MV50. Fiona Gibbs came in 94th overall, and 11th FV50.

Scoring Rules for AVR Off Road League

We have changed our (AVR) scoring to better reflect both performance and participation. Whilst the Wiltshire Off-Road League (WORL) scoring is slightly different it has the same aim:

- Separate standings for men (M) and women (W).
- 1st finisher (M/F) gets 1 point, 2nd gets 2 points, etc.
- Last finisher gets the number of points equal to the number of Male or Female finishers for that race.
- No entries/no show/no finish having run in a previous league race are awarded the same points as the last finisher in the busiest race of the season plus 5 points.
- Individual end of season reconciliation takes the sum of the best (lowest score) 6 races.
- The lowest M/F overall scores (for their best 6 races) of all who participated win the league.
- The fewer the points the better you are doing!!

Andrew Sharratt

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

Multisport News

I'd like to extend thanks to the AVT Working Group who have done a storming job this year working with everyone involved in multisport!

- Caroline Scott - AVT Multisport secretary
- Annalie Ibison - AVT Swim Champion
- Alan Best - AVT Bike Champion
- Maria Harryman - AVT News
- Emily Dye - AVT Results

Although we all champion slightly different areas our efforts are not limited to the areas above and considerable effort has gone into making 2024 another great year. So as the year draws to a close, we can all reflect on the incredible achievements of the team. All the way from European and World Qualifiers to learn to swim. We've seen incredible engagement in swimming, cycling and running.

Have you ever considered being part of the bigger picture?

We are on the lookout for another member to join the AVT working group to give AVT even more drive of enthusiasm to grow its success into the future. Please email AVT@avonvalleyrunners.co.uk if this is of interest or come and have a chat with ANY of the working group members above who can tell you more about the role.

For those of you with a keen interest in multisport here are a few dates for your diary:

Date	AVT Focus Events	Location	AVT Contact
March/April	Tri an Aquathlon	Clarendon	Annalie Ibison
16 th March	AVT FOCUS EVENT: DBMax Chilly Duathlon (5k Run, 21k Bike, 3k Run)	Castle Combe	Emily Dye
April (Before Oldbury)	Brick sessions - Special coached sessions		Caroline Scott
April	Segment of the Month competition starts / Segment Saturdays (Cycle)	Various	Maria Harryman
4 th May	AVT FOCUS EVENT: Oldbury Sprint Tri (Triathlon, Duathlon, Aquabike or Aquathlon)	Calne	Andy Jeffries
May (Before 51Fiver)	Open water - Special coached sessions		Caroline Scott
18 th May	AVT FOCUS EVENT: 51 Fiver - Olympic distance tri and AVT relay (DB Max - 1.5, 40, 10, relay) - Caroline to Champion	Cotswolds	Emily Dye Annalie Ibison (TBC) Caroline to Support
July (Before Frome)	Brick sessions - Special coached sessions		Caroline Scott
July 20 th	AVT FOCUS EVENT: Frome Sprint Triathlon	Frome	Annalie Ibison
July - September	Vobster Aquathlons	Vobster	Maria Harryman Annalie Ibison

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.



New AVT kit

The pre-ordered Tri-suits have arrived from our new supplier EPIC Custom Kit.

The Endurance Waffle speed suits come in men/women specific cuts and can be sleeved or sleeveless.

If you would like to order one or enquire about prices/lead times etc then please contact: avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Don't forget we also have a stock of swim hats available at £5 each

Results

Don't forget to send all your multisport race results to Emily Dye at AVTRESULTS@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk to be included in the AVT League or How Hard Did You Tri competitions.

See the AVT website for the latest standings. [AVT Results-2024.xlsx - Google Sheets](#)

Note that the AVR committee has a policy that you need to have entered as AVT and be wearing an AVT or neutral kit for your results to qualify.

AVT Christmas Social

Come and join us at Valeroso Lounge in Trowbridge at 6pm on Monday 9th December.

All welcome, no booking required.

[Valeroso Lounge - Café Bar - Trowbridge - Lounges - Food & Drink](#)



Caroline Scott

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

Segment of the Year 2024

Our Strava segment challenge has come to a close for its third year. With the points achieved during the twelve-monthly segments held between April and September along with the bonus points added where the segment of the month had been revisited (or even pre-empted) and for a few keen riders' points have been deducted, where more segments had been tackled than were actually required.



So, I am pleased to announce that **our Strava segment challenge champions for 2024 are Tom Carpenter and successfully defending her title: Caroline Scott**, with Alan Best, Jenny Nattrass, Darren Wrintmore and Caroline Tassell joining them on the podium at the club presentation evening on Saturday 1st March.

Rank	Athlete	Total Points	SotM Ridden	SotM Deductions	SotM Points	Bonus Segments	Bonus Deductions	Bonus Points
1	Tom Carpenter	492	12	47	246	12	46	246
2	Alan Best	480	11	22	240	12	45	240
3	Darren Wrintmore	470	12	42	235	12	42	235
4	Andrew Jefferies	351	8	0	163	11	14	188
5	Paul Banfield	346	8	0	174	8	0	172
6	Cliff Dye	305	5	0	107	11	15	198
7	Stephen Clark	222	5	0	87	8	0	135
8	Will Whitmore	194	4	0	97	4	0	97
9	John Naish	192	2	0	33	9	0	159
10	Sean Price (Westbury Wheelers)	159	1	0	20	10	0	139
11	Simon Williams	154	3	0	60	5	0	94
12	Adrian Holland	146	3	0	57	6	0	89
13	Richard Newman	135	3	0	47	8	0	88
14	Martin Disney	135	1	0	16	7	0	119
15	Ian White	124	2	0	37	7	0	87
16	Gary Day	109	3	0	57	3	0	52
17	Graham Livingstone	88	2	0	34	4	0	54
18	James Waugh	85	1	0	8	8	0	77
19	Dan Colman	84	0	0	0	6	0	84
20	Daren Booth	74	2	0	39	2	0	35

Rank	Athlete	Total Points	SotM Ridden	SotM Deductions	SotM Points	Bonus Segments	Bonus Deductions	Bonus Points
1	Caroline Scott (AVT)	493	10	0	247	12	45	246
2	Jenny Nattrass	488	12	47	246	12	42	242
3	Caroline Tassell	427	10	0	224	11	10	203
4	Annalie Jane	424	9	0	206	10	0	218
5	Rosemary Barber	375	10	0	203	12	21	172
6	Sarah Jewers	292	6	0	131	10	0	161
7	Maria Harryman	265	4	0	90	9	0	175
8	Jo Mumford	238	3	0	58	9	0	180
9	Esther Frawley	213	3	0	63	8	0	150
10	Fiona Price	183	1	0	21	10	0	162
11	Emily Dye	169	1	0	22	7	0	147
12	Fiona Gibbs	145	1	0	20	8	0	125
13	Anne Clark	134	2	0	29	7	0	105
14	Melanie Ward-Nicholls	116	3	0	44	6	0	72
15	Pauline Bradley	114	2	0	31	7	0	83
16	Sue P	112	2	0	39	4	0	73
17	Eve Green	108	3	0	48	5	0	60
18	Amélie Higgins	102	2	0	38	5	0	64
19	Izzy McNally	95	1	0	23	4	0	72
20	Jayne Williams	78	1	0	19	4	0	59

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

All those years ago

Avon Valley Runners has now been around as a club for over 38-years and a lot has changed in that time but some things have not, like members achieving success on a local, national and international level. So, I am going to look back at what we as a club achieved in this month 5, 10, 20 and 35-years ago...

December 2019

In this month five years ago:



Thirty-five AVR members took part in the **Plain Crazy 12-mile trail run** that starts and finishes on the outskirts of Warminster and takes runners through restricted areas of Salisbury Plain including the tank graveyard leading out of Imber. Ben Mees was the first AVR across the line in 1:21:58 in 5th place overall and the first AVR female was Jackie Rockliffe in 1:35:11.

The Avon Valley Runners team of Joby Hobbs, Peter Veleski, Richard Morgetroyd and Tim Lowrie took the honours at the **Hullavington "Secret Santa" 10-mile run**.

December 2014

In this month ten years ago:

Mike Towler ran a solid 33:27 to win the **Bromham Pudding Run 10K** and lead the AVR team including Rich Ayling, Mike Rose and Pete Slade to victory. Ruth Barnes made it an AVR double to win the Ladies race in 37:03 and lead the AVR team of Jackie Rockliffe and Laura MacGregor to victory. Stuart Macgregor ran 39:57 to win the MV60 award.

Robin-Mark Schols ran a PB time of 18:24 to finish 6th place and 1st MV50 at the **Street 5K**.

The Avon Valley Runners team of Michael Towler, Rich Ayling, Mike Rose, Dave Brigstocke, Dominic Beddis and Pete Slade took the **Wiltshire XC** team title and also the silver medal in the **Tri-country XC championships** behind Team Bath AC. Whilst the Ladies team of Jackie Rockliffe, Jen Ford, Fiona Price and Kiersty Barnett also claimed the county crown as well as bronze medal in the **Tri-country XC championships**.



Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

December 2004

In this month twenty years ago:

Bob Ellis was our sole entrant into the **Wiltshire Cross Country Championships** held at Devizes and came away with a very creditable 17th place.

Kevin Sparey travelled down to Portsmouth to take part in the flat & fast **Victory 5-mile** road race, recording an impressive 28:23 for 67th place.

A week later and Kevin took the age group win at the **Wyvern Christmas Cracker** 10K at Weston Super-mare clocking a time of 36:03. In 202nd Rosemary Barber won the 1st FV50 prize by clocking 44:42.

Escaping the winter weather, Danny Kay travelled to the **Majorca Marathon** where his 3-hours 30-minutes 28-seconds landed the 1st MV60 prize. Also, in Majorca and taking on the Half Marathon, Sue MacGregor landed the 1st FV45 prize in 1:41:14 with Tina Vivan the 2nd FV45 with 1:43:25.

The Boxing Day Run, held this year from the Beehive Pub in Bradford on Avon, saw Alistair Bartlett taking the win over the 5K course in 17:13 from Daryl Spicer and Mike Bryant. Claire Howard and Susie Phillips were our leading ladies.

December 1989

In this month thirty-five years ago:

40th placed Tim Northwood led the AVR contingent home at the **Yate Half Marathon** in a time of 1:23:26, followed by 58th Tom Roberts - 1:25:47; 80th Ted Rockliffe - 1:27:41; 149th Terry Harrison - 1:33:31; 284th R. Porter - 1:43:25 and 333rd Frank Allen - 1:49:48.

Getting festive was Bob Ellis who made third place at the **Nunney Turkey Trot**, Judy Farr went one better to get second place in the Ladies race. In 29th place Bill Howseg finished as 1st MV60.

Bob Ellis remained festive and was our first runner back in 15th place at the **Wyvern Christmas Cracker** 10K at Weston Super-mare clocking a time of 35:42. Judy Farr finished as 1st FV45 and we also took the honours with Phil Mitchell being the first Emu and Vic Bull the first Snowman!!!

Martin Connor ran out as the winner at the **Boxing Day Run** held in Trowbridge over the 'original course' from the Castle Public House in Ashton Street to the West Ashton crossroads and back, with Judy Farr taking the Ladies title for the 17th time!!!

A short snippet from the Winter edition of the Valley News

For those of you who wish to improve their performance with speed work we have measured by surveyors wheel a section of good towpath, it starts from the cinders on the Bath side of Avoncliffe railway bridge and goes for 812 metres to the gate at Elbow Cottage before Turleigh Bridge. If you think you are too old for speedwork think of 67 year old Jose Waller who has just improved to 77.04 for 10 miles on 50 miles per week most of which is interval work.

#Social Gallery

To tail-end this edition, some of my favourite posts, pictures and comments from the various Avon Valley Social Media pages that have been published over the past month...



Emma Rachel: Parkrun in Cape Town but the cloud hid Table Mountain.



Huge Congratulations to **Tim Burrell** who raced The Hayling 10 miles in 66-minutes breaking the club record for MV60!



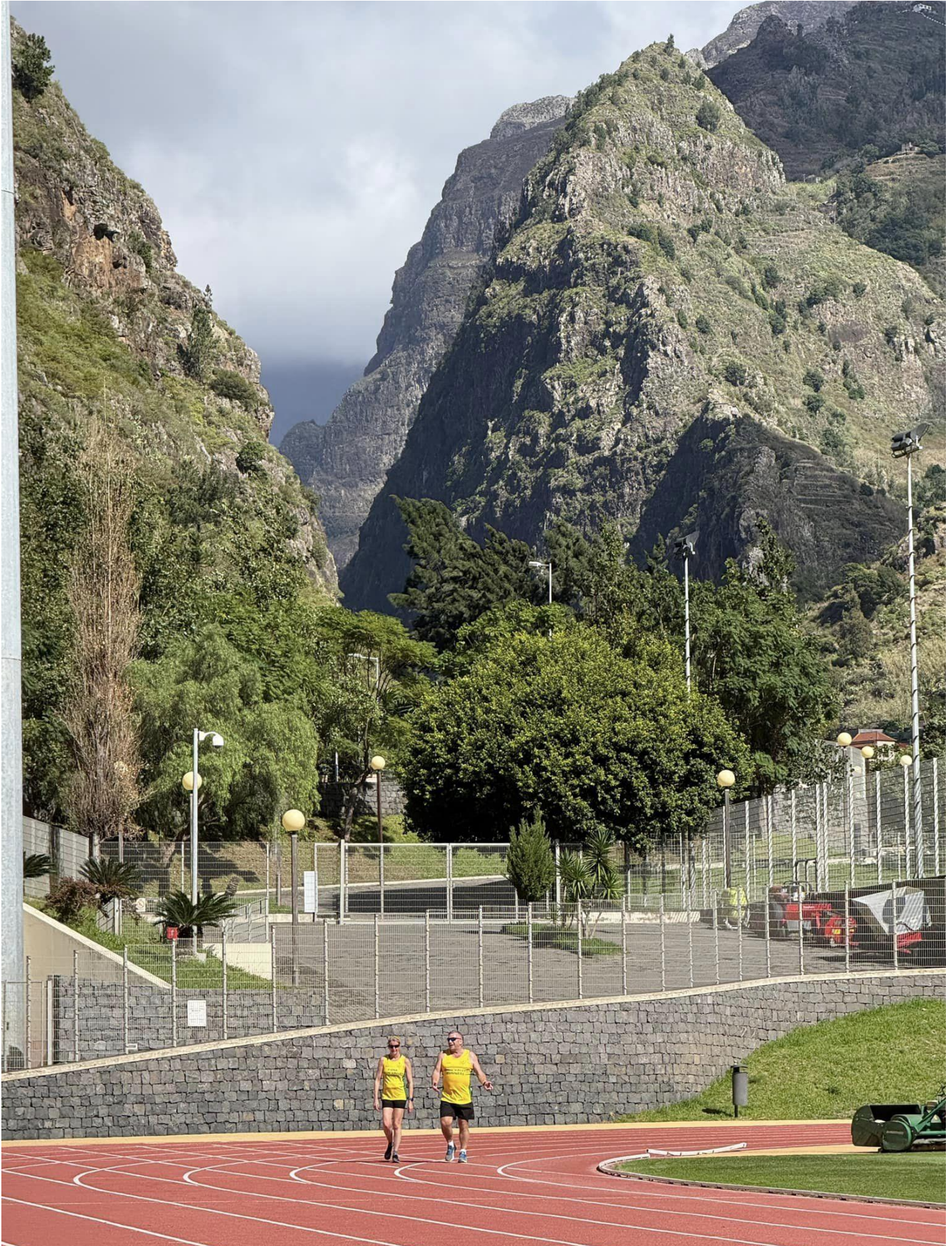
Sharon Walter: My landmark photo at Anfield after a parkrun at Croxteth Hall.



Fiona Price: wins her age category [and big money cash prize] at the Street 5K 😊

Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.

Fiona Price and Mark Tucker spotted in Madeira at one of the most iconic athletic tracks in the world...



Please send any news, articles or achievements to news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk.