



## Welcome to The Valley News

On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February, Forty-Five Avon Valley Runners ran out to the Storehouse Food Bank in Trowbridge with plenty of donations that will really make a positive difference for those in the local community. It is brilliant that, as a club, we can support such worthwhile local causes.

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

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**The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners**

**Issue #275 – March 2025**



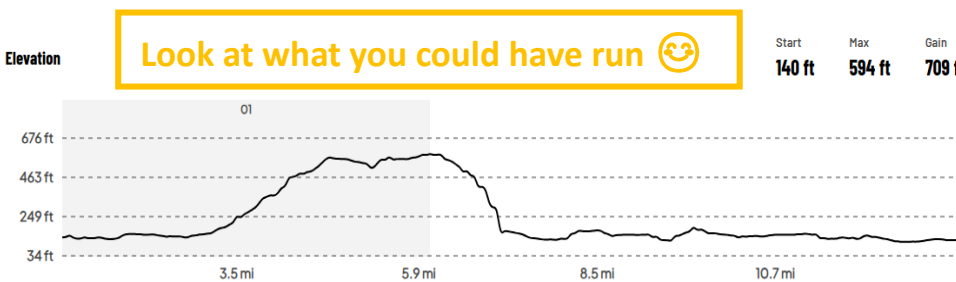
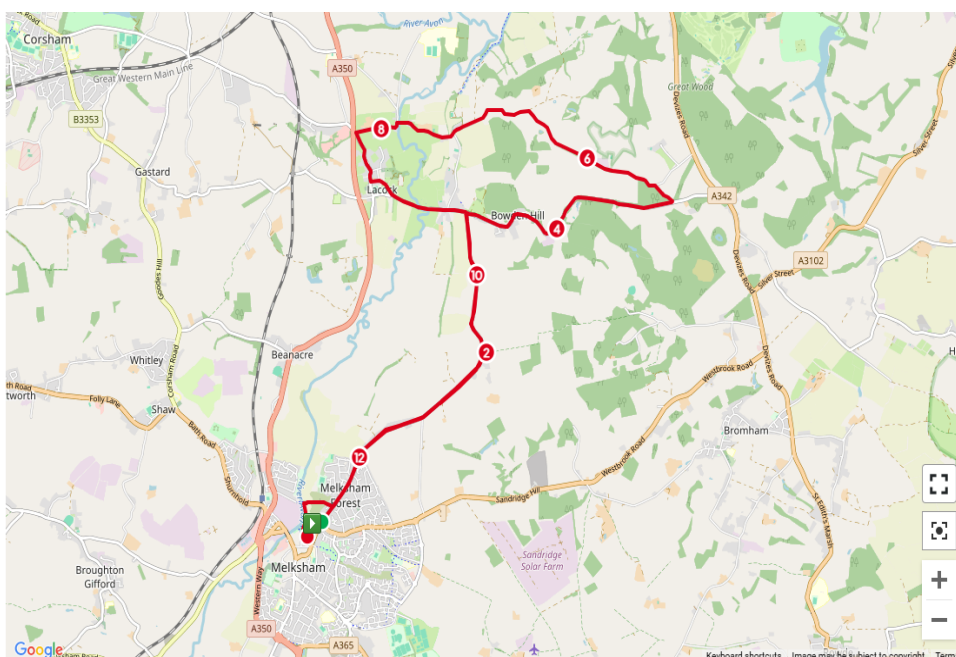
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# Wrinty's Ramblings

Back in 2010 I was faced with the prospect of redundancy from the company that I had been employed by for the past 15-years, so whilst I had the sword of Damocles hanging over me, I thought that should it fall, then perhaps I should to use my Project Management skills in an area outside of IT. I had organised a few races previously but needed a 'big hitter' or two in my portfolio, if I was to make a success of Stampede Sports.

There wasn't a road race of note in Melksham and so I put my planning hat on, fired up Google Maps and came up with a course for the **Melksham Half Marathon**. The race would start in the town centre and head out towards Lacock before sending runners up Bowden Hill. They would then descend back down to Reybridge, through the village and back to Melksham to finish in King George V Playing Fields.

However, when I headed out on my bicycle to check out the course first-hand, things didn't quite go as I wanted. The ride out from Melksham was good and quick, the climb up Bowden Hill was expectedly quad-burning but on my descent into Reybridge I encountered a tractor heading uphill towards me. I had nowhere to manoeuvre on the narrow lane, apart from dismounting my bike and retreating up onto the grass verge and thinking what would have happened if this was a couple of hundred runners – it was back on with the thinking cap.



Fortunately, the solution was presented by way of Bewley Lane which cut across the bottom of Bowden Hill, it would mean that the Half Marathon would now become a pancake-flat 10-miler (*well at least you weren't going up Bowden Hill*).

At the time I had taken on the role of Road Running Secretary for Wiltshire Athletic Association and trying to raise the profile of road running in the county and suggested that the "Wiltshire 10" (*as I had chosen to name the race*) host the county championships for the distance, along with the TBAS 10K at Castle Combe and the Cricklade Half Marathon.

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Over the next few months, I managed to obtain the sanction of Wiltshire County Council to close the A3102 for 10-minutes to allow the race to start safely, gained sponsorship from the Wiltshire Times for the race trophies, recruited a small army of volunteers and reached the race limit of 300-runners, unfortunately though, my application for a fly-past by the Red Arrows was declined 😞



The inaugural Wiltshire 10 gets underway in Melksham back in 2011

Forty-five Avon Valley Runners signed up for that inaugural edition with Tom Fisher and Dave Spencer, both making it onto the podium behind Salisbury's international athlete Simon Plummer. The race proved to be so successful that it was brought back again later that same year as **The Melksham 10**. The race continued to be successful and gradually expanded to support 400-runners, then in 2015 it was suggested that the race should host the national road running championships for the Association of Running Clubs and I expanded the race to a 500-runner limit. It was great to see Avon Valley Runners take both the Men's and Ladies team titles with Fiona Price being crowned national ARC champion and setting a new club FV40 record of 64:09.

The following year I was approached by the regional lead for England Athletics and asked would the event host the South West of England Road Running championships – who was I to say “no”, especially as I was also now the Team Manager for the county's senior athletes. With “home” advantage Wiltshire took the win for both Men's and Ladies teams just edging out Avon in both. The race also fell on Valentines Day, so the finishers medal was appropriately redesigned.

With the event now firmly established in the local race calendar, 2017 saw newly crowned England 10K champion Daniel Studley from Bristol & West AC line up with the 500-runner strong field and the tarmac almost melted beneath his feet as he smashed the course record with his time of 49-minutes 34-seconds. Also setting a record that day was Ruth Barnes who lowered our ladies club record down to 56-minutes 44-seconds and with Jo Mumford and Diane Hier took the Team Prize too.



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The race continued to prove popular with the entry limit eventually increasing to 800-runners and the cost for all that was being delivered, being kept at under £15.00. Then we had COVID and an enforced break of a couple of years not being helped by storm Katrina which led to the race hastily being converted to a virtual which was enthusiastically accepted by runners looking for a lockdown challenge.

The race returned in 2022 with 460-runners signing up, possibly down due to an enforced hike in the entry fee: Wiltshire County Council had decided that it would levy a £1,800 charge for my closing the road for 10-minutes, it would still be £1,800 if I wanted to keep it closed for a year or more! The justification being that they needed to inform the residents and businesses impacted by the road closures through advertisements in the local media via Newsquest. My argument that I had been giving my two children a tenner each to put a leaflet through the letter box of every address on the course went unacknowledged. I also pointed out that not everyone buys the Wiltshire Times to see the advert and wouldn't it have been more appropriate use the Melksham Independent News? It is interesting to note that WCC's use of Newsquest as opposed to more local and widely distributed publications has become something of a political argument recently. I digress.

One of the risks that was identified when I first planned the route was that the River Avon was prone to flooding, in Lacock this was not such a problem because the bridges in and out of the village have adjacent raised walkways but in Melksham the final half mile of the course would be under-water. So, after a few days of heavy rain in 2024 I had to call upon my contingency route for the first (and only) time, with runners having to take an alternate but still certified accurate path back into the park. 400 runners kept their shoes dry that day 😊

Onto 2025 and what I decided would be my final edition of the Wiltshire 10 with 300 runners completing the course.



The AVR contingent for the final edition of the Wiltshire 10

**Darren Wrintmore (Wrinty)**

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## Smash & Terminate

A couple of ominously titled races that attracted a fair few Avon Valley Runners to bag points in the Off-Road Race League...



Four of AVR's finest turned up for the **SMaRTT Smasher** off-road race in Calne. This was Wiltshire Off Road League Race No 6 (I think). Clear sky, very cold and rather splashy (rather than muddy, it's a fine line), this is an out and back 10K race, primarily along a former rail track. On the start line with 193 others (drum roll!!) - Sam Grant, Fiona Gibbs, Andrew Button, Gary Day. I've seen these people before somewhere!

First home for AVR was Gary Day targeting under 40-mins and crossed the line at 38:59, coming in 8<sup>th</sup> overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> MV40. Andy Button was 42<sup>nd</sup> overall and 7<sup>th</sup> MV50, Sam Grant came in 123<sup>rd</sup> overall, 32<sup>nd</sup> female and 10<sup>th</sup> FV40 with Fiona Gibbs targeting 60-mins and coming in at 59:03 as 136<sup>th</sup> overall, 40<sup>th</sup> female and 11<sup>th</sup> FV50. This looks like an easy race but it's not, the return leg is a tough slight uphill for most of the 5km. Great performance by all. Cakes and coffee got a 5/5!

A week later at Pewsey came **The Terminator**: This is a 12-mile very off-road race consisting of stretches of flat trail punctuated by punishing hills. A very cold day with a wind chill factor. Ground conditions were better than in 2024 (well they had it be!). Nine AVR runners along with over 400 others turned out to take on the hills and the wind. Gary Day came in as 1<sup>st</sup> Avon Valley Runner, 15<sup>th</sup> overall and 7<sup>th</sup> MV40. Daniel Coleman came in as 25<sup>th</sup> man overall, Ben Blackwell came in 70<sup>th</sup> man overall and Kevin Gover finished 286<sup>th</sup> overall and 14<sup>th</sup> MV60. Michael Guy also ran but had to retire injured. Our first lady back was Isabella McNally who was 11<sup>th</sup> lady overall, Jenny Natrass was 34<sup>th</sup> lady overall and 14<sup>th</sup> FV40. Fiona Gibbs was 94<sup>th</sup> lady overall and 24<sup>th</sup> FV50. Jo Guy and Pauline Bradley also both ran.



The next off-road race is the rescheduled **Slaughterford 9** which will take place on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March. With the exception of the social race (*no information as of yet*) this will conclude the Wiltshire Off Road League 2024 – 2025.

**Andrew Sharratt**

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# All those years ago

Avon Valley Runners has now been around as a club for over 39-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...

## March 2020

In this month five years ago:

Daniel Piper took the runners-up spot at the **SMaRTT Smasher** trail run at Calne, followed by: 17<sup>th</sup> Richard Morgetroyd (3<sup>rd</sup> MV50); 19<sup>th</sup> Simon Reece; 26<sup>th</sup> Rebekah Carrivick (1<sup>st</sup> FV35); 28<sup>th</sup> Andrew Jefferies; 34<sup>th</sup> Jennifer Marlow (2<sup>nd</sup> FV35); 35<sup>th</sup> Jo Farion (3<sup>rd</sup> FV35); 57<sup>th</sup> Andrew Sharratt (2<sup>nd</sup> MV60); 76<sup>th</sup> Kat Taylor-Laird; 79<sup>th</sup> Adewale Kadir; 88<sup>th</sup> Melanie Ward-Nicholls; 107<sup>th</sup> Helen Maria; 111<sup>th</sup> Richard Newman; 127<sup>th</sup> Adele Cooper; 143<sup>rd</sup> Frank Lamerton (3<sup>rd</sup> MV70); 147<sup>th</sup> Rosemary Barber (1<sup>st</sup> FV65); 152<sup>nd</sup> Teresa Edwards; 157<sup>th</sup> Alan Tate; 166<sup>th</sup> Philip Gibson; 167<sup>th</sup> Anne-Marie Gibson.

With a global lock down imminent, the **Bath Half Marathon** took the controversial decision to go ahead and 30 Avon Valley Runners decided to support it, with Ben Mees leading us home in 133<sup>rd</sup> place and clocking 1:17:55. 375<sup>th</sup> Robin-Mark Schols - 1:27:06; 492<sup>nd</sup> Toby Firkins - 1:29:43; 636<sup>th</sup> David Taylor - 1:32:17; 749<sup>th</sup> Holly Newman - 1:34:41; 803<sup>rd</sup> Andy Marchant - 1:36:10; 846<sup>th</sup> Fabrice Gagneux - 1:33:58; 880<sup>th</sup> Carly Hodgson - 1:36:45; 1295<sup>th</sup> Darren Messen - 1:41:08; 1371<sup>st</sup> Emily Dye - 1:42:42; 1928<sup>th</sup> Philip Harding - 1:46:52; 1935<sup>th</sup> Alan Button - 1:46:17; 2444<sup>th</sup> Becci Knight - 1:53:10; 2807<sup>th</sup> Cliff Dye - 1:53:52; 3074<sup>th</sup> Kat Taylor-Laird - 1:55:02; 3532<sup>nd</sup> Helen Maria - 1:59:44; 3684<sup>th</sup> Emily Bailey - 2:01:25; 3686<sup>th</sup> Douglas Marr - 2:01:26; 3960<sup>th</sup> Catrin Pullinger - 2:02:00; 4071<sup>st</sup> Sara Robert - 2:04:15; 4156<sup>th</sup> Kat French - 2:07:19; 4317<sup>th</sup> Vicky Bodman - 2:07:58; 4769<sup>th</sup> Alistair Bartlett - 2:09:57; 4878<sup>th</sup> James Gorman - 2:16:33; 5093<sup>rd</sup> Jayne Burgess - 2:19:32; 5468<sup>th</sup> Martin Pearce - 2:24:46; 5618<sup>th</sup> Mark Tucker - 2:23:24; 5982<sup>nd</sup> Jo Finch - 2:31:35; 6353<sup>rd</sup> Claire Balecke - 2:40:14; 6486<sup>th</sup> Paul Warner - 2:47:18.

## March 2015

In this month ten years ago:

Diane Hier was 1<sup>st</sup> FV50 at the **Gloucester 20-miler** recording 2:32:09 with Daren Jago recording 3:04:12.

Phil Harding finished in 14<sup>th</sup> place, recording 20:59 at the **Camp Resolute 5K** in Afghanistan.

Michael Towler was the overall winner at the **Devizes 10K** with 34:21 and led the AVR Men's team to victory with Pete Slade and Martin Batemen. Ruth Barnes set a new course record of 37:37 to win the Ladies race and with Fiona Price (1<sup>st</sup> FV40) & Kiersty Barnett claimed the team prize for AVR too. Also in the prizes were Robin-Mark Schols (1<sup>st</sup> MV50); Sarah Sims (2<sup>nd</sup> FV50); Steven Williams (3<sup>rd</sup> MV60) and Rosemary Barber (2<sup>nd</sup> FV60).

Alan Spiers was 1<sup>st</sup> MV50 at the **Fearless 5-miler** held at Malmesbury.

Rich Ayling ran a PB time of 75:19 to lead home the fifty Avon Valley Runners at the **Bath Half Marathon**; Fiona Price ran a new club FV40 record with 1:24:46 and along with Ruth Barnes and Jackie Rockliffe took the second Ladies team prize.

## March 2005

In this month twenty years ago:

Alistair Bartlett tackled the second race in the Somerset Race Series and finished 8<sup>th</sup> overall at the **Butleigh Multi-terrain 7**.

Paul Mumford and Rachel Bown were our leading runners at the **Gloucester 20-miler**, recording 2:18:49 and 2:23:55 respectively.

Rosemary Barber was third lady at the **Calne 10K** recording 44:23 with 6<sup>th</sup> placed Kevin Sparey being our first runner back in 35:56.

Thirty-five Avon Valley Runners took on the **Bath Half Marathon** with Alistair Bartlett in 1:17:51 and Jo Mumford 1:33:09 being our leading runners.

Daryl Spicer got onto the podium at the **Hogweed Hilly Half Marathon** with 1:28:59 for third place.

Club Secretary Stan Farr shared this analysis of the club membership...

### MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

The annual analysis of AVR membership at 1 January 2005 (your age at this date will determine eligibility for club age-group prizes for the current year) produced the following breakdown:

			U-40	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+
<b>Men:</b>	<b>84</b> (60.43%)	(33.33% u-40)	28	10	7	13	10	5	9	2
<b>Women:</b>	<b>55</b> (39.57%)	(47.27% u-40)	26	8	7	7	3	3	0	1
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>139</b>	(38.85% u-40)	54	18	14	20	13	8	9	3

**Subs reminder:** The above totals notwithstanding, the actual total of paid-up members in February 2005 was 91. The annual subscription of £7 for seniors was due on 1 January and should have been paid to treasurer Joyce Field during the first quarter, so you know what to do if you want to avoid being omitted from the list and forfeiting benefits of membership!

Whilst in our Captain's Corner, Tina Vivian introduced us to this...

### *Definitely not a Sex Toy*

Are you fed up with your bananas getting puréed whilst you are out on a long run? Banana guards may be the answer at a mere £3.00 each from Tina. They are available in a number of colours including "mellow yellow", "sublime green", "passionate purple" and "pretty in pink". But before you ask - *"No, there is not a battery attachment available"*.



## March 1990

In this month thirty-five years ago:

Judy Farr was 1<sup>st</sup> FV45 at the **Romsey 10K**, recording 43:58, Judy also picked up the Vets award at the **Paulton 10K** a week later with 46:47 and again at the end of the month with 46:14 at the **Midsomer Norton 10K**.


Both Keith Elsey and Martin Connor broke the 80-minute barrier at the **Bath Half Marathon** with 1:17:43 & 1:19:39 respectively. Forty-four Avon Valley Runners completed the race.

Keith Elsey ran an impressive 1:15:25 at the **Fleet Half Marathon**.

Danny Kay was our first man back at the **Gloucester 20-miler**, clocking 2:18:43 to finish 132<sup>nd</sup>.

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

A selection of forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Date	Event	Distance	Details	
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> March	<a href="#">Slaughterford 9</a>	9-miles	Rescheduled Off-Road Race League event; <b>RACE FULL.</b>	
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> March	<a href="#">Chilly Duathlon</a>	5K/21K/3K	Sprint distance at Castle Combe and 'draft legal' too.	
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	<a href="#">Hullavington 20</a>	20-miles	Stampede Sports provide some ideal preparation for a spring Marathon.	
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Bratton Hilly</a>	11K	If you want a picturesque, challenging, multi terrain course with panoramic views, then this is the event for you.	
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Devizes Half</a>	Half Marathon	LPS bring you a good 13.1-mile challenge.	
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Lightning Bolt 10K</a>	10K	Potentially fast 10K at Langley Burrell provided by i-Compete Events.	
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">St Georges 10K</a>	10K	Very popular 10K brought to you by Corsham Running Club	
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">London Marathon</a>	Full Marathon	Oversubscribed fun run in the capital. <i>At least you can watch it on TV.</i>	
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">White Horse Sprint Triathlon</a>	250m/20K/5K	Triathlon, Duathlon, Aqualon and Aquabike at Calne with LPS Events.	

## Results Update

As we have many new members, here's a quick reminder to everyone about those all-important results. If you are new to the club, all member race results can be found on the AVR website and from the top menu select [Events / Results | Results](#)

The majority of race times are picked up automatically, provided you have entered 'Avon Valley Runners' as your club when you sign up (not 'AVR'), so please make sure you enter the correct club when signing up, as results are usually sorted by club. This is especially important for League races, where every entrant counts for points. Avon Valley Runners are an England Athletic affiliated club, so should appear on the entry page as a club. You can enter as an Avon Valley Runner member, even if you yourself do not have England Athletic (EA) registration. If you have issues with your EA number, please contact England Athletic.

If your race results have not been added, or you had a PB/CPB, please email [results@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:results@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk) and please include the following information:

Race name / Race date / Distance / Finish Time / Position / Link to the official results for the event, *(these are the only results that will be used)* / Comments, eg PB, CPB - please note that space for comments is limited.

We really want to celebrate everyone who ran a PB/CPB, so please do send these in!

**Best of luck with all your runs! - Sharon Firkins**

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# Multi-Sport Musings

Each year AVT runs three members-only competitions;

**How Hard Did you Tri (HHDYT)** - Where we add up the distance of every leg, of every multi-sport event you did this year - furthest distance wins!

**AVT leagues (Open and Female)** - which is a performance-based league with your best results taken over an 10-mile Time Trial, Aquathlon, Duathlon, Triathlon and Aquabike. Your result will be expressed as a % (so if 100 participants entered and you came 57th your score would be 57%). If you don't participate in a discipline, you will receive a score of 100% for that event. The lowest score wins.

**Strava Segment Challenge (Open and Female)** - This is a monthly event between April and September, taking in two local segments per month. Full details are in the [January edition of the Valley News](#).

If you would like to participate in the 2025 AVT Leagues, all you have to do is send your results to Emily Dye [AVTresults@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:AVTresults@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk) If you don't want to be included please also let Emily know.

And here are the final results from 2024...

## **AVT League (Open) - 2024 final results**

Name	Time Trial	Aquathlon	Aquabike	Duathlon	Triathlon	League place	Average
Keith Withers	100	100	38.89	74.41	19.87	1	66.63
Simon Williams	100	100	22.22	100	17.31	2	67.91
Andy Jefferies	80.54	100	100	37.5	28.99	3	69.41
Cliff Dye	89.06	100	30.77	100	56.79	4	75.32
Graham Livingstone	100	100	44.44	100	34.62	5	75.81
Alan Best	100	100	100	53.54	52.01	6	81.11
Paul Banfield	100	74.72	100	100	30.86	7	81.12
Darren Wrintmore	32.81	100	100	100	100	8	86.56
Graham Anderson	100	100	100	100	38.27	9	87.65

**AVT League (Female) - 2024 final results**

Name	Time Trial	Aquathlon	Aquabike	Duathlon	Triathlon	League Place	Average
Jen Natrass	57.14	55.81	38.46	29.55	24.29	1	41.05
Emily Dye	71.88	75	23.08	25	37.04	2	46.40
Annalie Ibison	87.88	23.81	77.78	77.26	28.21	3	58.99
Jen Davies	100	100	100	75	52.53	4	85.51
Maria Harryman	90.91	67	100	100	71.24	5	85.92
Sarah Jewers	100	34.88	100	100	100	6	86.98
Caroline Scott	100	100	100	100	39.74	7	87.95
Caroline Tassell	100	100	100	100	42.95	8	88.59
Jayne Williams	100	100	65.38	100	100	9	93.08

**AVT HHDYT - 2024 final results**

Name	Total Distance (km)	Rank	Name	Total Distance (km)	Rank
Andy Jefferies	399.946	1	Emily Dye	400.25	1
Alan Best	368	2	Caroline Scott	392.65	2
Keith Withers	268.4	3	Jen Natrass	277.75	3
Cliff Dye	222.15	4	Annalie Ibison	240.5	4
Simon Williams	138.95	5	Pauline Bradley	107.65	5
Adrian Holland	91.3	6	Maria Harryman	79	6
Graham Anderson	76.75	7	Emily Wollacot	73.696	7
Dave Clarke	53.65	8	Rosemary Barber	71	8
Steve Clark	51.5	9	Jen Davies	69.8	9
Graham Livingstone	48.65	10	Eve Green	53.65	10

**There are three upcoming AVT Focus events:**

- Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March - **DBMax Chilly Duathlon** (5k Run, 21k Bike, 3k Run) @Castle Combe - Emily Dye is the AVT Lead for this event and can assist with any enquiries that you may have.
- Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May - **Oldbury Sprint Triathlon, Duathlon, Aquabike or Aquathlon** @Calne - Andy Jeffries is the AVT lead for this event.
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May - **51 Fiver - Olympic distance triathlon and Relay** (1.5k swim, 40k bike, 10k run) @Cotswold Water Park (Lake32) – Emily Dye to Champion for AVT supported by Caroline Scott.

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### AVT Tri-an-Aquathlon - Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> February

This month we had the first of our AVT Focus events for 2025. In the format of a Buddy 30-minute Swim & 5km Run, our Swim Champion Annalie Ibison organised our annual Tri-an-Aquathlon on Saturday 1st February.

A nice way to start the season and well done to those that turned out despite the weather!



### Pronto Bikes Winter TT – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February



Jennifer Burke tackled her first TT at Castle Combe wearing AVT colours, along with Darren Wrintmore. On a typically cold and windy morning at the race circuit, our results over 10-miles were:

Pos	Name	Age Category	Bike Category	Time	Pace
61	Darren WRINTMORE	Vet 55-59	Road Bike Vet50	28:39.97	20.9 m/hr
87	Jennifer BURKE	Vet 40-44	Road Bike Vet40	39:29.51	15.2 m/hr

### AVT Kit

As we are entering race season - have you thought about investing in some AVT club kit?

[AVT Kit | Avon Valley Runners](#)

Full details of prices, pictures and how to order are on our website.

Available are:

- Tri suits (male and female) from EPIC. (We have one Medium Male suit in stock).
- Running vests, Cycle tops and Arm and leg warmer from Halo sports
- Hoodies can be purchased from Sports Bug in Trowbridge
- Swim hats are available from Caroline Scott

Please contact [avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk) If you need any advice or help ordering.



# #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...



Team AVR: **Sam Grant, Alan Button, Gary Day and Fiona Gibbs** at the Calne SMaRTT Smasher.



**Chris Redshaw** was super chuffed to get his first MV50 trophy at the Wiltshire 10.



**Robin-Mark Schols** and team launched a new Parkrun at Thoulstone Park near Chapmanslade last month.

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