



Welcome to The Valley News

Our archway has seen a lot of use recently and here it is at Castle Mead School in Trowbridge, where we supported their Sports Day.

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

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**The Newsletter of
Avon Valley Runners**

Issue #280 – August 2025



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

The Cotswold Way Relay

One hundred teams and one thousand runners took part on a 10-stage, 103-mile course through some of the most stunning countryside that England possesses. If ever there was an off-road event, this has to be on the short list!

Avon Valley Runners had places for two teams with a mixture of well-known names to this event and those trying out for the first time.

Leg 1: Started in Chipping Camden at 07.00 in the morning, a fantastic atmosphere. Fiona Gibbs was there having previously completed all of the other 9-stages, so lining up to become a Queen of the Cotswolds. She was subsequently crowned! Chris Middup also ran this stage coming in 34th in the Open class and 89th on the stage.



"Queen Fiona" & Chris

Leg 2: Ben Mees put in a fantastic performance crossing the finishing line at Cleeve Common as 3rd in the Open class and 5th on the stage having covered 12-miles in 1hr 33m – and it's not flat!!! John Naish came in 26th in the Open class and 45th in the stage.



Richard & Gary ready for Leg-3

Leg 3: Finishes at Hartley Lane, Gary Day put in a great performance coming in 5th in the Open class and 7th on the stage, covering 11-miles in 1hr 25mins. Richard Wood also ran the same leg coming 27th in the Open class and 50th on the stage.

Leg 4: Finishes at Painswick, Tim Burrell ran this leg coming 17th in the Open class and 32nd on the stage, this is a 20km section (*one of the longest*), Tim completed in 1hr 44mins.

Leg 5: Jenny Natrass ran this leg finishing at Eberly Mill and came 21st in Open class and 46th on the stage, this is one of the shorter runs at 15km but with some punishing hills, Jenny came in at 1hr 24mins. Sad that she is leaving us.

Leg 6: Emily Dye came 15th in the Open class and 24th on the stage. Emily was 1st or 2nd female in both class and stage, fantastically impressive on 14km course covered in 1hr 22mins. Zoe Yoemans ran the same stage coming 26th in the Open class and 57th on the stage. Zoe is planning on becoming a Queen of the Cotswolds next year.

Leg 7: Liz Bundy ran this leg finishing at Wotton Under Edge coming in 35th in class and 90th on the stage. Liz tells me she took the scenic route and she will be back next year!!



Leg 8: Kallum King had a great run coming 5th in Open class and 6th on the stage, having covered the 12-miles in 1hr 32mins finishing in Old Sodbury. Kallum tells me he will be back next. Rob Day also ran this leg coming in 33rd in the Open class and 74th on the stage.

Leg 9: Alan Button ran this leg which finishes at Cold Ashton, coming in 26th in the Open class and 51st on the stage. This is a 15km stag, Alan completed it in 1hr 28mins.

Leg 10: The "Glory Leg" finishes outside of Bath Abbey (*what a location*), Katie Lamming ran this leg coming 33rd in the Open class and 90th on the stage. Douglas Watkinson also ran the stage coming in 30th in the Open class and 81st on the stage.

AVR Alpha team came in 36th overall and AVR Beta team 90th.

We need to show our appreciation the marshals: John Naish who ran leg 2 and then marshalled leg 5 along with Dave Bagshaw. Also, to the minibus drivers who got people to where they needed to be, AVR for funding two teams and myriad others who did their bit to make it all possible. See you all next year!

Andrew Sharraff

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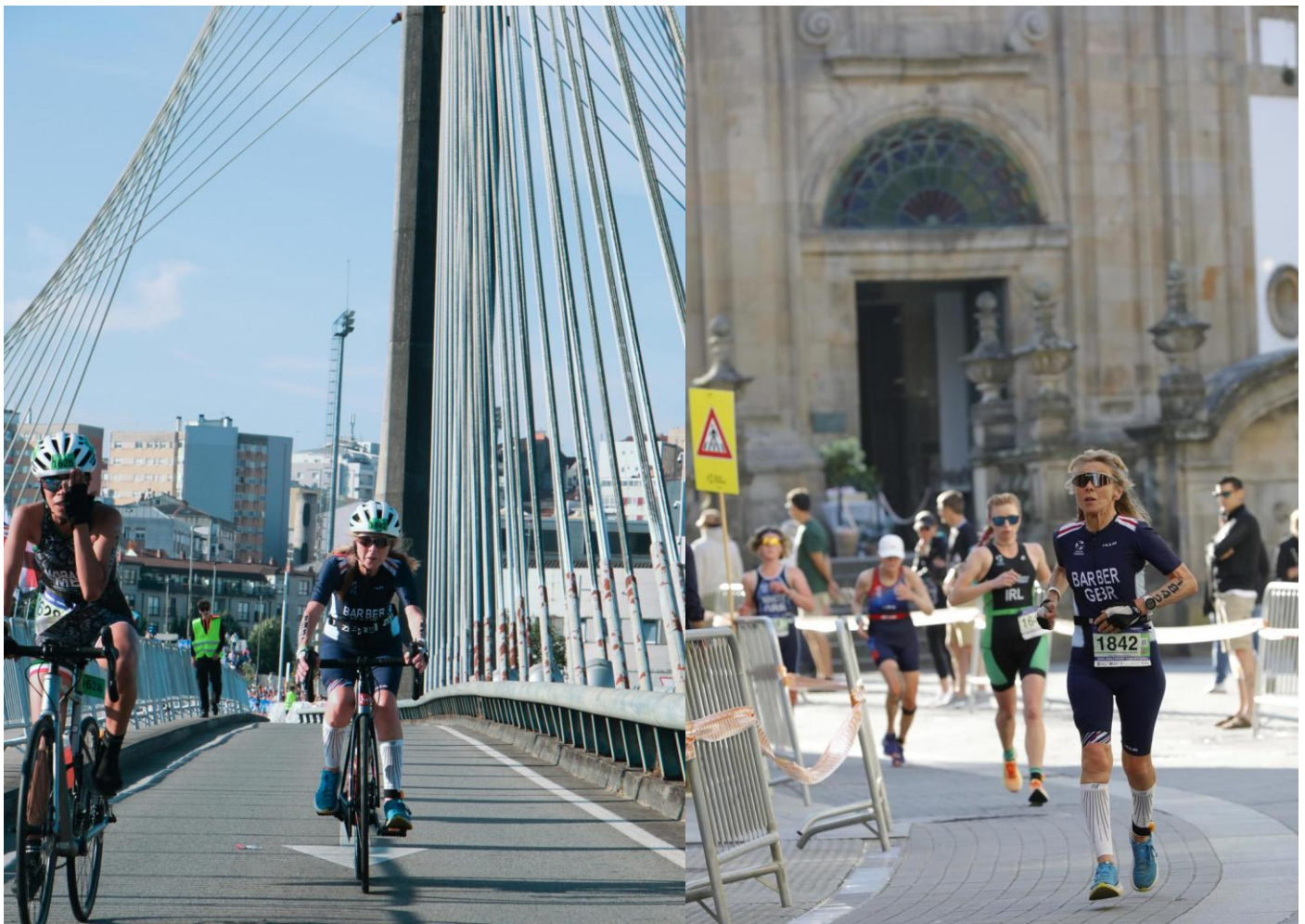
Pontevedra

I wanted to share my incredible experience at the **World Duathlon Championships in Pontevedra, Spain**. It was a journey filled with excitement, challenges, and unforgettable moments.

After qualifying for the race, my daughter Sarah, kindly offered to be my 'Roadie' for the week. We flew from Bristol to Porto, Portugal, and then took a scenic 1 hour and 45-minute coach trip to Pontevedra. The team hotel was bustling with athletes and bikes, creating an atmosphere of anticipation and camaraderie.

The days leading up to the race were spent familiarizing ourselves with the bike and run routes and exploring the historic city. Sarah, an avid swimmer, found a nearby pool to keep up with her training, and then meeting me for breakfast.

Race day began with an early breakfast and a sense of excitement. The first run, starting at 08:40, was a 5k through narrow streets and along the riverside, this set the pace for the challenging 20k bike ride up a steep climb turning at 10k for the precarious descent. The final leg, a 2.5k run, was met with cheers from Sarah and fellow supporters. I was pleased with my fourth position out of twelve in my 75 - 79 age group, qualifying for the next World Championships in Abu Dhabi.

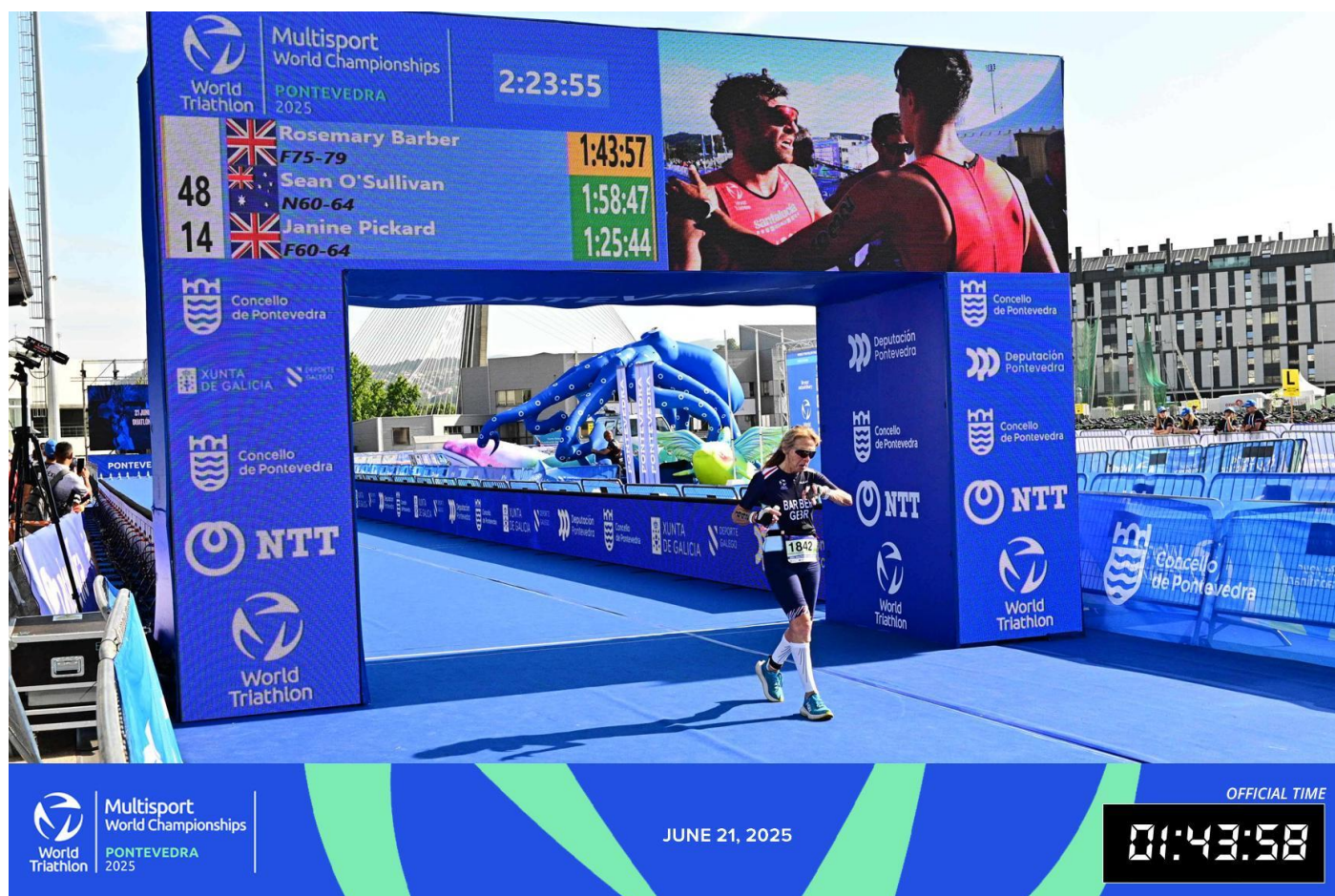


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The experience was made even more special by the support of Sarah, who ensured that everything ran smoothly. The event concluded with a well-deserved day at the beach and the excitement of the medal ceremony, where fellow club member Emily Dye received a bronze medal for her achievement in her age group.

This journey to the World Duathlon Championships was not just about the race, but also about the spirit of perseverance, support, and the joy of being part of a global athletic community. I am incredibly proud of our achievements and look forward to future competitions.

Rosemary Barber



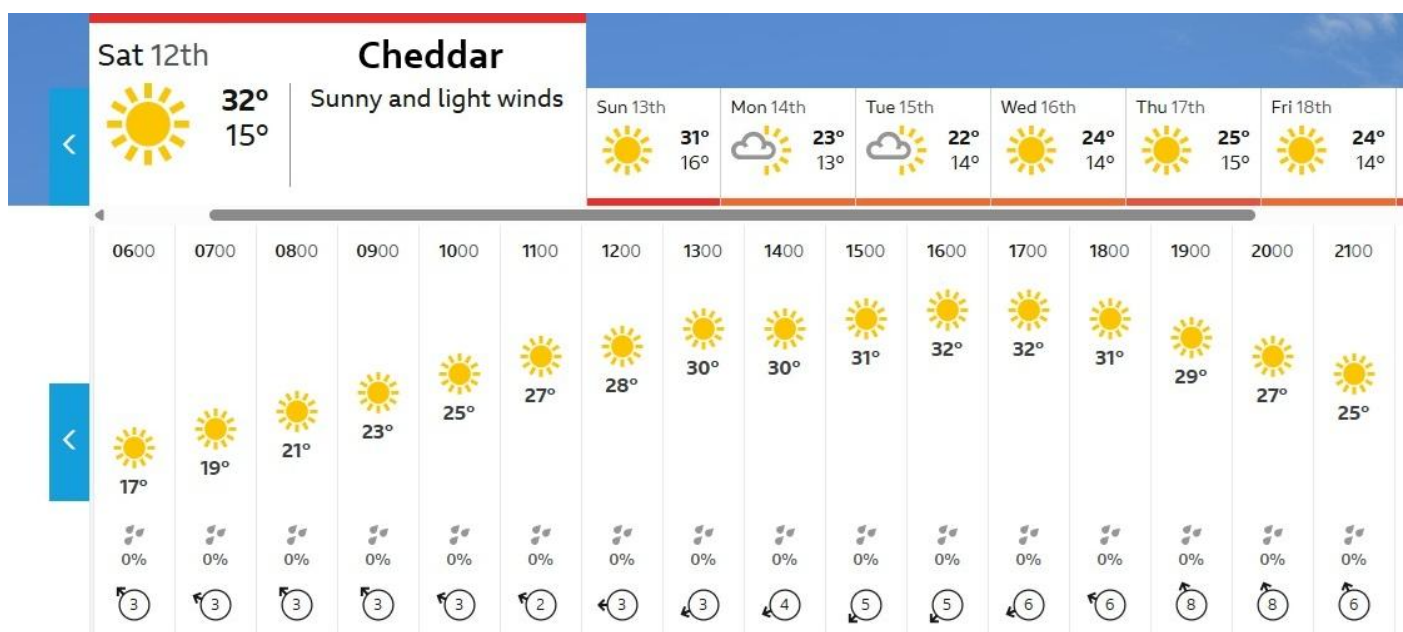
Race the Sun

Back in November I was told about an event that might interest me: "**Race the Sun**", which was to be held at Cheddar and billed as an Adventure Triathlon. This was not your standard Swim-Bike-Run but was going to be Bike-Hike-Kayak and also had to be done as a team, either in a pair or as a quartet. I opted for the pair option and my partner was to be my son, Jaret (JJ). The full scope of the challenge was set before us: 31-miles cycling (*including an ascent up through Cheddar Gorge*); kayaking 2-miles around Cheddar Reservoir; then hiking just shy of 9-miles up and around both sides of the Gorge.

The cycling challenge did not phase us much, as both of us could be considered accomplished cyclists, though I admit that I am carrying a few more pounds than I would have liked for the estimated 2,000ft of climbing. Neither did the thought of hiking 9-miles cause much concern, as we both take on the occasional trek, especially where there is a geocache or ten that can be bagged enroute. However, the kayaking was something that neither of us had much of an affinity with.

Throughout the spring months, plenty of cycling was had, with several climbs thrown in for good measure. Some good hikes were taken too, including a course reccie around Cheddar Gorge - it just takes one navigational error to undo all the gains made. Still the kayaking remained an unknown; then a post on Facebook revealed that you could hire kayaks at Warminster Park to take out on the Boating Lake - so off we went and 10-laps later we learned that we could cover 2-miles in well under 40-minutes but would have achy shoulders for a few days afterwards :-)

As race day approached the English summer moved into over-drive and a heat-wave was declared. The event organisers had suggested that the fastest time would be around 5-hours 20-minutes and we would be aiming for sub-six hours but with a 08:00 start time this meant that we would finish around two o'clock in the afternoon when the forecast had the temperature at 30-degrees. This was really going to be a "Race the Sun" challenge.



We had to travel down to Cheddar on the Friday evening to register as "Team Wrinty" and collect our race packs but also to learn that due to the heat wave that some course adjustments had been made. The cycle route was to be 30-miles with one of the hills being circum-navigated; for the hiking stage, the opening two miles had been removed as they were very exposed as they looped around the reservoir and with the water level having dropped, the kayak leg was going to be shorter too.

The next morning JJ and I were on the road by 05:30 and by eight o'clock were prepped and ready to go in Cheddar as part of the final starting wave. We both climbed well up through the Gorge, though I did have to give up my riding line for some mountain goats that had decided to cross the road just as I was rounding a corner. Once the Cat-4 climb had been completed we were able to open up on the speed as we headed down and out around Chew Valley Lake. As promised the route then diverted us away from Sutton Hill but took us straight onto the Smitham Chimney. Nowhere near as scenic as the Gorge climb through Cheddar, which made it feel so much tougher as it rose at between 5 & 15% over its 3-miles up from East Harptree, but we were passing plenty of other 'earlier starting' cyclists, of which more than a few had opted to get off and push their bikes up the steepest parts of the hill. Once conquered though, it was straight-forward riding back to the transition area at Cheddar Cricket Club.

Staying in our cycling gear but changing footwear we set off for the launch point on the reservoir for our kayak leg. We probably didn't show the required urgency getting around the reservoir path from the transition area, as JJ and I were both congratulating ourselves on riding a good cycle leg (we were *the third fastest pair*) and that ate into our time somewhat, as did the (necessary) water safety briefing. Once we were out on the water though we were back in the game and with the buoys having been moved inwards to provide deeper water on which to paddle. We covered the one and bit miles in 18-minutes. That session in Warminster Boating Lake had paid dividends and we were 8th fastest for this, our weakest discipline.



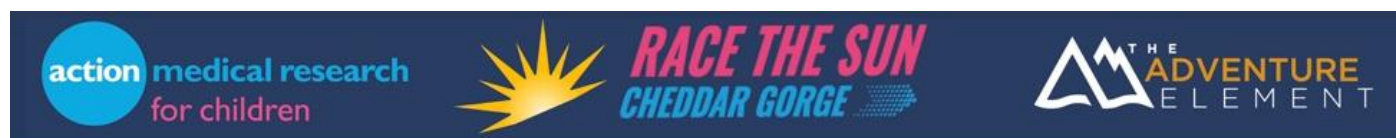
Now on to the hike phase and we were making good early progress but very conscious of the rising temperature, it had reached 25-degrees and the wind was negligible. We were still picking off other teams from earlier waves, whilst climbing up and along the south side of the Gorge. My legs held up well on the descent to "Black Rock" at halfway, they had protested most strongly when we had done the course reccie the previous weekend. Using a drinking technique which we had borrowed from dystopian TV series "Silo", whereby you carry each other's water on your back-pack, therefore allowing you to get a drink without stopping, we were able to stay hydrated and maintain our brisk pace. However, the rising temperature was still going to take its toll with the amount of exertion that we were making. With just over five-miles covered we needed to stop...but only briefly and within a few minutes we were back into our stride and soon heading downhill and back through the village to complete our challenge, just a couple of minutes after one o'clock with the temperature now having climbed above 30-degrees.

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An exhausting, exhilarating and fun Adventure Triathlon with the added jeopardy of a rare English heat-wave. We each received a wooden medal for our endeavours along with a Garmin water bottle and a very generous BBQ as well as the satisfaction of knowing that we contributed to an event which managed to raise £140,000 for children's charity Action Medical Research. The only downside was that we finished as the FOURTH fastest pair and to my mind 4th is the worst position that you can ever finish, but that said, we were less than a minute off of third. Let the training begin for "Race the Sun" 2026!!!

Darren Wrintmore (Wrinty)



Pos	Num	Name	Time	Behind	Hike	Cycle	Canoe
1st	90	Moscow Mules	04:25:18		02:04:56 7th +00:26:54	01:43:44 1st	00:36:38 2nd +00:05:22
2nd	79	The lads.	04:40:24 +00:15:06		01:38:02 1st	02:20:11 9th +00:36:27	00:42:11 6th +00:10:55
3rd	13	Roaring Dragon	04:51:04 +00:25:46		01:57:22 3rd +00:19:20	02:10:57 6th +00:27:13	00:42:45 7th +00:11:29
4th	85	Team Wrinty	04:51:58 +00:26:40		02:01:35 5th +00:23:33	02:07:14 3rd +00:23:30	00:43:09 8th +00:11:53
5th	59	Still Got It!	04:52:05 +00:26:47		02:01:40 6th +00:23:38	02:10:03 4th +00:26:19	00:40:22 3rd +00:09:06
6th	14	Andy & Debs	04:53:53 +00:28:35		02:01:16 4th +00:23:14	02:21:21 10th +00:37:37	00:31:16 1st
7th	60	Sink, Spin, Stumble	05:02:37 +00:37:19		01:45:45 2nd +00:07:43	02:28:16 13th +00:44:32	00:48:36 14th +00:17:20
8th	15	Andy & Mark	05:04:01 +00:38:43		02:12:03 8th +00:34:01	01:59:43 2nd +00:15:59	00:52:15 27th +00:20:59
9th	88	Pala	05:18:42 +00:53:24		02:18:12 9th +00:40:10	02:10:14 5th +00:26:30	00:50:16 20th +00:19:00
10th	62	So we can gorge on cheddar	05:20:17 +00:54:59		02:20:46 11th +00:42:44	02:12:24 7th +00:28:40	00:47:07 13th +00:15:51

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The Avon Valley Relay

The Avon Valley Relay is a 4-leg relay over 17-miles mostly along the Kennet and Avon canal starting at Bradford on Avon Rugby Club in Winsley and finishing at Trowbridge Rugby Football Club in Hilperton.

- 1st Overall/Male Team in 1hr 42m 55s – Avon Valley Runners (Team 2): Gary Day, Neil Gregory, Jay Hookins and Ben Gregory
- 1st Open Team 1h 59m 26s – Chippenham Harriers (Black Group)
- 1st Mixed Team in 2h 3m 54s – Avon Valley Runners (Team 5): Tina Towler, Douglas Marr, Mike Towler and Imogen Smart
- 1st Female Team in 3h 19m 25s - Westbury Running Group (Scruffy Donkeys)
- 1st Solo Female in 2h 20m 03s - Sarah Bennett of PD Fitness
- 1st Solo Male in 2h 26m 02s - Fabrice Gagneux of Avon Valley Runners



We need to thank many people who participated to get this event to work. The various authorities (including the Canal Trust, Bradford on Avon Rugby Club and Trowbridge Rugby Football Club) who gave us use of their facilities. Then there are those who in many ways have worked to put it all together over the months (David Hyde Katie Oliver, Alan Button, James Gorman) and on the day (Stephen Anderson, Martin Russam, Jez Bennett who gave us first aid cover), who marshalled the course and kept everything on track (Katie Lamming, Sandra Sharratt, Paul Taylor, Helen Donnelly, Vicki Scott, Alan Tate, Vicky Bodman and Hayley Chapman). And of course, the participants who we hope enjoyed the event and will come to the next Avon Valley Runners event (we know who you are!!).

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 somethings 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...

August 2020

In this month five years ago:

After four months of lockdown, a race appeared on the calendar – **The Bath Two Tunnels 5K** – in fourth place overall was Toby Firkins who recorded 18:19 and in 17th was Sharon Firkins with a time of 27:07 and Anthony Hickson finished 32nd with 44:25.

August 2015

In this month ten years ago:

Mike Towler set a new club record of 15:46 to win the **Heddington 5K**, Jackie Rockliffe recorded 19:02 to win the Ladies race.

Ruth Barnes cleaned up at the **Barbury Castle Horseless Steeple Chase**, not only was she First Lady but was the first runner overall, setting a new course record in the process. Joining Ruth on the podium was 5th placed Diane Hier who finished as second Lady.

Fiona Price was first Lady back at the **Foxtrot 5** road race, clocking 31:52 and with Anita Mellodew and Kate Hails claimed the Ladies Team prize for AVR. Our Men were led home by Mike Towler in second place overall, recording a time of 26:23. We had 33 Avon Valley Runners in the field that day and fun was had by all on a typically wet English summers day.



August 2005

In this month twenty years ago:

Avon Valley Runners launched the **Conkwell Killer!!!** race, which took runners on an 8-mile loop out from Winsley and down to Limpley Stoke before forcing them to run up the quad-burning "Miners Track" to the hamlet of Conkwell. Seventh placed Kevin Sparey was our first runner back and also claimed the 1st MV50 prize. Kathy Kinsey, Jo Mumford and Linda Ladner claimed the Ladies Team prize and Judy Farr finished as 1st FV60.



Also launching this month (by Corsham Running Club) was the **Foxtrot 5** road race at Broughton Gifford. Sixth placed Darren Wintmore was the first of our 17-runners back in 31:04 and Rosemary Barber bagged the 1st FV55 prize in 36:41.

Rachel Bown was first Lady at the **Baltonsborough 5** road race in Somerset, whilst Alistair Bartlet managed to break into the top-10 with a 35:46 clocking for 9th place in the very competitive **Battle of Sedgemoor 10K** at Langport.

August 1990

In this month thirty-five years ago:

At the **Devizes Marathon**, 48th placed Dennis Mellor was our first runner back over the 26.2-mile course in a time of 3-hours 36-minutes 37-seconds, whilst Ann Bull found herself on the podium as third lady after clocking 3:41:16 with husband Vic crossing the finish line in 4:00:29. Eleven Avon Valley Runners took on the supporting Half Marathon with 12th placed Martin Connor leading the way in 1:14:43 and followed by 53rd Sean Greenland - 1:25:46; 62nd Tom Roberts - 1:26:48; 78th C Stiles - 1:30:54; 83rd Linda Brown - 1:32:04; 84th Tony Frost - 1:32:03; 111th Judy Farr - 1:37:38; 124th Bill Howsego - 1:39:47; 124th Stan Farr - 1:39:47; 139th Mike Brooks - 1:40:57; 163rd Rosemary Barber - 1:47:33.

No race these days would take you along Bradley Road to Yarnbrook and up the A350 to West Ashton before descending back into Trowbridge, but these were different times and 23 Avon Valley Runners, completed the **Trowbridge Carnival Fun Run** which did just that! Our first man back was third placed Martin Connor, whilst Linda Brown was first Lady. Neil Fyfe and Judy Farr both bagged first place prizes in the Veterans category.

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Multi-Sport News

By Cath Rose

July has been bursting with energy, sunshine (at last!), and some truly inspirational performances from our members — both near and far. Whether you're racing your first aquathlon, building up to your A-race, or just enjoying the summer miles with friends, we're proud of every single one of you. We've got exciting updates, and plenty of opportunities to get involved — socially and competitively. Read on for all the latest multi-sport news...

The Regain Cycling Challenge - on 28th June, Diane Hier and Darren Wintmore both finished first in their respective challenges at Thruxton motor racing circuit. Diane led home in the Gold Challenge over 32-laps (75-miles) whilst Darren led home in the Silver Challenge over 21-laps (50-miles).

Ironman 70.3 Swansea - on 13th July, Keith Withers represented the club at Ironman Swansea 70.3, taking on the challenging sea swim. With the addition of the jellyfish, there was a rolling bike course, and buzzing city run and came away with a PB - Great work Keith!



Ironman 70.3 Luxembourg - Alan Best went further afield at, tackling the beautiful European scenery under high-pressure racing conditions. Why Luxembourg? The 70.3 course crosses over three countries So Alan went from Luxembourg, Germany and France, I bet he never stopped to get any fridge magnets! Great results Alan and can't wait to see what's next on the list.

Cotswold 113 - on the 13th July, Annalie Ibison took part at the Cotswold 113, a stunning middle-distance triathlon in the heart of the lakes. Great flying feet Annalie! Brilliant results in the heat! That was hot, hot, hot.

The Frome Triathlon saw a 3rd place for the AVT Relay team. Competing at Frome was Keith Withers, Caroline Scott, Charlie Pickman, Eve Green, Annie libison, Sarah Jewers, Alan Best and Cath Rose.



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Aquathlon Series – what a brilliant turnout at the Shepton Mallet Aquathlon on the 23rd July. A great mix of Avon Valley members took part, with many taking on their very first multi-sport event. The atmosphere was full of encouragement, smiles, and determination. Whether it was diving into new territory or crossing that finish line with a grin, the day was a powerful reminder that when you challenge yourself, the rewards can be huge.

Even better—several have already signed up for more!



"First-timers and seasoned triathletes' side by side at Shepton Mallet Aquathlon—proof that facing your fears brings joy, confidence, and maybe even a new obsession!"

Also, for all you who fancy having a go at Aquathlon on open water Vobster is also holding @carevents in the week and again it's a friendly safe environment but I just know that once you are in you will love it! No wetsuit or membership needed

Whether you're a keen open water swimmer or a multisport athlete, benchmark your performance against the clock with a choice of disciplines and distances available.

<https://www.vobster.com/eventsitem?20250711-aquathlon>

Avon Valley at Trowbridge Active - It was fantastic to see strong representation from Avon Valley Runners & Tri at the Trowbridge Active community event on the 12th July. With friendly faces, club kit on display, and encouragement for all ages, it was a great chance to showcase what we're all about: support, fitness, and fun.

Thanks to everyone who gave their time and energy to support this.


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Segment Saturday – on the 12th July, starting from the Lion & Fiddle in Hilperton, this ride covered a scenic 19 miles of rolling countryside. It was the perfect mix of effort and ease — social pacing, fresh air, and lots of chat along the way. **Reminder:** Segment Saturdays are for everyone — all abilities, all bikes, all welcome. It's about riding together, not racing.


The date for the next Segment Saturday is To Be Confirmed, so please keep an eye on the WhatsApp and Facebook page!

Segment of the Month - Our fourth round of segments introduced us to:

[Snake Hill](#) which starts near Westwood and climbs for 0.6-miles into Trowbridge, saw twelve members tackle its roller-coaster profile. Tom Carpenter and Caroline Scott were quickest over this section of road.

Rank	Name	Date	Speed	HR	Time
	Tom Carpenter	5 Jul 2025	25.0 mi/h	151 bpm	1:33
2	Alan Best	25 Jul 2025	23.3 mi/h	166 bpm	1:40
3	Caroline Scott (AVT)	25 Jul 2025	22.6 mi/h	148 bpm	1:43
4	Jenny Nattrass	22 Jul 2025	21.2 mi/h	111 bpm	1:50
5	Darren Wintmore	24 Jul 2025	20.4 mi/h	-	1:54
9	Annalie Jane	24 Jul 2025	17.9 mi/h	-	2:10

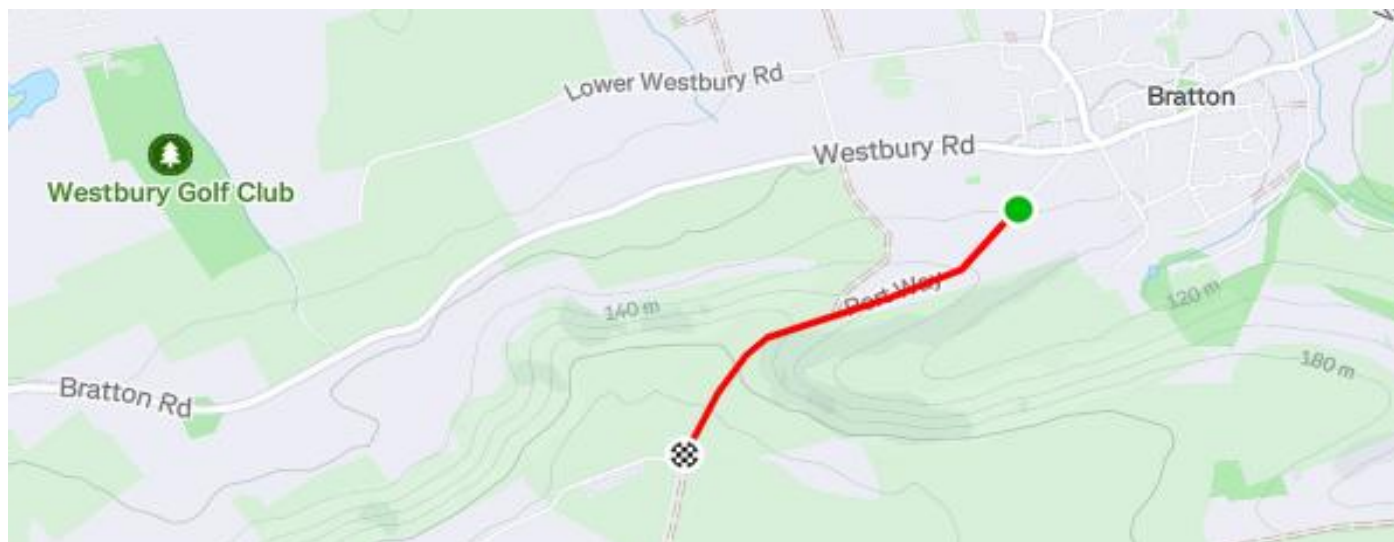
[The Monk](#) near Monkton Farleigh and drops down towards Farleigh Wick outside of Bradford on Avon. Eleven members descended along this road, none though claimed to hear the wolves howling at the sanctuary...probably just riding too fast. It was Tom Carpenter and Jenny Nattrass who were quickest, with Tom breaking the 30mph barrier.

Rank	Name	Date	Speed	HR	Time
	Tom Carpenter	12 Jul 2025	31.9 mi/h	138 bpm	1:26
2	Darren Wintmore	24 Jul 2025	30.5 mi/h	-	1:30
3	Jenny Nattrass	23 Jul 2025	28.0 mi/h	110 bpm	1:38
4	Charlie Pickman	10 Jul 2025	27.5 mi/h	-	1:40
5	Annalie Jane	16 Jul 2025	26.9 mi/h	-	1:42
5	Caroline Scott (AVT)	25 Jul 2025	26.9 mi/h	151 bpm	1:42

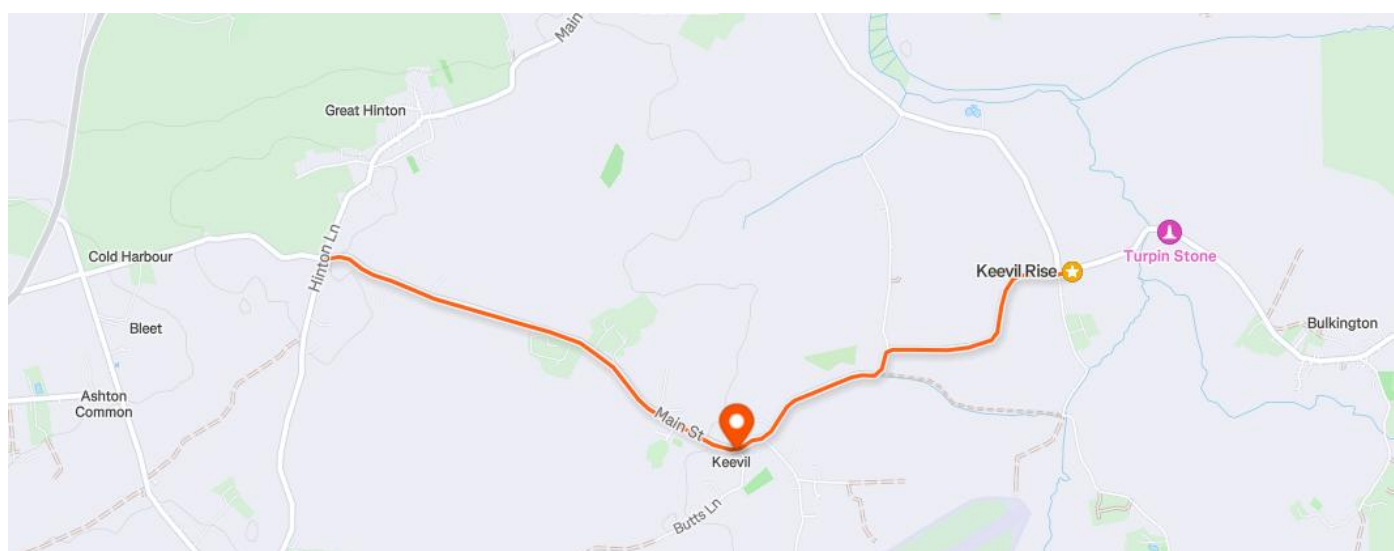
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So on to our penultimate round in the monthly element of our Stava Segment Challenge competition...

For August we see the return of the climb up to Westbury White Horse from Bratton called [Sign to the Top](#) and measures at 0.7-miles at a quad burning 10%. So far this year just five club members have taken on this challenge and sees Paul Banfield with 6:36 and Jenny Nattrass in 6:50 being our quickest climbers so far...



When your legs have recovered our second segment is also a climb (*though not as brutal*) with the [Keevil Rise](#) which is a popular 2-mile segment starting just outside of Bulkington and finishing near to Great Hinton at an average 1% gradient. Thirty-four club members have completed this segment so far this year so plenty of Bonus Points are going to be spread around, and it is Simon Williams with 6:10 and Jo Mumford in 6:19 who occupy the pole positions, so far.



For a fuller explanation of the Avon Valley Segment of the Year competition please check out the [January 2025 edition of the Valley News](#).

Don't forget to check the [AVT Facebook group](#) for news on the segments and the status of the overall standings in the competition.

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How Hard Did You Tri - this award is based on pure grit. We add up the distance of every leg of every event you did this year. Farthest distance wins!

The AVT League is performance-based. We take your best result in each of 10-mile Time Trial, Aquathlon, Duathlon, Triathlon and Aquabike, and this is expressed as a %. For example, if there were 100 finishers and you came 57th, you'd get 57% for that event. We then average your results across each of the above events. If you didn't do a particular event, you are awarded 100%. Lowest score wins.

Don't forget to send all your results into Emily Dye at avtresults@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

REMEMBER: IF WE DON'T KNOW YOU ARE COMPETING, WE CANNOT RECOGNISE YOU! 🤖







New to the news - we are delighted to welcome Cath Rose to the Avon Valley Triathletes Working Group; Cath brings with her a wealth of experience in mental health advocacy and a genuine passion for encouraging others to adopt a "have a go" attitude. With her personal journey in endurance sport and her professional insight into mental health, Cath hopes to contribute positively to the group by helping to shape activities that are welcoming, supportive, and empowering for all.

Final Word - Keep training smart, supporting each other, and showing up with a smile. Whether you're racing or recovering, your effort counts — and this community is stronger because of you. Don't forget to keep us updated through our Facebook page so we can share everyone's amazing achievements

See you on the road, in the pool, or at the café.

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

A selection of forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Date	Event	Distance	Details	
Wednesday 6 th August	Hilly Helmet Challenge	5-miles	Don your summer bonnet for this charity run up to Westbury White Horse and back	
Tuesday 12 th August	Westbury 5K	5K	The fourth & final of our races around West Wilts Trading Estate in Westbury	
Tuesday 19 th August	Heddington 5K	5K	Flat and fast and very popular.	
Sunday 17 th August	Lightning Bolt 10K	10K	Flat and fast 10K at Langley Burrell, near Chippenham by i-Compete	
Saturday 30 th August	Flying Monk 10K	10K	A popular 10K delivered by i-Compete.	
Monday 1 st September	AVT Time Trial Championships	10-miles	Being held this year at Longbridge Deverill along with our friends at Westbury Wheelers.	

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Road Running Report

Well done to Gary MacAllister & the team on another sold out, successful **AVR Westbury 5K** in July. We had 63 runners (*including our great AVR pacers*) with Jensen Walsh-Hill 3rd & brother Locke 5th U16, Rebecca Fletcher & Izzy McNally both top-10 in the Senior Ladies category, Jay Hookins top-10 MV40, Jenny Nattrass, Adrienne Barthram & Louise Old all top-10 FV40, Rich Harding 3rd MV50, Tim Burrell 2nd MV60 & Andrew Trigg & Simon Woodhead both top-10 MV60, Diane Hier 1st FV60, Andrew Sharratt 3rd & Peter Campbell 4th MV70. Well done all, with lots of Season Best performances & a good few PB's too.



This race was closely followed by the July edition of the **Heddington 5K** with another great turn out with 30 Avon Valley Runners on the start line. Luke Stubbs was 4th Senior Man, Jay Hookins was top-10 MV40, Jenny Nattrass was top-10 MV45 along with Clare Wood & Paula Farrell, Fiona Price was 4th FV55, Adrienne Barthram was top-10 FV35, Andrew Sharratt, Peter Campbell & Frank Lamerton were top-10 MV70+ and Pauline Bradley was 3rd FV65+.



Next up are the August editions of the Westbury 5K (*Handicap*) and the **Heddington 5K**. Both count for the Road Race league, with the best time of series counting.

Martin Russam

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The Gower Peninsular 100K

One of my longer-term goals for this year was to complete an ultra-marathon as a runner! I have completed them before as a walker so I was under no false impressions as to the challenge that lay ahead. So, on Saturday 19th July @7am, I found myself on the start line for the **Gower 100km**. I chose this race as the company offer generous cut off times due to it being open to walkers and runners alike and the aid stations are famously well stocked!

The first section started with a good climb up to an open ridge with stunning panoramic views, then we headed down towards Oxwich Bay, and hit the sand.

So much sand.

I followed the route behind the bay until the next climb to the aid station at Oxwich Castle. The next part followed the coastal path with beautiful views and bright sunshine. It soon became very warm with no shade. There was a bit of scrambling involved too!

As I headed out of the next aid station I was spoilt with views across Rhossili Bay. Then began a long and arduous climb. It felt never ending!



After a quick refuel it was on to the half way point where the 50km runners could happily dance under the finish banner, but for me it was the aptly named "*lane of pain*" for those of us continuing. The half way point offered hot food, massages and medics or those wanted it. For me, it was a quick change of clothes, and shoes, a bite to eat and back out again. Back up the big hill, back along the ridge and then off in a different direction!

The second half of the course saw a lot of tarmac and concrete, although more coastal than I had been expecting. There was also some woodland which offered shade and some different scenery and terrain. As I headed out of the 77km rest stop it was time for the headtorch and darkness fell. I ran most of this section with someone I met on course who was good company. We headed into the final aid station just before 23:30, and both thought we would be finished by 1am with 11km left. However, we had no idea what lay ahead! Steep inclines, rocky woodland and so many styles. I think it took an hour to reach the 93km marker! By this point my left knee was starting to hurt, and I wasn't able to run anymore. But I plodded on, until I eventually reached the finish line at 1.50am. Finishing in a time of 18hrs 50 mins and 20th Female.



I met so many amazing people on the route, although a solo runner, I never felt alone, often running and chatting with others. This was the victory lap! The training for this began at the beginning of the year with half marathon training for Weymouth. Then my attention turned to further endurance and trails. I entered the Giants Head marathon in June for practice, and completed a 50km training run the week after. This put me in a good position for the 100km (and 2000m of climbing), fit enough, but not exhausted! This was as much a mental challenge as a physical one.

Ali Alderton

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Dipping a toe into Triathlon

I know that triathlon and multi-sport events can be daunting. I took part in the **51Fiver Triathlon Relay** back in May, opting for the swim leg. I love swimming, it's my happy place. I felt at ease and felt I had a really good swim. The atmosphere at the 51Fiver was amazing and inspiring. Maybe a little too inspiring because by the end of it, Amber Whitehouse had convinced me to sign up for the **Westonbirt Sprint Triathlon** just 8-days later! The element I was most worried about was the bike; I hadn't been on my bike properly for a good while. So, I got on my bike – I could still cycle, maybe this will be OK.

We'd found out that Emily Wollacott was doing it as well and made sure we all supported each other, even having a cheer squad of Hayley Anderson and Sam Grant (*who saved the day by bringing my goggles I'd forgotten!*). We all had a great time and decided to sign up for yet another Tri and committed to training for it. So, we got super excited and signed up for **Berkely Triathlon**.

We had time to train for it as it was 8-weeks away. However, life got in the way (*it is summer after all*) and I was focussing on my running for now, so the other elements didn't get much attention. On the day our group grew from the three of us to eight of us with three of us trying a triathlon for the first time! Jo Guy and Louise Oldall did the Super Sprint distance and Katie Laming did the Sprint. James Gorman and Adrian Holland also joined us. Everyone encouraged each other on the day, cheering each other across the line! Jo even said she enjoyed it!



It was a really relaxed atmosphere and there was no pressure from anyone at all. The swim was in an 18meter lido, so 22-lengths to make it just under 400m rather than the normal sixteen in a 25m pool. The bike was over a two-lap course and had beautiful views. The 5km run was scenic, beautiful and mainly downhill! I wasn't worried about my time (*as Emily will tell you from the amount of time I spent in transition just having a chat!*).

I was just glad to be there, to have support and to complete it. I was also happy I 'd managed to dodge the majority of the rain.

I know triathlon and multisport can be daunting but if you want to give it a go, I think you should! You don't have to tackle a full one straight away, there are different distances and different disciplines. If you don't like the bike, why not try an aquathlon where you swim and then run? I also know I'm not going to win any fancy trophies but the friendships that are built along the way are the best reward.

Vicky Bodman

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AVR are on the Track

There was a fun, lively atmosphere around the Bath University running track on the evening of 16th July, as AVR held its summer sports evening. It was a packed programme — 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, and both the 4x100m and 4x400m relays. What really made the evening special wasn't just the races — it was the positive energy: relaxed, friendly and totally inclusive. The whole evening was really about having a go, whatever your ability, and enjoying being part of it. There were some amazingly quick youngsters flying round the track, and a few slightly older bods giving it everything too - and if you were anything like me, regretting it a little the next morning. Who knew I wasn't 15 any longer?!

A massive thank you to the volunteers who made the whole evening run smoothly — Ken, Katie O, Katie L, Richard, Fiona N, Tim, Margaret and Robert. I'm sorry I don't know surnames, but you know who you are and you were brilliant, every one of you. And, of course, a big shout out to Sean Price and Fiona Price for organising the whole thing — we know it doesn't just happen by magic. A special mention must go to Holly Newman who gave us her track expertise when she took the warm up, and also to our guest of honour, Anthony Hickson.

As for the races themselves — it's hard to pick out individual performances because there were so many great ones across all the events. From people smashing personal bests to those just taking on a new distance for the first time, everyone brought something to the track. Well done to all who took part.

Yes, we all know the old cliché: it's not the winning, it's the taking part that counts. And while some might roll their eyes and say, "*Well, you would say that — you're never going to win anything!*" - it's true, I'm not. But that doesn't stop me embracing the event - giving it a go, cheering on others, and having a great time. Besides — if I wasn't out there finishing last, how would you know you were winning? So really, you're welcome. Here's to more evenings like this - full of joy, encouragement, laughter and the right amount of friendly competition. Avon Valley Runners, you smashed it.

Andrew Thackeray



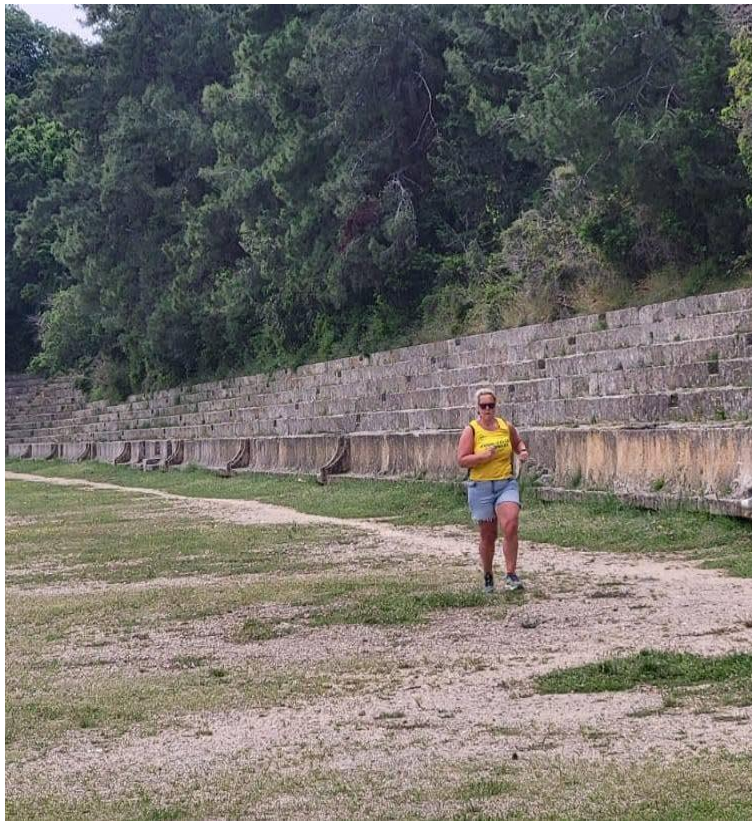
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#Social Gallery

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...



Sharon Firkins: on her Game of Thrones in Dubrovnik



Vicky Bodman sporting her AVR top for a run around the Rhodes Acropolis



Vicky Bodman, Emily Wollacott, James Gorman, Annalie Ibbison, Amber Whitehouse & Fiona Gibbs all rocked up for the Westbury Wheelers TT @Longbridge Deverill.



What a busy month for **Eve Green** with good performances at the Westonbirt 10K, Heddington 5K, AVR Relay & the Frome Triathlon.

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