

Welcome to The Valley News

Coming up soon (Sunday November 2nd) is our club's flagship race - "Over the Hills"

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 #282 – October 2025



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

Delving into multi-Sport

AVR has always been my motivation to run, starting with the beginners' group when I was 56-years old, and building up to run Half Marathons. It's always felt an inclusive, supportive club for all levels. I knew I would never be fast but I enjoy completing a new challenge. However, the last couple of years my running has been dropping off... maybe I'm just getting old....

When I saw the AVT's Friday 'beginners' (now promoted to 'technical'!) swimming sessions, I decided to give it a go. I fully expected to have to drop out as I had no experience of front crawl and a belief that I'm difficult to teach. I was wrong – Jodie Rebecca was completely unphased by my attempts and soon had me swimming 50 lengths of front crawl with a bit of technical savvy.

At 65 I was still unsure whether I should take on a new challenge, but a call on the AVT FB page for a beginners aquathlon resulted a group of us taking part in the **Shepton Mallet Aquathlon Series**. It was a perfect entry into this sport; 400 metres in the lido and 5 laps round the local estate. It was friendly and inclusive, and our AVT group was incredibly supportive; we all had a great time and are planning to do it again next year. On a personal level, I found swimming first actually helped my running and I improved my times a little in each of the 3 events.



I wanted to finish the season with an open water swim event and the opportunity arose with the **Cotswold Big Swim at Lake 32**. I was nervous; I had only just started doing front crawl in open water and had only swum in a wetsuit once. Vicky Bodman kindly coached me round the 750 m course at lake 32 a couple of weeks before, but I struggled to get my breathing right and tired quickly. My first swim in a wetsuit also left me lacking in confidence as I grappled to adjust my balance.

The night before I imagined myself sinking into reeds and wrestling with eels. I finally got a grip and mentally rehearsed how to find my breathing again. As dawn broke, the sun peeped through the morning mist and a gentle breeze promised perfect swimming weather.

I was greeted by the reassuring sounds of shouty Dave from DB Max, and by 7.50am I was on the start line ready to go. Following the advice of seasoned swimmers, I positioned myself at the back; the last thing I needed was people swimming over me!

I swam slowly, remembering all the techniques Jodie had taught me until I found my rhythm and my breathing. As I relaxed, I was able to enjoy the feeling of being carried by the water and immersed in nature, with the sun ahead glinting on the surface of the lake. This is why I do it! Later, I discovered I was first in my category - it was a small category but still...



The question of how much to push myself is still with me. Sometimes it's hard to find the balance with mind and matter, but certainly delving into multi-sports has given me a psychological boost and I'm definitely enjoying exercising again with a group of lovely people. Having challenges to aim for is important for my motivation so I've entered 2 x 10k's to build up my running distance again, and the **Westonbirt Sprint Triathlon in 2026**.

Hope to see you there!

Liz Mason.

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...

October 2020

In this month five years ago:

Debbie Ellis ran out as the FV50 prize winner at the COVID-compliant **Hullavington Half Marathon**, recording 1:44:59; whilst Holly Rush took the overall ladies runners up spot with 1:23:55 and Rich Harding finished as 2nd MV40 in 1:17:38. Other AVR finishers were: 37th Robin-Mark Schols - 1:31:59; 89th Emily Dye - 1:46:15; 103rd Laura Hoskins - 1:48:51; 105th Cliff Dye - 1:48:57; 151st Teresa Edwards - 2:07:59; 153rd Sally Frawley - 2:10:26; 154th Chris Walford - 2:10:27.

Earlier in the month, Ben Mees finished 4th overall at the **Devizes Half Marathon** in 1:20:05 and Fiona Price took on the **Thruxton 10K** where she finished as second lady overall and 1st FV50 with a 45:16 clocking. Fiona also managed to take the 1st FV50 prize at the **Two Tunnels 10K** at Bath.



October 2015

In this month ten years ago:

Ruth Barnes finished in fifth place overall, first lady and set a new AVR club record for the distance at the **Griffleton 10K** with a time of 35:56.

George Gurney set a new AVR club record at the **Bournemouth Marathon** where he clocked 2-hours 29-minutes 2-seconds for a fourth-place finish.

Avon Valley Runners dominated the **Calne Clock Change 10K** with Michael Towler leading home as overall race winner in 33:18 and with second place Rich Ayling and 5th placed Mike Rose claimed the Men's Team Prize. Not to be outdone, Diane Hier, Fiona Gibbs and Jennifer O'Connor claimed the Ladies Team Prize. In the supporting 5K, Fiona Price was second lady recording 19:21.

Claire Howard was third lady at **The Stickler** multi-terrain race in Dorset.

Anna Cottle was first lady at the **Westbury Lions 10K**, whilst Chris Roxburgh was second placed man and Niall Thorne, third. Simon Morgan was 1st MV40.

Melanie Ward-Nicholls, Liz Gard and Carrie Almeida were the 1st Ladies Team at the **Badminton Horseless Trials**.

Fiona Price bagged a county GOLD medal at the **Cricklade Half Marathon**, which was hosting the Wiltshire County championships, whilst Diane Hier and Peter Slade each took home a bronze medal.

October 2005

In this month twenty years ago:

It was an AVR double at the **Box Fun Run** with Alistair Bartlett and Rosemary Barber both taking victory over the six and a half-mile course.

Joyce Field was 1st FV60 at the **Swindon Half Marathon** just ducking under the two-hour barrier with 1:59:45.

Kevin Sparey was first man at the **West Tytherley 10K** with 36:53.

Twenty Avon Valley Runners made the club trip to the Netherlands with Llewelyn Jones 3:18:25; Rachel Bown 3:18:26; Stuart MacGregor 3:28:00; Andy Collins 3:39:37 and George Roberts 3:48:53 completing the **Amsterdam Marathon**. In the **Amsterdam Half Marathon**: Doug Barber 1:21:02; Darren Wrintmore 1:28:19; Chris Atkinson 1:35:09; Paul Mumford 1:37:09; Jo Mumford 1:37:12; Tina Vivian 1:40:33; Mike Pace 1:41:29; Sue MacGregor 1:41:29 and Ali Atkinson 1:54:26. In the **Amsterdam 10K**: Sarah Clark 47:26; Julia Scott 49:30; Paul Clark 49:37; Chris Snape 50:01; Tony Robinson 53:42 and Dennis Mellor 62:22.

October 1990

In this month thirty-five years ago:






Judy Farr was first Lady Vet at the **Bifton 10K** and second Lady Vet at the **Marlborough 10K**.

Denise Ellis was third lady at the **Collingbourne 10K**.

Martin Connor finished 11th overall at the **Gloucester Marathon** with a time of 2:54:24, whilst coming home in 20th position, Ted Rockliffe bagged himself a new Personal Best time of 3:04:49. Two weeks later at the **Abingdon Marathon**, Martin Connor broke the three-hour barrier again with 2:53:53 for 29th place.

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

A selection of forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Date	Event	Distance	Details	
Wednesday 8 th October	Pronto-Bikes TT	10-miles	Final DB Max hosted TT race at Castle Combe circuit for the year	
Sunday 12 th October	Marshfield Mudlark	11K	Race #2 in the Wiltshire Off-Road Race League	
Sunday 12 th October	Grittleton 10K	10K	Flat & potentially fast course presented by i-Compete	
Sunday 19 th October	The White Horse Gallop	7'ish miles	It is back – the quad burning run to the top of Westbury White Horse, courtesy of Redfish events & #3 in the WORL.	
Sunday 19 th October	Lightning Bolt 10K	10K	Another flat & potentially fast course presented by i-Compete	

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Multi-Sport News

Oh my Gosh, I'm sure September is meant to be easing towards the off season for multisport, but you wouldn't know it as our members took on a whole host of events from Time Trials, duathlons, long distance swims, 70.3 and Ironman!..to help them celebrate and maybe be inspired for next year, read on...

Monday 1st September saw the AVT club Time Trial championships take place over the [U321 course at Longbridge Deverill](#) at an open event hosted by our friends at Westbury Wheelers. Five Avon Triathletes took on the undulating 10-mile course with Alan Best (28:41) and Annalie Ibison (31:56) being crowned as our club champions. Charlie Pickman (29:37); Paul Banfield (30:58) and Fiona Gibbs (34:33) were our other finishers with our club Vice-President Darren Wrintmore in the Race Directors chair with Peter Campbell and Caroline Barham on time-keeping duties.



The AVT Working Group held an Introduction to multi-sport evening sharing a presentation and bringing in lots of swim, cycling and running kit to show what you need and to answer all those questions like....do I wear underwear under my tri-suit? What is a race belt? How do I go to the toilet in a wetsuit?

Thanks to all those who contributed: Alan Best, Annalie Jane, Keith Withers, Vicky Bodman, Jennifer Lucy, Cath Rose and John Naish and to all those who attended.

If you missed it then it was recorded and can be seen [here](#).

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Ironman Weymouth 70.3 - 14th September

Due to forecasted bad weather and concerns over safety, the swim leg of this year's race was cancelled. I'm sure it was a disappointment to everyone involved, not least the athletes who had put in all the training and missed out on the full experience, but despite this Bex Walsh-Hill finished the Bike/T2/Run legs in a combined time of 06:10 - congratulations Bex!

Bournemouth International Triathlon - 14th September

This year Challenging Events hosted the Great Britain Age Group Team European Sprint Qualifier alongside their Standard Distance, Aquabike and Aquathlon events. Both Sprint and Standard distance swims start on the beach just under the zig zag of West Cliff Gardens before heading out of Bournemouth on a fast bike course towards the market town of Ringwood on the edge of The New Forest. You then finish by running along the promenade to finish back on the sand!

Well done to Caroline Scott and Emily Dye from AVT who undertook the challenges and big congratulations to Emily Dye who came 1st in her Age Category in the Sprint Distance Triathlon, qualifying for the Europeans in 2026.

Swim Serpentine - 20th September

Several of our members took to the Serpentine Lake in Hyde Park London to complete the 2-mile swim and one of the three London Classic events (*The London Marathon and Ride London 100 being the other two*). The events can be completed in any order and over any time period. From AVT, swimming this year included Emily Dye and Caroline Scott who are both able to show off their Special London Classics Medals!

The London Classics medal is awarded to those people who complete the three London Classic events: London Marathon, Ride London and Swim Serpentine. You can complete each event whenever you want, over your lifetime, but need to complete them all to get the medal! More information on the London Classics can be found [here](#).

Here's Caroline looking a little blue from the cold Swim Serpentine but happy to receive that huge London Classic medal!



Ironman Italy - 20th September

Alan Best has done not one, but two Full Ironman Triathlon's this year. How does he do it you ask? Through dedication and determination, his journey into triathlon over the last few years has been amazing. His most recent event was Ironman Italy, where he finished in 12-hours 46-minutes and 21-seconds, coming 168th/245 in his age group.

Well done, Alan, we'd say rest up and enjoy the feeling but knowing you I'm sure you are already thinking about what next!



Segment of the Month - Our final round of segments brought us two climbs:

The [Worm Hill](#) climb at Bradford Leigh attracted 12 members to tackle its 0.38-miles in length at a 3.4% gradient, with Tom Carpenter completing the climb in 1-minute 3-seconds (21.7mph) and Caroline Scott in 1-minute 16-seconds (18mph) being our quickest and bagging the 25-points.

Our second segment in September was another deceptive climb as we challenged members to take on the 0.7-mile climb up [Hill Street](#) in Trowbridge. 18 members tackled this ascent with, who else but Tom Carpenter clocking the fastest time of 1-minute 51-seconds (22.4mph) and Caroline Scott in 1-minute 55-seconds (21.6mph) being our quickest speedsters over this lengthy incline.

That concludes the monthly round of segments and now you have until 25th November to revisit the segments that we have used this year and bag some bonus points.

The top-10 table now looks like this and as it stands, Tom Carpenter could become the first Avon Valley Triathlete to finish our Segment of the Year competition with a maximum 500-points and Caroline Scott is set to claim her fourth consecutive title!!!

Rank	Athlete	Total Points	SotM Ridden	SotM Deductions	SotM Points	Bonus Segments	Bonus Deductions	Bonus Points
1	Tom Carpenter	500	12	48	250	12	48	250
2	Alan Best	481	12	45	241	12	45	240
3	Darren Wintmore	459	12	41	230	12	41	229
4	Charlie Pickman	447	12	41	224	12	29	223
5	Paul Banfield	394	12	33	203	12	23	191
6	Adrian Holland	384	11	18	197	12	28	187
7	John Naish	222	4	0	67	9	0	155
8	Martin Disney	220	3	0	62	9	0	158
9	Sean Price (Westbury Wheelers)	176	4	0	72	7	0	104
10	Andrew Jefferies	171	4	0	83	5	0	88

Rank	Athlete	Total Points	SotM Ridden	SotM Deductions	SotM Points	Bonus Segments	Bonus Deductions	Bonus Points
1	Caroline Scott (AVT)	493	12	47	247	12	45	246
2	Jenny Nattrass	485	10	0	244	12	35	241
3	Maria Harryman	440	12	43	225	12	38	215
4	Annalie Jane	417	8	0	187	11	17	230
5	Rosemary Barber	364	10	0	202	10	0	162
6	Jennifer Burke	283	6	0	121	9	0	162
7	Jo Mumford	251	5	0	107	7	0	144
8	Caroline Tassell	219	4	0	81	9	0	138
9	Emily Dye	215	2	0	41	8	0	174
10	Vanessa Lucas	163	2	0	37	7	0	126

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Looking forward to the 2026 segment challenge, we are looking for somebody to take over the administration of the competition, if you think that you can help with this then please drop a line to avt@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

AVT 2026 Focus Event planning evening - 14th October

The AVT working group will meet this month to plan our calendar of focus events and club organised training events for 2026. We are really keen to hear from our members if you have any particular events you'd like us to consider, or any training or social ideas you would like the club to offer. Please contact one of the working-group (Caroline Scott, Alan Best, Maria Harryman, Jennifer Burke, Cath Rose, Annalie Ibison or Emily Dye) if you've got ideas.

Don't forget, if you have been racing this year and would like your results to be included in the AVT leagues or the How Hard Did You Tri? competition, then please send your results in to; avtresults@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Road Race Report

At the Chippenham Half we had 22 runners with Ben Mees 11th overall and 2nd MV40 and Tim Burrell 2nd MV60. Going into the final race – The Devizes 10k we are still top of the Wiltshire Road Race League and with (hopefully) a strong participation will see us retain the county crown.

WRRL Division 1			Race #1		Race #2		Race #3		Race #4		Race #5		Race #6		Race #7	
Position	Team/Club	Total Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts	Race Score	Race Pts
1	Avon Valley Runners - A	113	767	19	695	17	733	19	771	19	738	18	807	19	759	19
2	Royal Wootton Bassett Hounds RC - A	111	837	20	524	15	346	12	756	17	763	19	885	20	766	20
3	Chippenham Harriers - A	111	440	13	866	20	696	18	797	20	858	20	566	16	605	17
4	Frome Running Club - A	102	704	18	688	16	423	14	725	16	642	16	782	18	611	18
5	Caine Running Club - A	93	492	15	461	13	494	16	765	18	619	15	381	13	536	16
6	Team Bath AC - A	89	0	0	847	19	948	20	77	9	699	17	85	10	459	14
7	Avon Valley Runners - B	87	516	16	492	14	484	15	493	15	448	12	563	15	196	9
8	Royal Wootton Bassett Hounds RC - B	79	616	17	109	9	40	9	475	14	436	11	708	17	340	11
9	Corsham Running Club - A	77	0	0	731	18	362	13	440	13	73	9	69	9	512	15
10	Stonehenge Striders RC - A	75	466	14	183	10	245	10	251	10	480	14	448	14	454	13
11	City of Salisbury AC & RC - A	73	182	11	308	12	632	17	279	11	253	10	370	12	237	10
12	Devizes Running Club - A	71	279	12	251	11	258	11	419	12	473	13	360	11	408	12

Martin Russam

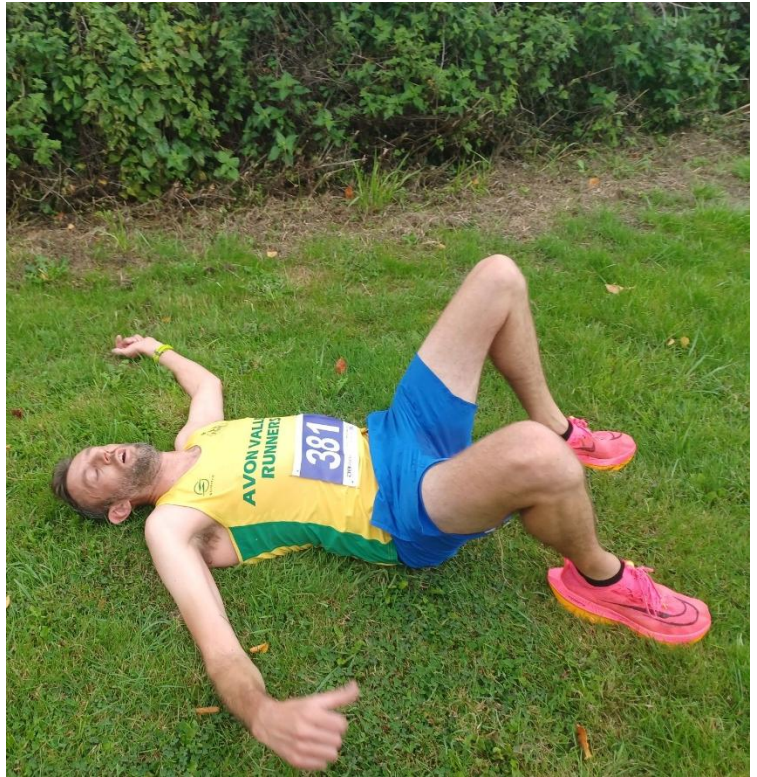
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#Social Gallery

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...



Adrienne Barthram bagged a new PB at the Big Half in London.



Ben Mees set a new MV50 record at the Compton Bassett "5" – 26:58



Certificates for **Vicky Bodman**, **Debbie Ellis** and **Eve Green** who successfully passed their EA Race Directors course.

"Well Done, Ladies".



Louise Oldall - Road trip down to Yeovilton 5k race;
James A Gorman - Great to spend time with you guys / Great driving **Sonia Pateman**; **Amber WH** - Great work all, and the cake 🍰 made it all worth it.

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