



Valley News

The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners

#158 April 2014



This month's News is dominated by our very own Fiona Price. Read her progression from a non-running Mum of four just a few years ago, to an athlete competing on the world stage.

Apart from the regular entries and accounts of recent events we've included a coaching tip from our expert coach Steve Williams – useful for anyone doing VLM this year. We've also reprinted an unsolicited testimony of a new member's first encounter with AVR – well worth a read.

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The World Masters Athletics Championships

Fiona Price: *Hungary* for the big time!

Mother of four, Fiona Price, took up running as part of a charity fundraiser for headway after a friend's niece had an horrendous moped accident. Back in 2007, aged 40, she entered a triathlon alongside her friends to raise money. Little did she know then she would eventually get bitten by the running bug.

It took a while to run her first mile without stopping but progress was quick. First a member of Westbury Running Group and then joining Avon Valley Runners In 2010 Fiona has been on a running rollercoaster.

On Friday 28th March, just three and a half years after joining AVR and two days after she turns 46, Fiona flies out to Budapest to run the World Masters Half Marathon Championship 2014. An event held every two years - this is the biggest race of her career!

Fiona trains 6 days a week and is coached by Team GB Event lead endurance coach, Martin Rush. She is spotted regularly on the streets of Westbury, running as much as 70 miles some weeks. In her "spare time" she is Honorary Secretary of local club Avon Valley Runners, run director at Southwick Country parkrun (weekly 5k timed run), a member of Westbury Wheelers, Frome and District Wheelers, South West Vets and runs her own business, "Fiona Price Catering".

Not only did Fiona win the Bath Half Vet category at the beginning of March but she also led Team AVR Vet ladies to victory in the same race. Two weeks after her World Championship race which takes place on Sunday, 30th March Fiona will be trying to improve on the Vet Female 7th place she achieved in last year's London Marathon.

When Fiona was asked, "Do you regret not taking up running when you were younger?", she replied, "We fostered and had four children of our own, would not have sacrificed that for anything!"

Fiona is hoping for a top ten finish but the experience of being out there with the top vet athletes from all over the world is an exciting prospect. 20 of her closest friends and family are travelling to Hungary to support her and the support from all those in the running community have been inspiring.

Fiona says, "You're never too old to start running, join AVR beginners on 9th April when they commence their new beginners sessions up at Trowbridge Rugby Club 7pm (6.45pm meet)."

Sean Price

....Stop Press

Fiona was pushed up to the V40 category for the GB team event. She ran an amazing race to finish in 5th place 5th in her age group and won a **silver medal** for Great Britain along with twins Lisa and Sian Finlay in the Ladies team V40 category. Fantastic result Fiona and well deserved! I hope you'll tell us all about it in the next edition...*ed.*



Member's Profile

Each year in the presentation awards Hoddy performs acrobatic number-crunching feats on our race times to find out how the current year's times compare with the previous year's. **Liz Gard** achieved the award of *most improved female* for 2013 which means that at all the recognized distances she reduced her overall time by more than any other female runner in AVR – that shows consistent improvement throughout. Liz clearly feels she hasn't achieved everything she's capable of and she tells us a little but about herself below. (We expect great things from you Liz....ed.)

Name: Liz Gard
Age: 39 (but only just!)
Where do you live? Westbury
Where do you work? Martin & Co Westbury, Letting administrator.
Favorite food: Lots!
Favorite film: Shawshank Redemption.
Favourite Sports book: Paula Radcliffe's Autobiography

How did you get into running? I have always had an interest in running even at school which most people didn't like. After having my children I ran to lose weight. I suppose I really got into running regularly after we moved to Westbury and I joined AVR and got into regular training

What are your Personal Best Times?

5k: 22:57

10k: 46.11

10 mile: 1.19.23

Half Marathon: 1.47.29 – *Stop press: Liz was hoping to improve on this at Ringwood last weekend. She managed her second best time and is now looking forward to Bristol.....ed.*

Marathon: 4:40:33 (My only one)

Are you hoping to improve on these? Yes; my goals for this year are a sub 45 10k, and sub 1.45 half marathon.

Do you have a training regime? I aim to run 3 times a week, it is only this year that I have started going back to speed work after being injured for most of 2012. I try to do one long run a week and a harder training run once a week. I also try to bike and swim at least twice a week and of course for those of you who know me there are my twice daily dog walks with my 2 springer spaniels.

Any tips for new starters? Make sure you enjoy and stay positive

Do you have any favorite races? The Bratton hilly, The Cotswold relay, The Easter Bunny 10k, The Hogweed trot 10k.....amongst others.

You received the award for most improved female 2013. How did you manage this?

Having received the most improved female last year I cannot say I how my running improved. Having taken most of 2012 off injured I gradually came back to running and managed to improve my times over 2013 and recorded times I did not think were achievable for me and I broke pbs that I had not broken since about 2008. Basically I just went out and ran!! I'm not sure this will work for everyone but it did for me, maybe the biking had a little influence.

All Hail AVR

The concluding race for the 2013/2014 Wiltshire Athletic Association Off-Road Race League will remain in the minds of many members of Avon Valley Runners and tales will be regaled in the club house no doubt for years to come.

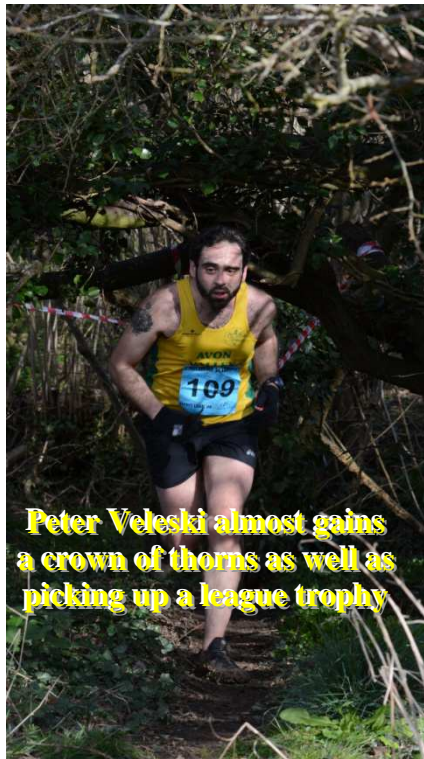
It was not only memorable as the club walked away with the team trophy for the league as well as individuals scoring highly over the course of the six races but also for the stunning scenery and challenging course which makes up the Spirithill Trail near Calne. Perhaps however; the most memorable feature of the day was the weather.

Race-goers were met with cold and breezy conditions whilst waiting for the run to get underway. Once we were out on the trail, which was mostly sheltered, the sun came out and the tree lined trail led to a most pleasant dappled light in which to run. In and out of the woods we ran on the two lap course to cover the 12.6 km race distance splashing through brooks and rivulets as

we went.

The club was represented by fourteen members; although we didn't score maximum points on the day this didn't affect our league standing. Peter Veleski was our first man across the line taking fourth place overall, Thomas Coney was our second male and Richard Morgetroyd third. Jen Ford was first in for our ladies and second female overall followed by Suzann Large and Rosemary Barber. Following a fall, Sarah Jewers hobbled back to the start line without finishing the race in search of an ice pack and a warm coat. The ice pack was forthcoming from a kindly gent at Race HQ the coat not so as the lady wearing it would not relinquish her grip, despite Sarah's best efforts!

But it was just as the last of the prizes were being handed out when proceedings were abruptly halted by an almighty gust of wind that blew the Race HQ tent over our very heads and into the bushes of an adjoining field. This gust of wind was then followed a hail storm of biblical proportions from which many fled the scene in search of shelter and the warmth of their cars. This was not so of the plucky AVR members who valiantly helped the race organisers rescue the now somewhat torn and twisted tent. Suffice to say its days of being proud and erect are now well and truly over.



Peter Veleski almost gains a crown of thorns as well as picking up a league trophy



Thomas Coney thought the crowd were quackers when they shouted 'duck'...



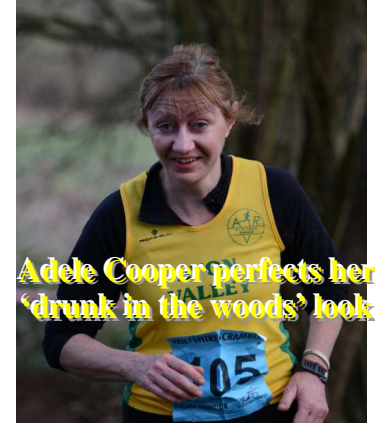
Richard Morgetroyd pats his invisible pet Great Dane



Wozza demonstrates the size of the log he's just passed to a surprised race Marshall



Jen Ford happy in her work evading a Chippenham Harrier



Adele Cooper perfects her 'drunk in the woods' look



Bob Ellis is the epitome of cool. N.B. this was before the hail storm...

Standing under the remains of the partly dismantled tent still entangled in the bushes, the assembled members of AVR couldn't help but laugh as the hail bounced around us and our exposed hands and faces got colder and colder to the point of becoming numb. Once the worst of the storm had passed we worked as quickly as our frozen fingers would allow to haul the tent from the greenery and fold it up neatly for the owners to assess its fate.

We then made our way back to the field where the cars had been parked only to find only AVR members vehicles remaining, which demonstrated to me that not the club not only has some first class athletes, but we also have a great team spirit and are only too willing to help others out in the face of adversity!

By 'eck was I glad when we got back to Warren's car; although I was slightly perturbed by the request to fish around in his pocket for the key as



Denise Ellis smiles her way round the 12.6km trail

his hands were too cold to find it. I hastily fumbled for the booty and pulled out the treasure and we jumped in the car and got the heating on post haste before Thomas Coney could complain of hypothermia!

Richard Morgetroyd



Did you know?

At the 1932 Olympic Games held in Los Angeles Polish athlete Stella Walsh took the Gold Medal in the women's 100m equaling the then World Record time of 11.9 seconds. The following year she lowered the world records for both 60m and 100m. Then at the infamous 1936 Olympics in Berlin she took the silver medal in the 100m after which she retired from top-flight athletics.

In 1980 Stella Walsh was killed during an armed robbery in Cleveland, USA and an autopsy then revealed that she was actually a man!!!

(Thanks Darren for digging this one out....ed)

An Inspriational Story of a New Member

One winter evening in January I decided to visit my mother as she had something to tell me. When I arrived she picked up the Melksham news, flipped through to this page and began reading. I wasn't really listening to her and only picked up something about a running group, beginners, Trowbridge club, on a Tuesday, 7-8. Mum then moaned at me for not listening (as per usual) so I took the paper and decided to read it myself! Two minutes later I looked at her and said.. "umm it sounds good but I am not sure about it, I haven't jogged in years and I guarantee I will be the slowest jogger and therefore I won't continue going".

All my mother could say was "you won't know unless you give it a go." With that I decided to attend the taster session.

The day of the taster session arrives and I am feeling nervous, wondering if I will be the only one there and petrified that if other people are there then they will all be amazing and can run really fast and I will be the elephant who embarrasses themselves..... I was totally wrong!

The club was packed, everyone seemed so friendly and welcoming and with that, I left mum in the car waiting for me whilst a huge group of us headed out for a warm up/jog. We all took our time and it was made clear that this is the beginners group and that it doesn't matter if you have to walk at times, what matters is that you practice to improve.

When I arrived back to the venue I got in the car with the biggest smile on my face and spent the rest of the evening going on and on about what we did and how amazing it was and that I couldn't wait for the next class.....

The reason why I am sharing my story with you all is because Ian Isaacs asked me during the taster session what my goal is and I said "to lose weight and to be able to jog three miles....."

Two months on from joining AVR I have lost a stone and today I took part in the sports relief Trowbridge mile and jogged THREE miles WITHOUT STOPPING! AVR you have helped me to achieve my goal and I am ever so grateful for all your encouragement and enthusiasm. Jogging has become a part of my life and I love it!

I encourage anybody who is thinking about jogging to join AVR and become part of a fantastic, friendly group. The other person who I really want to say a huge THANK YOU to is my mother Trish Hunt. Without you going on about joining AVR I wouldn't have joined, met new friends, lost any weight or become fitter Sorry that this is a long story but I just want to make people aware of my success and hope this can encourage people to stop thinking about something and just do it! X

Ellie-Marie Hunt

(Ellie-Marie posted this on the AVR face-book a few days ago and was inundated with encouraging comments many of us felt it deserved a place in the AVR News as a permanent record.

April's Coaching Tip

Tapering for a Marathon

Now that the spring marathon season is in full swing and London is on the horizon, here are a few tips regarding your final preparations.

There is nothing you can do, running-wise, within the last three weeks before a marathon to improve your performance on the day. The reason is that the training-effect of any session takes this time to feed through into your race performances. However, there are lots of things that you can do, within this period, to impair your performance and, unfortunately, a lot of people do.

Do not try and squeeze in any 'missed' long runs or sessions. Your last major long run before the marathon day should, ideally, be 3 weeks before. Thereafter, you are looking to arrive at the start line both physically and psychologically refreshed and strong, well-nourished and properly hydrated. If you have missed substantial parts of your intended programme then revise your expectations. For example, instead of a time target make completion and/or enjoyment (is that possible?) the goal.

For the last two Sundays before the marathon, I would suggest you do no more than 8 to 12 miles on the first and 4 to 8 miles on the second. (You will feel fantastic both mentally and physically as these runs will feel so easy after all the hard work you have put in.) The week of the marathon? Make sure you rest properly. Again, I would suggest Monday – rest, Tuesday - 30 to 40 minutes easy run, Wednesday – rest, Thursday – 20 to 30 minutes easy run, Friday – rest, Saturday – 15 minutes very easy 'loose' jog. You get the picture?

Getting nervous as race day approaches? Feel that you might not achieve your goal? Then reposition your thinking. Firstly, congratulate yourself on doing the training and getting fit enough to arrive at the start line of a marathon. That is a considerable achievement in itself. Tell yourself you are about to embark on a fantastic learning experience. No matter the outcome you will be better informed about yourself, what you did correctly and how to modify your training for future such races. In terms of the general population, you are part of a small group of exceptional individuals who have had the determination to prepare yourself for the challenge of the marathon.

Finally, good luck to all of you who have risen to this challenge. Happy daze!



JAVR News # 9



WILTSHIRE JUNIOR RACE LEAGUE

Junior Avon Valley Runners moved ahead of Team Bath in the second race of the Wiltshire Junior Race League at the Swindon Park Run 5K on 15th March. JAVR took maximum points ahead of Swindon Harriers to give them a total of 39 points ahead of Team Bath's 38 points. In the boys race four juniors ensured another first place finish with a score of 286 ahead of Chippenham Harriers (194) and Swindon Harriers (192). Niall Thorne was again the first runner home for JAVR (97) finishing fourth overall. Alex Tucker (95), Luke Slade (94), and Kieran Beardmore (93) ensured that after two races JAVR now occupy four of the top six places in the boys league table. Overall the boys are in first place with a score of 575 ahead of Chippenham Harriers (468).

In the girls race on her debut run in the league Ellie Brown finished second and moved straight into joint third place overall in the league. Another great performance from Ellie Isaacs (96) who finished 5th overall for the second race ensured that she moved into second place overall in the league. The girls finished joint first in race with a score of 195 equal to Slinn Allstars. In the overall standings the girls are now second with a score of 291 behind Team Bath AC (395).

The next race in the league will take place at the St Georges Day 10km (Corsham) on the 27th April. More information about the league including league tables and individual scores can be found at:

www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk

Note: numbers in brackets relate to runners league score / team league scores





RESULTS

Full results available at:

www.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Full Junior 2km results available at:

www.junior.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk

Full Wiltshire Junior Race League results available at:

www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS (races in **Bold** are included in the Wiltshire Junior Race League)

EVERY SATURDAY: Southwick Country Park parkrun 5km, Southwick (9.00am)

AVR Mile – Bradford-on-Avon - Thursday 3rd April

St Georges Day 2km – Corsham – 27th April

The “Sci-Fi” Trowbridge 5km – Trowbridge – 4th May

Frome 5km – Frome – 20th July

Wiltshire Athletic Association present: The County AA Championships

Saturday 24th May

Tidworth Oval

Bulford Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire, SP9 7SB

Events: 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m & 5000m
Long Jump, High Jump, Triple Jump, Pole Vault & Relays
Hurdles, Javelin, Shot Putt, Hammer Throw & Quad Kids

Open to: Juniors, Seniors
& Disabled athletes



See www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk for more details and event entry



The Wiltshire Road Race League

The 2014 Wiltshire Road Race League sponsored by Newsquest International properly got underway in the brilliant sunshine with the Castle Combe Half Marathon. The field of two hundred runners enjoyed an undulating course around and through the south Cotswold village before finishing on the Castle Combe motor racing circuit. Leading the way was unattached runner David Evans who finished in 1:17:04. Defending League champions Avon Valley Runners were well represented with Mike Rose and Joby Hobbs enduring a battle royal with Rose managing to make an 8-second margin over Hobbs to take third place overall in 1:20:37.

England international runner Amy Chalk from Chippenham and competing for Bristol & West AC finished in sixth place overall recording 1:22:53 to win the ladies race with Kate Wilkins of newly promoted Devizes Running Club finishing runner-up and Gemma Collings of Chippenham Harriers in third. In fourth place Juliet Coulson of AVR claimed the FV40 prize.

However it was superiority in numbers that led Avon Valley Runners to take maximum points in the Wiltshire Road Race League ahead of Chippenham Harriers and Calne SMaRTT - A. In the Second Division, Calne Running Club head the table with new joiners Bybrook Valley Runners in second and Calne SMaRTT - B in third.

The next race in the Wiltshire Road Race League is the St Georges 10K which takes place in Corsham on Sunday 27th April.

Pos.	Team	M-Score	F-Score	Total Score	Points
1	Avon Valley Runners – A	486	454	940	20
2	Chippenham Harriers – A	423	283	706	19
3	Calne SMaRTT – A	172	432	604	18
4	Avon Valley Runners – B	441	81	522	17
5	Devizes Running Club – A	317	184	501	16
6	Corsham Running Club – A	400	87	487	15
7	Frome Running Club – A	121	80	201	14
8	Slinn Allstars – A	121	79	200	13
9	Team Bath AC – A	0	175	175	12
10	Swindon Harriers – A	84	0	84	11
11	Highworth Running Club – A	70	0	70	10
12	Chippenham Harriers – B	62	0	62	9
13	Swindon Striders – A	0	0	0	0
13	Wootton Bassett Hounds – A	0	0	0	0

For individual standings and full fixture list please see www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk