



# Valley News

The Newsletter of Avon Valley Runners

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Christmas is on the horizon and must be doing the same to the brain cells as it often does to my resolve to get out and do some training.

Let's hope this months edition is a case of quality versus quantity and you enjoy these few items prior to settling down to your festive celebrations before you feel a thickening around the midriff and the desire to get back out there and pound the tarmac under street lights. I always find winter a tough time to get out, especially running around a little village where all you can do is try to vary the direction and order of the few paved areas that provide safety from traffic. It can get really tedious just trying to achieve five miles under those conditions, unlike the summer where you can run early morning or late evening through miles and miles of quiet countryside.

Perhaps some of you can give me your suggestion as to how you make winter running interesting. I'd gladly print it as well as trying it myself.

## Did you know?

Derartu Tulu grew up in the same Ethiopian village as Kenenisa Bekele - in case you'd forgotten, he was the one who managed to hold off Mo Farah in this year's exciting finish at the Great North Run. Derartu enjoyed a measure success in the early nineties including 10,000m gold at Barcelona 1992 and Sydney 2000. By 2004 she was well into her thirties so a bronze in Athens was an excellent way to end her career. However, five years later at the age of 37 she decided to have one last shot at a big race and entered the New York City Marathon alongside three-times winner Paula Radcliffe and some other fine distance runners. During the race Paula started to pull up with a sudden pain but instead of blazing for the finish, Derartu stopped to help and encourage her rival; leaving other runners to take the lead. This happened not once but twice when at last Paula urged Derartu to leave her and concentrate on the race. Having decided there was no more she could do for her good friend, the reward of winning hearts and minds in such an altruistic act was not the prize she sought in New York. Undaunted by her delay, she picked up the pace once again and against all odds managed to win with a margin of eight seconds. One last big pay cheque!

## Mike's Mile



On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November in drizzly conditions at the Bath University track we held a small low key event called "Mike's mile" to inspire our Junior AVR members.

The Idea came from Roger Bannister and his attempt at the 4 min mile where he used pacers. The idea of pacers is not new but I thought it a great way of showing the juniors the true benefits. Children are notorious (we all are really) at going off too fast, too soon. The mile is a romantic distance by which we all (nearly all) measure pace. It is also a comfortable distance that children can run.

The four guys pictured:- Pete Slade, Mike Rose, Tim Lowrie and Rich Ayling all took it in turns to pace Mike Towler to attempt to run a mile PB (his best was 4:32). They paced Mike in relay fashion in order to maintain the most even pace.

Pete paced Mike to start with as he was most consistent in training and Mike was comfortable keeping up with him. Tim took over and he was unable to train with the others, he was at a slight disadvantage but ran a great leg. Mike still held on then Rich Ayling took over and at this stage you started to see how Mike runs, his grit and determination from his face is evident for all to see and this dedication was what I wanted the children to see. Mike Rose was last on as during training he accidentally ran a 59 sec lap when he was supposed to run 65sec. Phenomenally fit guy who spent much of his 65 sec lap looking backwards offering Mike encouragement, it was a sight to behold. As they rounded the final bend and hit the straight most of the juniors were already arranged so that they could run the last 100 metres with them, to help them over the final few yards and to have some idea what pace you have to achieve to run a 4:30 mile. Suffice to say despite a valiant effort Mike came in at 4:34 which was incredible in the wet and cold conditions and the 30 children looking on were definitely inspired (mission accomplished). Mike was gutted but we could only reassure him that the juniors would all remember the event and were inspired by his and his team mates efforts.

I know people assume that as you become faster and stronger as a runner it becomes easier but I am reliably informed that the effort required never diminishes; you just get faster; and whenever you see Mike and many other of our elite athletes running you can see it in their faces!

Big thanks to the five boys, Mike T, Tim, Pete, Rich and Mike R for their efforts, Hodd for the timing and Alan for the coaching tips which were an education in themselves.

**Sean Price**



## JAVR News #18



### WILTSHIRE CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Wiltshire XC Championships took place at the University of Bath on Sunday 14th December with eight juniors braving the chilly yet dry conditions. With four age categories for the junior races there was much to keep an eye out for throughout the day. In the Under 11 age group Lottie Brown was the clubs sole representative and with a great run Lottie finished in 27<sup>th</sup> position overall and was the 13<sup>th</sup> Wiltshire athlete over the line. It was just the boys in the U13 race with James Pickford and Luke Slade flying the flag for JAVR. James finished in a time of 11:48 in 27<sup>th</sup> position overall with Luke in 34<sup>th</sup> position overall in a time of 13:17. They finished 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> respectively in the Wiltshire County race. Vanessa Curtin and Niall Thorne both ran in the U15 age group with Vanessa finishing in 24<sup>th</sup> place in the girls race with a time of 16:30 and 7<sup>th</sup> Wiltshire athlete. In the boys race Niall also finished as 7<sup>th</sup> Wiltshire athlete and in 19<sup>th</sup> position overall with a time of 15:14. In the U17 age group two JAVR runners competed with Jade Day and Holly Newman running in the girl's race. Jade had an excellent run finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> Wiltshire athlete in a time of 18:45. Holly finished as 7<sup>th</sup> Wiltshire athlete and in 14<sup>th</sup> position overall in a time of 26:10. Henry Dowler took to the U20's race and finished as 8<sup>th</sup> Wiltshire athlete in a time of 23:29 in 28<sup>th</sup> position overall.

The Wiltshire Cross Country Championships are used to select the Wiltshire team for both the South West Inter-counties event which takes place at Bicton College near Exeter on Sunday 4th January and the National Inter-counties event which takes place at Cofton Park, Birmingham on Saturday 7th March. With some good performances on Sunday we await to hear if any of the JAVR athletes will be selected for these events. For further information regarding the Cross Country Championships visit the Wiltshire Athletics Association website: [www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk](http://www.wiltshire-athletics.org.uk)

# HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY FESTIVE RUNNING!!

### UPCOMING RACES

Sat, 27th Dec - JAVR 2K League, Southwick Country Park

Boxing Day (26<sup>th</sup> Dec) – Stan Farr Boxing Day Run, TRFC

**More information @**  
[www.junior.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](http://www.junior.avonvalleyrunners.org.uk)

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Get in touch with JAVR News...

Do you have any news or perhaps an article  
or a  
story for inclusion in the next edition

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## Children In Need 2014



Paul and Nialle Thorne



Some of our runners gave up a Saturday back in November to help Tesco customers raise funds for Children in need. The idea was to run, cycle and swim to some far off exotic location in a day - I think Paris and the English Channel figured somewhere in the virtual journey - and be spurred on by generous donations from the many customers who passed through the Tesco Portals.

Watched and supported by new Bradford on Avon resident Sharon Davies (MBE), The Challenge started at 12 noon on Friday at Trowbridge Pool following a minute's silence as a mark of respect on November 11.

The sponsorship had been created by the Hot Chilli Tri club, a triathlon club which shares many runners from Avon Valley.

When I arrived Kevin Gover was giving it his best shot at running a fast mile before jumping off to rest and hand the reigns to more rested colleagues.

In the meantime the cyclists were contributing to the 360k challenge to make the kilometres go by more quickly.

By 12 noon on Saturday, a total of 115km running, 510km cycling and 9650m swimming had been completed and over £3000 raised for Children in Need.

Other members who took part were Martin Pearce, Candy Durbin, Fiona Gibb, Diane Hier, Simon Alexander and Martin Disney.

Well done all for your contribution to a magnificent fund raising effort.



## *End of An Era*



Sean and Fiona will be relinquishing some of their duties over the coming months and this month's news ends with a thank you from them as well as a few other items they'd like to draw to your attention. They've occupied too big a part of the life of AVR to be allowed to slip away so easily.

### *Thank you*

Fiona and I would like to say we are overwhelmed by the messages we have received since announcing that we are stepping down at the AGM. As you can see, we will still be heavily involved with AVR as it has become a way of life for us and that won't change. Fiona will continue to be involved with the Juniors and I will be run leader for the yellow group.

Thank you to the committee who have been so supportive and helped us realise some of our visions for the club. The new committee are an amazing group who will I'm sure take the club to the next level. Also thanks must go to the members who we feel are integral to the success of the club and should be proud of their contribution both the newcomers and those with club history. We would like to say a special thanks to Andrew Hoddinott who has been a rock to us throughout our tenure and has been an incredible Chairman for this club for the past five years.

### *Mad March Mile*

My sister, Gretchen and I started a challenge last year and we hope it snowballs this year. We, and, about 20 other runners challenged ourselves to run (or walk if required) one mile or more every day throughout March. If you fancy the challenge then join our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/554413804655421/> - Please Join it!

How it works: The first person who completes the mile+ each day posts "Day 1" then comments on their run or post Strava link or whatever they want. Each subsequent runner posts their run on the comment below Day 1 etc. We also offer (not compulsory) a custom handmade (by White Horse Pottery) mug for those who want to commemorate their achievement. We will meet up on 1<sup>st</sup> April to hand them out, cost £10 and some part of that goes to Alzheimer's Support (nominated by Hayley Southgate). The challenge is free and just some fun to get you in shape for the season ahead. The Mad March Mile is not exclusive to AVR.

### *Track Training at Bath Uni*

I have asked Rich Ayling, who has agreed, to do some Mile length training for adults and juniors on Wednesday nights during March at the Bath Uni. I hope to attract some female elite athletes to do a demo (similar thing to Mike's Mile) to inspire the junior girls. I am looking for some sub 21min 5k'ers to run the mile on the track on Wed. 4<sup>th</sup> March, it's not a race but it is a timed run, please let me know if you can make it. After the demo and throughout March, Gretchen and I will be running our mile at the Uni and we hope you can join us even if you are not doing the Mad March Mile. The track does cost £2 for juniors and £3 for adults.

# Off Road News

Hi Athletes,

Firstly let me wish you all a Happy Christmas.

Secondly may I invite you all to join me at the Stan Farr 5K run on Boxing Day.

This will be held at the Trowbridge Rugby Club. Please arrive from 11:00 for registration (Registration is on the day only). The event will start promptly at 11:30.

I am very keen that AVR should win the **Wiltshire County Championships**, so please reserve Sunday 18th January and Sunday 22nd February for the Corsham Court Challenge and the SMaRTT Smasher at Calne. - If you can't run, then please come and support the AVR runners.

Here is a list of selected events for the next few weeks:

**Sunday, 4th January** [Somerley Estate 10K](#) - run at the stunning private Somerley Estate near Ringwood with two distances through beautiful grounds.

**Sunday, 11th January** [Rough 'n' Tumble](#) - 10 miles of Mud, Sweat & Hills

**Sunday, 18th January** [Corsham Court Challenge](#) - Approximately 6 miles of Off-Road trail run around scenic Corsham Court - **The first AVR Off Road Championship event**

**Sunday, 25th January** [Slaughterford](#) - (fills up quickly) or [Moorland Multi Terrain](#) - The multi-terrain challenge follows tracks through a variety of surroundings including fields, woodland and a reedy nature reserve with 75 metres of hill climb in total. Participants are encouraged to wear suitable offroad running shoes.

**Sunday, 8th February** [Dursley Dozen](#) - A challenging 12 mile multi terrain course around the beautiful Dursley hills

**Sunday, 15th February** Bath Skyline - this also fills up quickly. I recommend that you enter today

**Sunday, 22nd February** SMaRTT Smasher - **The second AVR Off Road Championship event**

Please note that although the scoring system for the Road Championships has altered for 2015, that the Off Road Championship scoring system will not change and will remain the same as in 2014. Eight races to count, first AVR runner (for each sex) scoring 20 points etc.

Happy running,

AVR Off Road Secretary

**Anthony Hickson**