



## Welcome to The Valley News

Our cover image this month shows the core team that delivered this year's Avon Valley presentation evening.

**From Left to Right: Victoria Bodman, Katie Oliver, Caroline Barham, David Hyde, Katy Nickless and Ceri Ann Case.**

If you have a favourite photograph which you would like to have featured as a cover image on your favourite monthly Avon Valley based newsletter then please send it along with a few words to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk)

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 #264 – April 2024**



Please send any news, articles or achievements to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk).



## STOP PRESS – Sara Robert

Like a good many club members I was both shocked and saddened by the news of the untimely and totally unexpected passing of Avon Valley Chairperson – Sara Robert on Sunday 24th March.

I personally found this very hard as I and fellow club VP Andrew Hoddinott had been working with Sara just a few hours earlier at the finishing line of the Hullavington 20-mile road race.

Over the course of the last few months, I had been teaching her the dark art of RFID chip timing and at the Hullavington 20 she was flying solo with the technology for the first time, with Trevor the Jack Russell at her feet for support.

Whilst waiting for the first finishers to return across the finishing line Sara had the idea to make a couple of daisy chains to use as a finishing tape. The first lady back was former Avon Valley Runner, Holly Stables (formerly Rush) now an ASICS FrontRunner UK Community Manager. Holly was so impressed with the daisy-chain that she commented *"I don't think I have had such a pretty finish tape ever, thank you for making such an effort"*, Holly then added *"I knew that I wanted to preserve it because I tried not to step on it and wore it around my neck until I got home to show my mum"*!



Obviously, this has been a lot for us to process individually over the course of the last few days and it is good that we can come together as a club to remember Sara. If you have any memories or photos of Sara that you would like to share, then please post them on the [Google Drive](#). We will collate a selection of them and publish in the next edition of the Valley News.

Please remember to check regularly on our social media feeds for other tributes and support that the club is offering at this sad time.

**Darren Wrintmore - Vice-President**

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# Avon Valley Presentation Evening

On Saturday 9th March, we held our annual Presentation Evening at the Civic Centre in Trowbridge, celebrating the brilliant achievements of our members throughout 2023. This year's event followed a "Casino Night" theme, with plenty of red and black decorations and a fun photo booth with themed props to match! We even had our very own Martin Russam providing tunes from across the 70's, 80's, 90's and 00's until the early hours - with plenty of people dancing the night away!

Alongside the celebrations, our charity raffle on the evening was a resounding success and raised £545 for the deserving local community group 'Helping the Homeless in Bath and West Wiltshire'.



A huge thank you to everyone that attended and donated raffle prizes, and a big well done to all those that won an award, including those that achieved either a Single or Double Goal Getters Award in 2023. It was a fantastic night of celebration, and we already look forward to next year!

Please see the full list of award winners below:

## Outstanding Performance:

U20s - Oscar Jarman  
Senior Male - Ben Mees  
Senior Female - Isabella McNally  
V40 Male - Gary Day  
V40 Female - Emily Dye  
V50 Male - Tim Burrell  
V50 Female - Fiona Price  
V60 Male - Robin Mark-Schols  
V60 Female - Diane Hier  
V70 Male - Peter Campbell  
V70 Female - Rosemary Barber

## Club Championship (Men):

Senior Male - Ben Mees  
V40 Male - Gary MacAlister  
V50 Male - Chris Suter  
V60 Male - Robin Mark-Schols

## WAVA Awards:

Male - Chris Suter  
Female - Diane Hier

## Most Improved:

Male - Mark Spiers  
Female - Adrienne Barthram  
Ultramarathoner - Ben Blackwall

## Best Beginner:

Male - Julian Roughley  
Female - Sharon Walter

## Most Promising New Member:

Male - John Naish  
Female - Molly Braham

## Club Championship (Ladies):

Senior Female - Katie Oliver  
V40 Female - Emily Dye  
V50 Female - Fiona Price  
V60 Female - Diane Hier  
V70 Female - Rosemary Barber

## The Bomb: Gary MacAlister

**Perseverance:** - Jack Prout

**Members member:** - Dave Bagshaw



**AVR Road League (Men):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Peter Veleski  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Gary Day  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Paul Dredge

**AVR Off-Road League (Men):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Frank Lamerton  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Richard Newman  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Gary MacAlister

**AVT League (Men):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Alan Best  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Will Whitmore  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Steve Clark

**AVT Segment of the Year (Men):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Will Whitmore  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Alan Best  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Darren Wintmore

**Most Improved Multi-Sport Athlete:**

Male - Alan Best  
Female - Emily Dye

**AVT Inspire and Motivate Award:**

Steve Clark

**AVR Road League (Ladies):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Fiona Price  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Sharon Firkins  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Annalie Ibison

**AVR Off-Road League (Ladies):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Veryan Cranston  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Fiona Newman  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Fiona Gibbs

**AVT League (Ladies):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Emily Dye  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Annalie Ibison  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Kathryn Butt

**AVT Segment of the Year (Ladies):**

1<sup>st</sup> - Caroline Scott  
2<sup>nd</sup> - Jen Natrass  
3<sup>rd</sup> - Annalie Ibison

**How Hard Did You Tri:**

Male - Alan Best  
Female - Caroline Scott



Many thanks to the team that made the Avon Valley Presentation Evening such a great event.

**Katie Oliver**

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# The Goal Getters Awards

Acknowledged for their achievements at the Avon Valley Presentation Evening were our Goal Getters, who had either beaten their race times accomplished in the previous year over the 5k, 5 Mile, 10k, 10 Mile, Half Marathon or Marathon distance to achieve a bronze, silver or gold award in **"Me vs. Me"**.












Or had accumulated points in the **"Goal Getters Challenge"** with 15 points = Bronze; 20 points = Silver; 25 points = Gold, with activities ranging from volunteering at an event, running a 5K, 10K, 10-mile, Half Marathon or XC race, taking part in a cycle Time Trial or an Open Water swim and even writing an article for the Valley News to count. All with the support of an experienced club member to act as a mentor:

Goal Getter / Mentee	Mentor	Me vs Me	GG Challenge
Annalie Ibison	Alan Best	Silver	Gold
Becky Janes	Jen Nattrass	-	Silver
Caroline Scott	Diane Hier	-	Bronze
Ceri Sonnet	Martin Russam	Gold	Silver
Ceri-Ann Case	Paula Farrell	Gold	Gold
Daniel Crosby	Frank Lamerton	Gold	Silver
David Hyde	Martin Russam	Bronze	-
Drew Holloway	Simon Williams	Silver	Gold
Hayley Southgate	Fiona Price	-	Gold
Izzy McNally	Drew Holloway	Bronze	-
James Gorman	Sarah Hillman	Bronze	-
Jayne Williams	Diane Hier	Gold	Gold
Jen Buckle	Hayley Chapman	-	Gold
Jen Nattrass	Annalie Ibison	Bronze	Gold
Kathy Kinsey	Pauline Bradley	Silver	-
Katie Oliver	Karen Applegate	Silver	Bronze
Maria Harryman	Stephen Clarke	-	Gold
Martin Russam	Frank Lamerton	Bronze	Gold
Michael Guy	Nicola Applegate	Silver	-
Paula Bray	Hayley Chapman	Gold	Gold
Pauline Bradley	Caroline Scott	Bronze	Gold
Sandra Sharratt	James Gorman	Silver	Gold
Sarah Fenby	Nicola Applegate	-	Gold
Sarah Hillman	Paul Thorne	Silver	Silver
Sarah Russam	Jo Guy	-	Bronze
Sharon Alexander	Daren Booth	Gold	Silver
Sharon Firkins	James Gorman	-	Gold
Stuart Mackie	Dawn Sawyer	Gold	Gold
Tracey Webb	Douglas Marr	Gold	Gold
Vicky Bodman	Stephen Clarke	-	Gold
Wendy Butt	Daren Booth	Gold	Silver
Wendy Staden	Caroline Scott	Silver	Bronze

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

A selection of forthcoming events which may be of interest:

Date	Event	Distance	Details	
Saturday 6 <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 7 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Highworth 5</a>	5-miles	Good club run 5-mile race, with a challenging final mile.	
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Devizes Half Marathon</a>	Half Marathon	LPS bring you a good 13.1-mile challenge.	
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Lightning Bolt 10K</a>	10K	Potentially fast 10K at Langley Burrell provided by i-Compete Events.	
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> April	<a href="#">Pronto-Bikes TT</a>	10-miles	DB Max kick off their TT series at Castle Combe	
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> April	<a href="#">St Georges 10K</a>	10K	Race #1 of the 2024 Wiltshire Road Race league in Corsham.	
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> April	<a href="#">London Marathon</a>	Full Marathon	Oversubscribed fun run in the capital.	
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May	<a href="#">Chilly 10K</a>	10K	3.4-laps of Castle Combe race circuit, courtesy of DB Max.	
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">Oldbury Sprint Triathlon</a>	Various	AVT focus event at Calne sports centre: 250m swim, 20k bike, 5k run	
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">Semington Slog</a>	10K	Off-road fun brought to you by St Georges School.	
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">Hullavington Half &amp; 5K</a>	Half Marathon 5K	Race #2 of the 2024 Wiltshire Road Race League. <b>AVR mini-bus to this event – contact Martin Russam for details.</b>	
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">Westbury 5K</a>	5K	The first of AVR's 5K race series for 2024.	
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">Pronto-Bikes TT</a>	10-miles	DB Max hosted TT race at Castle Combe circuit	
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	<a href="#">51Fiver Triathlon Relay</a>	51.5K	AVT focus event at Lake32: 1500m lake swim, 40k bike, 10k run	

## What is in a name?

When signing up for a race, to ensure that your result gets attributed to any Team Awards or even club record recognition it is vitally important that you enter your club's name as "Avon Valley Runners" and not just "Avon Valley" or "AVR" - there is an AVR in Devon and another in Scotland – it would be so disappointing that we lose a team prize due to a spelling mistake!!!

Special consideration should also be made when accepting a charity place as sometimes your club's name will be replaced by the charity name and so you should consider requesting that this be amended at the time of entry through your chosen partner.

## Wrinty's Ramblings

The Club championships have been a feature of our club since its earliest days with the titles initially going to the fastest over a specific distance: from 10K through to the Marathon. In 1997 it was decided that the Club Championships should be based on the runners best cumulative times over 10K; 10-miles and Half Marathon. The inaugural winners being Simon Spedding and Jackie Rockliffe with total times of 2:54:45 & 3:28:30, additional awards were made to the first V40, V50 and V60 runner too - *I was fortunate enough to win the V40 award back in 2007 (3:11:13)*. An additional trophy joined the portfolio in that year: "The Bomb" which is an artillery shell case, was donated to the club by Neil Fyfe and was first awarded in 1997 with Tony Bartlett being its recipient for services to AVR.



Ted Rockliffe

In 2015 it was decided to name the trophies awarded for the Club Championships after influential persons in the clubs (then) 30-year history: The Senior Men's award was accredited to myself, which I thought a little odd as these sorts of awards are normally made in memoriam:-)

The MV40 trophy was named after the late Tim Northwood who was one of the club's founder members and a prolific racer with several sub-3-hour Marathons to his name. The MV50 trophy is actually the oldest in the AVR portfolio and was first presented in 1994 and retains the name of its benefactor: Frank Allen. The MV60 trophy takes its name from Ted Rockliffe who was a founder member as well as former club Chairman/President and is still very much alive 😊

The Senior Ladies award was accredited to Denise Ellis who joined Avon Valley Runners in 1987 and served the committee in a number of roles including Chairman, Vice-Captain, President and still regularly runs with the club. The FV40 trophy is named after long serving Treasurer and Captain: Joyce Field. The FV50 trophy is named after the late Stan Farr who served as club secretary for over 20-years, Stan also took part in 45 editions of the Boxing Day run dating back to 1960 and the race now bears his name; The FV60 trophy is named after Nan Simpson who although not a runner herself was very supportive of Avon Valley Runners and her daughter-in-law Rosemary Barber, and provided a trophy to the club in 2004 for award to the outstanding FV60 member - the first recipient being Joyce Field.



Nan Simpson & Rosemary

Well, done to all of those that picked up awards at our presentation evening and I hope that these words give you an insight into their legacy.

**Darren Wrintmore (Wrinty)**

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# All those years ago

Avon Valley Runners has now been around as a club for over 38-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...

## April 2019

In this month five years ago:

Damian Spreckley set a new MV40 club record of 16:36 at the **Lakeside 5K** near Portsmouth. Also recording swift 5K runs were Max Davis (15:26); Mike Towler (15:37); Niall Thorne (16:47) and Jackie Rockliffe (18:47) at the **Yeovilton 5K**.

Third placed Mike Towler (54:53), 12<sup>th</sup> Peter Veleski (62:25) and 14<sup>th</sup> Daniel Miles (62:29) made a winning start to the 2019 Wiltshire Road Race League by taking the Men's team prize at the **Chippenham Good Friday 10-mile race**.

The AVR Ladies team of Bethan Francis, Gemma Lawton, Vervan Cranston and Fiona Price took the honours at the **St Georges 10K** at Corsham.

Holly Rush ran a very impressive 2:46:48 at the **Manchester Marathon** and then just two weeks later set a new FV40 club record at the **London Marathon** with a time of 2:45:41, where we had 14 club members finish the 26.2-mile race.

## April 2014

In this month ten years ago:

Avon Valley Runners were well represented at a number of spring marathons: Dave Bagshaw recorded 4:29:42 to finish 570<sup>th</sup> at the **Shakespeare Marathon** at Stratford on Avon and Fiona Kerr clocked a new PB time of 3:49:16 for 1777<sup>th</sup> place at the **Brighton Marathon**. Twenty-one club members took on the **London Marathon** where Fiona Price led them home in a new Personal Best time of 3:06:35 for 1941<sup>st</sup> place. 2663<sup>rd</sup> Jackie Rockliffe - 3:13:07; 2677<sup>th</sup> Robin-Mark Schols - 3:13:16; 2947<sup>th</sup> Tim Lowrie - 3:15:11; 3932<sup>nd</sup> Tim Dodwell - 3:23:13; 3993<sup>rd</sup> Diane Hier - 3:23:43; 5490<sup>th</sup> Phil Harding - 3:32:27; 6003<sup>rd</sup> Pete Slade - 3:35:47; 7399<sup>th</sup> Chris Brown - 3:43:01; 9514<sup>th</sup> Kate Hails - 3:52:05; 9645<sup>th</sup> Jackie Adams - 3:52:33; 12502<sup>nd</sup> Kev Bush - 4:03:12; 13646<sup>th</sup> Juliet Coulson - 4:08:19; 16446<sup>th</sup> John Painter - 4:19:49; 18918<sup>th</sup> Frank Lamerton - 4:29:41; 21209<sup>th</sup> Jill Moore - 4:39:55; 23220<sup>th</sup> Richard Newman - 4:48:48; 24842<sup>nd</sup> Louise Fearon - 4:55:57; 27911<sup>st</sup> Kate Coney - 5:13:06; 29306<sup>th</sup> Steve Cade - 5:22:29 and 32035<sup>th</sup> Andrew Chappell - 5:46:00. Whilst Peter Jefferies travelled to France for the **Paris Marathon** where he finished in 29393<sup>rd</sup> place with 4:41:05.

At the **Trowbridge Lions 10K** Michael Bryant took the win and with Will Holland and Edric Hobbs claimed the Men's team prize, whilst Sarah Simms was the first FV50.

AVR dominated the Wiltshire Off-Road Race League fixture of the **Bluebell Run**, with Peter Veleski taking the runners up spot and along with Warren Wade and Thomas Coney claimed the Men's team prize. Jen Ford, Suzann Large and Kathy Kinsey claimed the Ladies team prize.

Richard Hudson took on the Brecon Beacons with solid performances at both the **Sugarloaf Fell Race** and the **Cribyn Fell Race**.



**April 2004**

In this month twenty years ago:

At the **Trowbridge Lions 10K** around Southwick Country Park, Kevin Sparey and Alistair Bartlett had another battle royale, with the Vet runner taking 4<sup>th</sup> spot overall in 37:15 and his younger rival fifth in 37:38. 12<sup>th</sup> Brett Flook - 41:20; 21<sup>st</sup> Steve Noyes - 43:55; 23<sup>rd</sup> Chris Atkinson - 44:21; 27<sup>th</sup> Derek Jarvis - 45:09; 31<sup>st</sup> Gary Thwaites - 46:34; 37<sup>th</sup> Laurie Irwin - 49:15; 39<sup>th</sup> Bob Sales - 49:29; 49<sup>th</sup> Janice Betteridge - 51:02; 53<sup>rd</sup> Anthony Hickson - 51:57; 65<sup>th</sup> Mark Edwards - 54:47; 83<sup>rd</sup> Tony Bartlett - 1:16:23.

At the **St Georges 10K** in Corsham, Alistair Bartlett and Kevin Sparey resumed their rivalry with 5<sup>th</sup> placed Alistair this time getting the upper hand in 36:34 to Kevin's 36:47. 33<sup>rd</sup> Bob Ellis - 40:04; 75<sup>th</sup> Llewelyn Jones - 43:42; 102<sup>nd</sup> Peter Hunt - 45:52; 168<sup>th</sup> Anthony Hickson - 49:46; 175<sup>th</sup> Janice Betteridge - 50:07; 199<sup>th</sup> Julia Scott - 51:59; 226<sup>th</sup> Viv Toms - 53:53; 227<sup>th</sup> Joyce Field - 53:54; 289<sup>th</sup> Judy Farr - 61:07; 292<sup>nd</sup> Genevieve Sharam - 61:15; 311<sup>st</sup> Stan Farr - 67:22; 326<sup>th</sup> Tony Bartlett - 74:01

Danny Kay was 1<sup>st</sup> MV60 at the **Taunton Marathon** recording 3:38:15. Whilst in the accompanying Half Marathon, Sue MacGregor finished as 1<sup>st</sup> FV45 with 1:43:10.

Nine Avon Valley Runners finished the **London Marathon** with 3111<sup>st</sup> Liz Ringham - 3:20:30; 4391<sup>st</sup> Danny Kay - 3:29:03; 5703<sup>rd</sup> Sue Macgregor - 3:36:47; 5981<sup>st</sup> Tina Vivian - 3:38:20; 5089<sup>th</sup> Chris Atkinson - 03:33:07; 7550<sup>th</sup> Nigel Evans - 3:46:18; 11290<sup>th</sup> Sonya Stephens - 4:00:18; 11291<sup>st</sup> Jim Anderson - 4:00:18; 23559<sup>th</sup> Dennis Mellor - 4:53:39.

Danny Kay then went on to run the **Shakespeare Marathon** at Stratford on Avon where he clocked 3:55:43 for 156<sup>th</sup> place.

**April 1989**

In this month thirty-five years ago:

At the **Sutton Benger 5**, Martin Connor made it onto the podium with a 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish recording 27:40. In 8<sup>th</sup> place was D. Brown in 28:55 and 39<sup>th</sup> was Stan Farr in 36:01.

**The Corsham Road Races** saw a good AVR turnout with Dave Bristow leading the way in the 5-mile race clocking 28:15 to finish in 7<sup>th</sup> place overall. Ray Withey clocked 32:03; Tom Frost - 32:24; Linda Brown - 32:55; Judy Farr - 34:06; M. Bailey - 38:27; C. Beirne - 40:32 and Denise Ellis - 42:24. In the 10-mile race the seemingly indefatigable Martin Connor recorded 58:30 for 9<sup>th</sup> place. 18<sup>th</sup> Neil Fyfe - 1:01:13; 24<sup>th</sup> Nick Rosier - 1:02:59; 27<sup>th</sup> Ted Rockliffe - 1:03:55; 43<sup>rd</sup> Tony Frost - 1:05:49; 52<sup>nd</sup> Mike Carpenter - 1:07:00; 60<sup>th</sup> Malcolm Gerrish - 1:08:16; 84<sup>th</sup> Stan Farr - 1:12:05; 90<sup>th</sup> G. Babb - 1:13:30 and 115<sup>th</sup> R. Porter - 01:16:16.

At the **Highworth 10K**, 81<sup>st</sup> placed Roger Carey finished in 37:00 whilst Judy Farr claimed the Ladies Vet prize with 43:40 and leaving husband Stan over a minute adrift in 44:44.

Eighteen Avon Valley Runners finished the ninth edition of the **London Marathon**. 1606<sup>th</sup> Maurice Cockell broke the 3-hour barrier with 2:55:22 as did 1801<sup>st</sup> Neil Fyfe with 2:57:07. 3261<sup>st</sup> Bob Ellis - 3:09:09; 4238<sup>th</sup> Ray Withey - 3:15:56; 5143<sup>rd</sup> Danny Kay - 3:21:40; 5955<sup>th</sup> Andy Lilley - 3:26:20; 6225<sup>th</sup> P. Hart - 3:27:46; 6232<sup>nd</sup> Ted Rockliffe - 3:27:48; 6729<sup>th</sup> K. Lee - 3:30:21; 6986<sup>th</sup> Ron Whittle - 3:31:45; 11158<sup>th</sup> L. Brown - 3:52:23; 12311<sup>st</sup> Peter Bray - 3:57:42; 14888<sup>th</sup> P. Collier - 4:12:31; 15980<sup>th</sup> B. Churchill - 4:19:39; 16363<sup>rd</sup> Ann Whittle - 4:22:29; Colin Williamson - 4:31:38; D. Coop - 4:51:43; Mike Beirne - 5:19:17.



# The Good, the Bad and the Grizzly

***Never say never, but probably my last.....***

The Grizzly is an iconic off-road event from Seaton, Devon. It's organised by Axe Valley Runners and includes lots of steep hills, mud and shingle beaches. This year is said to have been the muddiest conditions anyone can remember. There is a full 20-mile route and the 9-mile 'Cub' which misses out such delights as the bog but is still a proper challenge. What really makes the event special is the amazing support from the crowds, volunteers, marshals and musicians all the way round.

My husband, Ian and I first did the long event in the mid-1990s shortly after it began. We had moved down from the north-east where we'd enjoyed fell running so were thrilled to find a tough off-road race not too far from home – this was before the abundance of multi terrain races on offer now. In those days race HQ was at the holiday park and services on offer included a creche so that both parents could run!

After a gap of too many years, we have recently rediscovered our Grizzly love - only the Cub these days but our daughter does the long event and obviously wasn't put off by the creche, and even happens to live 12 miles or so from Seaton!



This year, the Grizzfest fun runs for children took place on Saturday 16th and both our grandchildren ran around the 1.5km course in cold wind and rain; but by Sunday the weather changed to warm sun. Two thousand runners gathered on the seafront to start the Cub and full races. Straight away we're onto the long shingle beach – a thunderous noise and I'm thinking 'thank goodness I'm never doing this again, I'm really not!'! Then there's the road hill, more of the same steadily up and too many runners flying past, try not to panic!

After two miles and my bumpy start we get on to the proper off road after Beer then I find another gear. Everyone else seemed to slow down and I seemed to lollop my way through the squelchy mud, loving it! My heart sank at the sight of a huge queue waiting to go down the narrow, steep and extremely muddy path to Branscombe beach, runners picking their way down nervously – downhill mud is my best bit so, deep breath and elbows deployed, I wove in and out quickly arriving at the beach having gained 30-40 places. Passing the Memory Tree I nodded a thank you to my dad who got us all into this running malarkey and remembered my Morpeth running friend Stevie who lost her life last year to the same cancer I had, feeling hugely grateful that I'm still here doing this. A river to wade through then another long stretch of shingle beach to the start of the 'Stairway to Heaven' fortified by jelly babies. This is the steep cliff path with lots of steps so a lot of puffing, panting, gritting of teeth and hands on knees to the top. Still 2-miles to go and hard work back on tarmac, through Beer and up another steep hill, the woods, road, more woods before the wonderful downhill to the finish to be greeted by hundreds of spectators and our own support family!





This was to be my last Grizzly as I am officially now an OAP, with dodgy knees, but wait.....there were a good 200 Club runners behind me in the results and I am in the first half of the 56 runners in the W60 category (just!) so maybe there is something to celebrate and just maybe, I'll be back next year!

**Barbara White**

Please send any news, articles or achievements to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk).



# The Total Guide Chilly draft legal Duathlon

On the 10th March, nine AVT members kicked off the multi-sport season by lining up at the start of the Chilly draft legal Duathlon and many others turned out to shout encouragement from the sidelines!

The event takes place at Castle Combe Race circuit and consists of a 2-mile run (1 lap of the race circuit), followed by a 10-mile cycle (5-laps of the race circuit) and finally another 2-mile run (another lap).



Anyone who has ever cycled at Castle Combe knows that it is renowned for its exposure to the wind and elements (no doubt how the event got its name) but thankfully the weather was kind on the day.

Well-done to Alan Best, Andrew Jeffries, Jenny Doyle, Keith Withers, Analie Ibison, Linda Unsworth, Leslie Unsworth, Pauline Bradley and Sally Frawley. Also, to Peter Cambell, who ran the Chilly 10k on the same day.

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## AVT Try-a-Tri

Thanks to Alan Best who organised this year's AVT Try-a-Tri closed event on Sunday 24th March.

This is a non-competitive and supportive event designed to encourage anyone in AVR/AVT who would like to dip their toe into the world of triathlon to come along and have a go.

Swimmers booked a public swim session at Trowbridge pool and swam for 30 minutes at their own pace, followed by a 10-mile group road ride led by Maria Harryman and a 5km out and back run with everyone going at their own pace. Finally, a coffee/breakfast at Valerosa in Trowbridge where I think we've convinced Mark Spiers to sign up for the swim leg of the 51 Fiver!

Good luck to James who is doing his first triathlon at Stonehenge in May.



**Maria Harryman**

## Segment of the Month – April 2024

April sees the launch of our **Avon Valley Segment of the Year competition** and to recap...the idea is that you are invited to take on a couple of Strava segments which can be incorporated into one of your training sessions and the fastest times recorded within the month (*actually up to the 25th of the month as we will need time to compile the results*) will get loads of kudos; with the fastest overall (Male & Female) getting 25-points. The second fastest (Male & Female) getting 24-points, the third fastest (Male & Female) getting 23-points and so on down to the 25th fastest (Male & Female) getting 1-point each; in the unlikely event that we should get more than 25 members tackling a segment then they will each get a point as well.




You can undertake a segment as many times as you like in a month and it is your best time that will be taken. Even when the month has passed you can continue cycling the segments right through until November (25<sup>th</sup>) and these will make up your Bonus-points score, with up to another 25-points on offer per segment


In order to participate you will need to register for a (*free*) account on Strava if you have not already done so, which will log your miles recorded from your Garmin or other compatible GPRS device. Once logged into Strava you need to join the **Avon Valley Triathletes club** which will be used for tracking cycling results on the segment.

Sport Type		Club Type	
Avon Valley	Location	All	All
			Search

	<b>Avon Valley Runners</b> England, United Kingdom	315 members	Running	Club
<a href="#">Join</a>				

	<b>Avon Valley Triathletes</b> Westbury, England, United Kingdom	106 members	Triathlon	Club
<a href="#">Join</a>				

Simply search for the words "Avon Valley" from the Strava Dashboard, being sure to change the default setting from "Athletes" to "Clubs" using the drop-down list:

Of course it goes without saying, but I am going to say it anyway that **undertaking these Strava segment challenges is done at your own risk.**

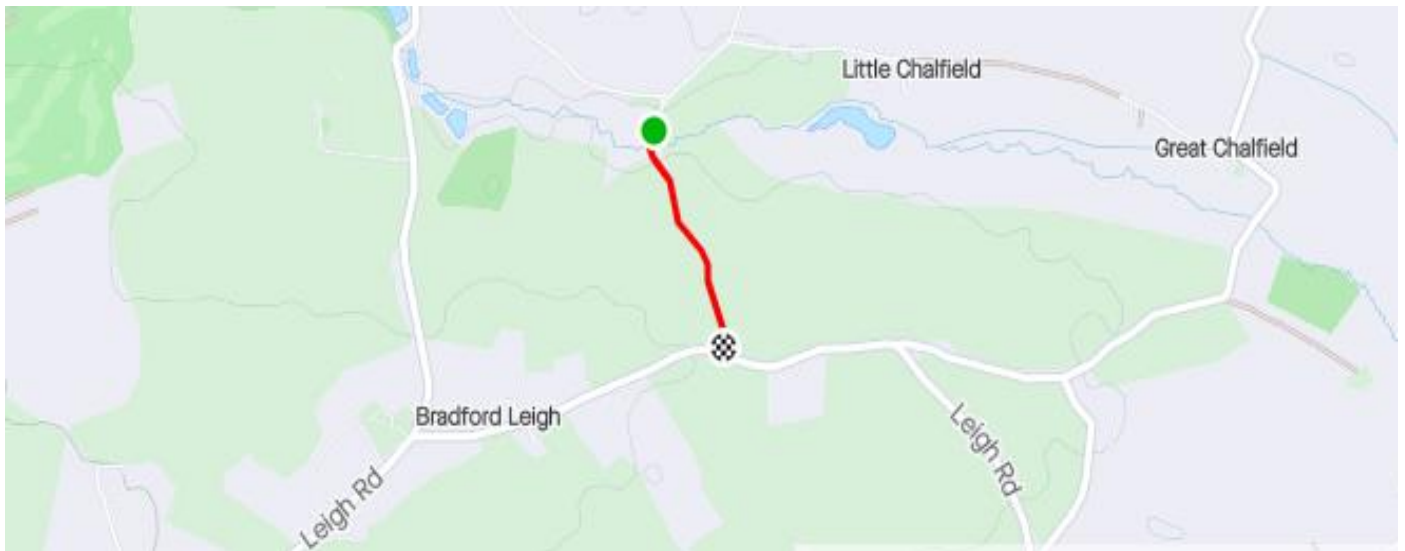
So where are the Avon Valley Strava segments?

Please send any news, articles or achievements to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk).

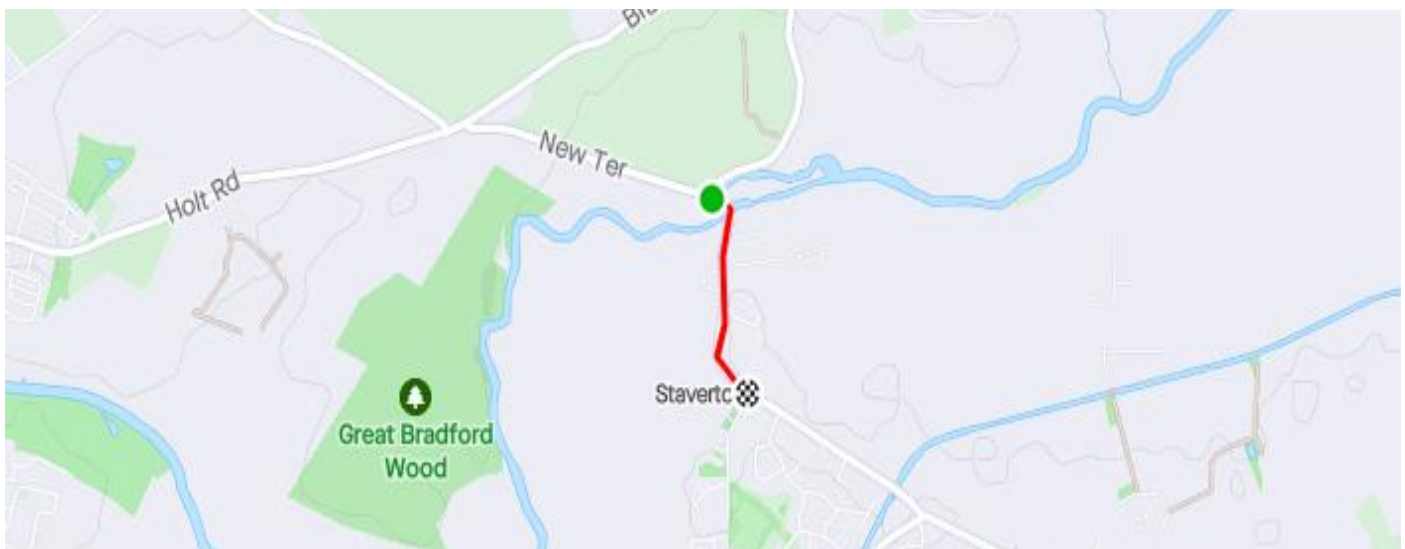


We kick off the 2024 challenge in April with two segments that have been put forward by last year's champions.

Ladies' winner, Caroline Scott brings you [Worm Hill](#) which is near Bradford Leigh and is just 0.38-miles long and climbs at an average gradient of 3.4%. So far this year seventeen club members have taken on this short climb with Jo Mumford (1:40) and Mark Sims (1:48) being our quickest riders so far and one to watch: Gary Day is the Strava Local Legend for this segment, having made the climb 50-times so far this year, at the time of writing this!



Our second segment is presented by our Men's winner, Will Whitmore and can be found at Staverton. Coming off of the Holt Road, heading into Trowbridge and is called [Climb Home Baby](#) and is just 0.36-miles in length and climbs at an average gradient of 2.6%. So far this year sixteen club members have taken on this short climb with Annalie Jane (1:22) and Alan Best (1:22) being our quickest riders so far.



For a fuller explanation of the Avon Valley Segment of the Year competition please check out the [January 2024 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.

Please send any news, articles or achievements to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk).

# The WSM Half Marathon Story

A very early alarm awaited me on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March as myself and Tracey Webb were heading to Weston-Super-Mare for their half marathon!

As a new member I signed up to Goal Getters and this was an ideal opportunity to earn some points. After a carpool karaoke of 80's tracks (Tracey's choice) we arrived at a very windy Weston!

We headed to the race village and bumped into Michael Guy who was also running. It wasn't long to wait and we were soon in our pens and we were off!



It was a relatively flat route and had some nice scenery, although running on the sand was rather heavy on the legs. I was buddy running this Half to support Tracey as she wanted to better her time from her last year's Half, which she did in Bournemouth. We then reached mile 10 and along came the inclines! Tracey was moaning (she's not a hill lover) but as it was an out and back what goes up must come down. So, with a downhill finish onto the pier and with a supporting crowd we crossed the finish line with Tracey knocking 30-minutes off her previous time and I achieved my Goal Getters points!

**Dean Robinson**

Please send any news, articles or achievements to [news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk](mailto:news@avonvalleyrunners.org.uk).



## #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...



**AVR do Bath Half**, well done to everyone here today



**Jayne Williams and Lady Liberty**



**Les Unsworth:** My first T1 exit, and it shows. Pauline Bradley showing me the way.



**Gary MacAllister and the bomb** (and Denise Ellis)

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