

Marathon Training

by Hal Higdon (1993)

The Athletics Congress (TACSTATS) keeps records. Road Runners Club of America is a good source of info. 1991 average men's marathon time was 3:18 in Boston & 3:58 in NY (women are 3:41 & 4:27). Training 35 miles/week is adequate to finish a marathon (55 to do well). By finishing a marathon people can catch a glimpse of their own potential. Walk through water stops to make sure you drink enough.

Don't run the same distance at the same pace everyday (try short fast, long slow). Train 400m repeats for 5 & 10k races; 800m for half-marathons; & mile repeats for marathons. Try speed work on the grass (less pounding). You want enough time to execute a well-organized plan that will bring you to the starting line in the best shape of your life (base + 6 mo). Read about nutrition or see a sports nutritionist referred by the American Dietetic Association. Try a diet of 60% carbs (10% simple), 15% protein, & 25% fats. See Jack Daniel's oxygen power tables.

A big city marathon gives more support and encouragement, but is crowded (a small race is faster). Taper 3 weeks before the marathon (25% less each week) [cut distance, not intensity]. Don't spend all day on your feet the day before the marathon. Splashing water on your body is important the last 6 miles of a marathon. Concentration is the hallmark of an elite runner (we slow down when we daydream).

Immediately after a marathon start sipping water, Gatorade or fruit juices (1/2 oz per minute); walk for 10 minutes, then get off of your feet. Take a cool bath to cool down followed by a warm shower. 1.5 hours after, shift to solid foods (banana, fruit, yogurt, crackers). Rest for a few hours and then get up and eat a full meal (carbs & protein). The best time for a message is 24-48 hours after. Do nothing for a week. Typical training week = long slow run, rest, speed work, easy run, fast run, easy run, rest.

Books: Sport Nutrition Guidebook (Nancy Clark)

Movies: Marathon Man