



Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon

sponsored by

brakes
fresh ideas

The Blue Cross Training Pack



THE BLUE CROSS

Britain's pet charity

Contents...

1. Training Programme

2. Top Training Tips

3. Kit

4. Health & Nutrition

5. Stretching

Training Programme

Keeping a log of your training is a great motivator and an excellent way of monitoring the progress you make. Below is a weekly log, which you can photocopy and fill in each week.

| Mon | Distance | Time | Heart rate | Weather |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Tues | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Weds | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Thurs | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Fri | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Sat | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |
| Sun | | | | |
| Course/notes | | | | |

Top Training Tips

1. Enjoy your running but don't over do it
2. Always warm up and stretch properly
3. Dress appropriately - be seen, be safe and keep warm
4. Look after your running shoes.
5. Try to run with others - it helps motivation
6. Join a local club or running group
7. If you feel unwell, don't run - wait until you feel better
8. If you are injured see a physio or massage therapist - never ignore injuries they don't just go away!
9. A sports massage once every two weeks will help keep you in good physical order
10. Drink lots of water
11. Watch your diet
12. Keep a record of your training - you can then see the progress you are making
13. Your training schedule is designed to prepare you for your race so take it seriously but don't push yourself too hard too soon
14. Always warm up well before races and jog to cool down afterwards
15. Always tell someone where you are running and carry your mobile phone or change for emergency phone calls
16. Run off road on grass or tracks whenever possible, it reduces the risk of impact injuries
17. Ask absolutely everybody you know to sponsor you to help raise funds for The Blue Cross!

Kit

The most important piece of kit for a runner is a good pair of running shoes. Always buy footwear from a specialist retailer, as they will advise on the type and fitting that you need. Take your time buying your shoes, try out lots of different brands, styles and models until you find the shoe that's right for you.

Here are some more key points to remember:

1. Be seen and be safe - wear light coloured reflective clothing
2. If it's wet wear a lightweight shower-proof top over your training kit, several thin layers are better insulation than one thick one.
3. Cover your extremities when its cold, wear gloves and a hat, you lose more heat from hands and head than anywhere else.
4. Keep your kit clean and dry. Wearing damp kit is not only unpleasant but can chaff your skin.
5. Never wear brand new gear for the actual race. Ensure it has been washed and worn several times before.
6. Always walk in a new pair of shoes for a week before running in them. This helps to avoid blisters and sore feet, as brand new shoes are usually a lot stiffer than the ones they are replacing.
7. Don't be tempted to buy high fashion gear from non-running sports shops, it is not designed for running and will certainly be a lot more expensive.
8. Write or have your name printed on your running vest or t-shirt so the crowd can cheer you on.
9. Slightly loose fitting gear is more practical for running, keep the skin tight gear for the post race party!
10. Ensure you wear a watch to record how long you train for and use a pedometer to monitor the distance you have run.

Health & Nutrition

The easiest way to explain the ideal diet for endurance athletes is through the following formula:

carbohydrate 65/70% + protein 15/20% + fat 15%

Add to this water, vitamins and minerals and you have the ideal mix that will refuel your body and provide you with energy stores that can easily be released when exercising.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates provide the main source of fuel for runners and it is therefore vital that it makes up the lion's share of your intake. Complex, slow release carbo's are the best (brown rice, wholemeal pasta, jacket potatoes) and cooked with a little imagination can provide a very enjoyable meal that will do you more good than burgers and chips!

These foods are stored in the body in the form of a substance called glycogen, which fuels your muscles. It is therefore vital that when training these stores of glycogen are kept topped up and you should try to eat a carbo snack as soon as possible after running. A banana or a sandwich fits the bill until you can have a full meal. If you don't refuel, you will start to feel increasingly fatigued and muscles will get sore, this is when you are at risk of injury or picking up an unwanted cold.

The next area to look at is vegetables, try whenever possible to have fresh vegetables and never overcook them, this removes the vitamins and minerals that you need.

Simple carbohydrates such as confectionery and sweet foods are also helpful in giving a quick boost of energy but they will not provide a lasting benefit so should be used sparingly.

A good breakfast of complex carbohydrates will give you a great start to the day and if you have had a morning run will restore your energy levels quickly. Never neglect breakfast when you are training, as it is important to eat regular meals.

Fluids

Hand in hand with carbohydrates is the importance of keeping your body well hydrated. You should drink water before, during and after exercise, sports drinks are also useful for boosting energy reserves but read the labels before buying, some are full of 'e' numbers and are of no real benefit.

If you feel dizzy, you have left it too late, it is better to drink slightly more water than you fancy than not enough, even in cold weather you will lose body fluids when training so be very careful.

Tea and coffee are ok in small quantities but are essentially diuretic, this means they will cause a degree of dehydration, and so if you are partial to them make sure you also drink plenty of water during the day. Alcohol in moderation is fine, but have a couple of glasses of water as well.

When using powdered sports drinks practice to get the right consistency and use them whilst training. Some can cause slight stomach problems so better to learn now than halfway through your race!

Protein

Protein is not as vital as carbohydrates but still provides an important part of your overall requirements. Protein will aid energy stores when glycogen stores are depleted, usually after more than two hours of exercise. It also helps your body to burn fat supplies.

High protein foods include, white fish, white meats, cheese, lentils and beans. If you are keeping to a low fat diet these foods will help to reduce your levels of body fat - most of us carry more than we need, but be careful, training for a race is not the time for crash diets!

Generally fried and fatty foods should be avoided; they are not good for you even when not training so use this opportunity to change your diet. Having said that the odd bacon sandwich won't hurt though!

It can be helpful to keep a record of your food intake alongside your training record as it may identify trends that work well for you.

Key Points

- Carbohydrate high diet
- Plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Drink lots of water
- Avoid fats where possible
- Odd treats are ok, you deserve them!

Food chart

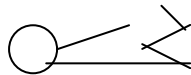
| Type | Good | Ok | Not so good |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Carbohydrates | Brown rice, baked potatoes, wholemeal bread, pasta, fruit, vegetables | White bread, rice, mashed potatoes, root vegetables, honey, cereals | Chips, fried rice, biscuits, sugary sweets and cakes |
| Proteins | White fish, white meat, low fat cheese, kidney beans, lentils, eggs | Oily fish (tuna), red meat, soft cheese, fried eggs | Fried fish, fried meat, burgers, sausages, hard cheese |
| Fluids | Water, approved sports drinks, fruit juice | Semi-skimmed milk, moderate tea/ coffee and red wine | Excessive alcohol and tea/ coffee, fizzy drinks, sugary drinks |
| Fats | Oily fish, olive oil, semi-skimmed milk | Yoghurt, vegetable oil, other milk products | Crisps, chocolate, fried food |

Stretching

Stretching is the key to helping an athlete avoid injury and unnecessary pain. A regular regime of stretching before and after running will help you to feel loose and relaxed whilst running and aid your body's recovery time.

Stretching Exercises

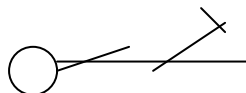
- Always jog a little to warm up before starting these stretches
 - Hold each stretch for 15-20 seconds
 - Don't go past a point where it starts to feel painful
 - Never bounce stretches
 - Move slowly into each stretch
 - Try to stretch before and after running sessions
1. Lower back – lie on back, knees to chest hold for 15 seconds release slowly and repeat 3 times



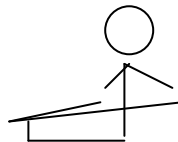
2. Back/ side – lie on back, pull knee across body and hold as shown, repeat 4 times each side



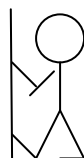
3. Hamstrings – lie on back, raise straight leg, pull slowly into stretch and hold, release slowly, repeat x4 each leg



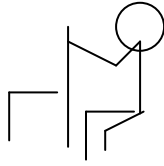
4. Calf/ hamstring – sit with one leg outstretched and other foot against knee, put towel over foot and pull, hold and repeat on other leg.



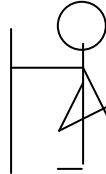
5. Calf – lean against wall, heels on ground, one leg forward and push hips towards the wall, repeat on other leg



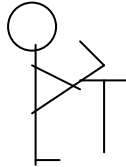
6. Calves – lean on back of a chair, both knees bent, one in front of other, heels on floor and push rear knee downwards



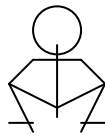
7. Quads – use wall to steady you, pull foot up to bottom and hold, change leg and repeat



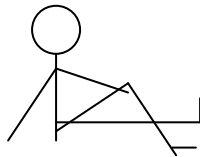
8. Hamstrings – use steeplechase barrier or similar to try to keep leg straight, hold and repeat on other leg



9. Abductors – sit with heels together and push down on knees.



10. Llio Tibial band – (band that runs down the outside of your leg from hip to knee). bend leg over straight leg, use elbow, adjust raised knee and push slowly



If you can make this routine a habit it will really help your preparation and help avoid injuries.