

Stafford Half Marathon Race Day Preparation

We all know how important it is to get the right training in prior to tackling the Half Marathon challenge, to ensure you are physically prepared for the 13.1-mile challenge. Equally important however, is your race day preparation.

Preparation on the day of your Half Marathon is really important, to ensure that you get around the circuit in good health, and to enable you to get the best time that your training has prepared you for. For many first time runners, the day of the race is a real test of those nerves, and some simple steps below, can help to ease you into your run...

1. Set an alarm so that you wake up with plenty of TIME. Work backwards so that you know what time you should get up, take into consideration time required to get ready, travelling time, parking, finding the venue, registration (if you do not have a number in advance), warm up (at least 20mins) plus extra time for the toilet, getting to the start line or any other overlooked preparation.
2. Make sure you eat BREAKFAST, but try not to experiment with food on the day. However, in the weeks leading up to the Half Marathon it would be a good idea to try and adjust your body to eat a carbohydrate enriched breakfast such as, porridge, cereal, toast and honey or a banana, Therefore, you will be aware if eating such energy enriched foods have adverse effects prior to exercise.
3. Try to eat your last main MEAL 3 hours before the start of the race. However, if you feel hungry a cereal snack bar is advisable.
4. Stay away from fizzy or concentrated drinks as these may lead to stitch and remember caffeine will assist dehydration. It is therefore advisable to take on board plenty of WATER or diluted fruit juices; these are the same concentration as your blood and will effectively hydrate your body.
5. Don't wear new items of CLOTHING on the day of the event. 13.1miles is a long way to be wearing uncomfortable clothing. Try to run in lightweight non-restrictive clothing.
6. It is especially important to have worn your TRAINERS in, as blisters are extremely painful. Check that your trainer laces are done up to provide maximum support and laced tightly in a double knot. Don't forget to attach your TIMING TAG to your lace!
7. Make sure you WARM-UP before the race; slow jogging and stretching will prepare your body for the demands of the race. Pay particular attention to stretching your calf and quadriceps muscles, as these muscles will be subjected to a large amount of impact during the 13.1 miles.
8. Check that your RACE NUMBER can be clearly seen on the front of your vest / t-shirt and is fastened with four safety pins.
9. Wear a WATCH; it is a good idea to be conscious of time on the day of the event, it is also useful to wear a watch during the half marathon
10. Get to the START LINE in plenty of time, but position your self in a place that suits your ability. There will be some quality club athletes on the front few rows, some of which will be international standard, unless you are of this standard, you will hold athletes up and will be pushed into running too quickly over the first mile.

Finally remember to relax and enjoy the event!