

# Up and Running June 2014

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## **Boston Marathon**

Stephen Malcolm writes

There are many spring marathons to choose from. Lots have great or good reputations, some do not. London was a non-starter, the small matter of not bothering with the ballot. Passing my eye down the list, I noticed that Boston was 2 days after my xxth birthday, meaning I had the qualifying time fairly comfortably. Boston is the longest running, annually held marathon, and is a target for many runners due to the need to achieve a qualifying time based on age/gender.

Entries didn't open for a month but I thought it best to check out accommodation options. I checked the usual accommodation sites. Ooft! 5 or 6 nights in a hotel near the bus pickup was close to a month's pay. Adding entry, flights and beer money would make this seriously expensive. Luckily, further down the list, was the hostel on the edge of Chinatown. Excellent reviews, a 5 minute walk from the bus pickup, still expensive for a dorm bed, but a much more realistic price and free cancellation.

Having the qualifying time isn't a guarantee of entry but my entry was confirmed within a day of applying, which meant I had to start thinking about. . .

## **Training**

I decided to try out the Hanson's Marathon plan. This plan is (in)famous for having a maximum long run of 16 miles, and is therefore easy. This isn't actually true. They recommend the long run is limited to 25%-30% of weekly mileage, but include weekday runs like 14-16 miles with 10 at marathon pace, and 10-13 miles with 2x3 at 10 seconds under marathon pace on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Anyway, before I could start the training fully, I developed a new injury. Sore right shin, possibly caused by too much running in circles through December and January. So, slightly undertrained and with lowered expectations, I got in the taxi to the airport, boarded the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 planes, and arrived at Boston Logan Airport roughly on time. One cramped, but free, bus journey and a 10 minute walk later I was settled in the hostel.

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## Friday/Expo

Everywhere in central Boston is walkable pre-marathon. Strolled along to the Expo with Chinese and German room-mates. Number and t-shirt pickup easy. Spending on other items, also easy. Splashed out on the 'bright' orange official race jacket, and tried a few gels/chews. All were too icky to take a gamble with on race day.

Retired to Boston Common Coffee Company, one of the better cafes in Boston, then headed to Ned Devine's at Fanueil Hall for some Sam and a large mac & cheese, resisting the temptation to swap the side salad for fries.

## Saturday

The days leading up to the marathon should be spent resting and fuelling. I'm fairly comfortable with the later, but what's the point of going somewhere new if you don't look around?

1<sup>st</sup> up was the Boston 5k Race. I entered this when my shin was at its worst, and thought it would provide a nice jog and sharpener with 10,000 friends. I started off steadily, weaving in and out of the slower runners, and was a bit shocked to reach the mile in 7:15. The field thinned a bit after this, and a gradual acceleration gave further splits of 7:00 and 6:45. So much for a gentle jog.

A nice relaxing afternoon at the 'ball park was called for, 3-4 hours off the feet. I certainly needed a seat after the cost of the souvenirs. The only problem was the big, bright, burn causing, ball of gas in the sky. Ho hum, back to The Landsdowne for a soothing Harpoon and another large plate of mac & cheese

## Sunday

Another early start due to the jet lag. A stroll through the public park, past Cheers, down to the riverside, was followed by a visit to the posh shops of Newbury Street for coffee/2<sup>nd</sup> breakfast.

I didn't want to take any chances with carb loading, so I joined the long line waiting to enter the pasta party, despite arranging to meet a friend for dinner later. The menu was unusually impressive, 4 types of pasta dish, a meat dish, salad, yoghurt, **26.2 beer** and, the piece de resistance, a goody bag with a Lindt chocolate bear, a pack of Toblerone, amongst other

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goodies. The only drawback was the venue, the plaza at city hall was a bit of a seventies nightmare with a wind-tunnel effect.

2nd Dinner was at Gennaro's at 5 North Square. This proved to be a pleasant experience, not as busy as I expected, with good service, and excellent food. Decided to skip the nightcap and headed straight to bed.

### **Marathon Monday**

Once more an early start, headed down to the breakfast room with my pot of porridge to find the hostel had started breakfast at 5.30. Result!

Walking round to Boston Common for the bus pickup, I began feeling the big race excitement. Much of the pre-race communication had focused on the extra checks and security at the bus loading and athletes village in Hopkinton. I didn't have anything to compare against, but it wasn't noticeable. As long as my number was displayed no one bothered me.

The journey to Hopkinton seemed to take an inordinate time, but we eventually spilled off the bus and entered the village a good 2 hours before the wave start. Not much to do except grab a snack and a coffee, and find a spot to relax, before joining the loo queue before it grew too long. Worryingly, it was feeling fairly warm at just the back of nine.

The residents of Hopkinton certainly embraced the marathon. Some had set up stalls with essential items like Vaseline and sun cream. Others had beer and cigarettes! Unfortunately only Coors was on offer.

### **The Race**

All the advice was to set off slowly and not let the steep downhill start induce too much speed early on, wrecking the legs for the later hills. I thought I managed this, and managed to stay reasonably cool thanks to a gentle, cooling side breeze. The 10 mile mark was reached in just under 1:13 about 25-30s down on my fastest prediction, so ok.

Unfortunately, the cooling breeze vanished after mile 11, and I began to feel uncomfortably hot. I slowed my pace a bit to hopefully compensate adjusting my hoped for time to 3:18. I was still feeling ok on reaching the ladies of Wellesley College, so resisted the temptation to stop. I did 'high five' a few groups and noted some of the interesting signs – 'Kiss me, I'm

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performance enhancing', 'Kiss me, I have out last year'. All very tempting! If I had known what would happen in the final 4 miles. . .

I've struggled to digest gels since Berlin last year, and decided to rely on the Gatorade and water on offer at the aid stations. These were spaced at mile intervals so I decided to take Gatorade at evens and water at odds. Luckily the juice was going down quite well and I still felt fairly strong if a bit toasted on reaching mile 16 at the Charles River in 1:57:40, still on course for a decent time. Note to self: skip the daytime baseball next time.

Depending who you speak to there are 3 or 4 Newton Hills. None of these hills are a problem if you're feeling strong or just out for a jog. So it proved on the 1st 'unofficial' hill, and the 1st part of the 'fire station' hill. Suddenly I lost the zip from my legs. It may have been the heat, or maybe I wasn't taking it as easily early on as I thought. Thankfully, my head was still in the game, and I managed to muddle through the remaining hills, including the famous Heartbreak Hill, to reach 21 miles in 2:38.

This left 42 minutes to cover the final 5 and a bit miles for a final time of about 3:20 which I would have settled for at the start. Sadly my legs weren't interested, and I couldn't lift the pace on the long downhill. Beacon Street, 3 miles, dead straight and lots of opportunities to stop and board the 'T'. No chance, the crowds were so loud and enthusiastic that this was not an option. Shuffled along, finally reaching the 'Citgo' sign with a mile to go, before the turn into Hereford Street.

And the final turn into Boylston Street for the last 600 metres. Thankfully this was gently downhill, and I managed someone close to a dignified 8minutes/mile pace to the line before picking up the medal, a posh heat sheet, and much needed food and drink.

[Ed: Congratulations on a 3:26 time in Boston.]

### **Post Race**

I don't know if it's like this every year, but I couldn't buy a drink in the pub. Every time I tried, someone chipped in 'I've got this'. That pretty much summed up the trip. Everyone seemed delighted that people had come to run 'their' marathon.

Note: a longer version of Stephen's piece, with pictures, is available at:

<http://malk71.wordpress.com/2014/05/03/boston-marathon/>

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### Post London Blues

Neil Graham writes

So the London Marathon came and went, I took a couple of days off from running but soon started again, scared of losing the fitness I had achieved. Then work went mental, 3 weeks without a day off, sometimes 20 hour days. I would love to tell you more about what happened but as they say in the movies "then I would have to kill you". Anyway my training took a hammering, one week I managed a 3 mile run that was it. My diet also suffered, eating on the go, at one point all I wanted was to eat something not from a packet, on a plate and not stuck between two pieces of bread, it's the little things in life.

Work has calmed down a little so I have been able to get back into training, of sorts. Without a major goal to work for at present, I am struggling to motivate myself. The weather has been awful, no big races to work towards, in fact I was using any excuse not to head out.

I don't start training for the Chicago Marathon until late June, so there was no real reason to push myself. So on Wednesday night it reached a new low, it was interval training at Eliburn reservoir, and I decided not to go. It was raining, it was cold, cold to me anyway so I just stayed in. The reservoir is about 500 metres from my house so I could not use that as an excuse, just no motivation.

The same the following morning, my alarm went off at 5, but I looked outside and again it was pouring, so back to bed for an hour.

That day posted on the club's Facebook page was a photo of youngsters Robyn and Louis Macdonald and Jamie Kennedy standing after their races on the Wednesday night, they were soaked but smiling. It was the kick I needed. These three had been out in awful conditions for their sport, and they looked happy. Whereas I had sat in my house moping around.

This is just to say thank you to Robyn, Louis and Jamie for giving me the kick up the backside I needed. (possibly I should be looking at their parents for offences under the Children and Young Persons Act, only joking).

I entered the Livingston Rotary Club 10k as soon as I noticed the photo, as punishment for not going on the Wednesday night.

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So here I sit after running around Livingston this morning, I managed 46 minutes, not my best but not my worst. A tough route although Christine MacVarish made light work of it, being the first female home. It was a well organised wee run, timing chips, plenty of stewards, and a decent medal, plus it was local.

Dechmont Trail next week, then Black Rock 5 the following week. Post London blues are gone and I feel I am back. New goals set, sub 45 10k, sub 21 5k, and possibly not speaking to as many people during a marathon.

Maybe just maybe I will start to go to the track on a Thursday with the flyers, let's see.

### **Eight reasons I reckon that hill running is better than road running...**

John Malcolm writes

I often try to encourage people to take part in hill races. Anyone who can run a 10k in an hour can turn up at a hill race and have a go.

This year's been great as we've had a decent turnout at Carnethy 5 and several other 'new' hill runners turning out at Ben Lomond and other races.

So, to encourage a few more of you along, here are eight reasons that hill running is better than road running :-)

1) The view... The Mamore ridge during the Ben Nevis race beats the oil refineries at Grangemouth 10k :-) The view from the Ochil hills during the Ochil 2000s beats the view of the Ochils during Alloa Half marathon.

2) In road races 'jogger's nipple' is the most serious injury possible. At hill races, you can finish with bloodied hands, knees, head and anywhere else. Makes for much better action shots :-)

3) 24hr time trials. For road runners you can do laps of a track to see how far you get. Zzzz. Hill runners can traverse 42 Lakeland peaks on the Bob Graham 24hr challenge or 20+ Munros on the Ramsay Round.

4) Road = enter a year in advance by making sure you are on your computer at the exact second the race entry opens. Hill = turn up on the night and pay £3 to Angus ten minutes before the start.

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5) A race goody bag includes 100 fliers for the latest kit which will make you run... at exactly the same speed you do now. A glue-like energy gel and a one-size-fits-no-one tshirt. At hill races there's usually some water and a Bourbon biscuit.. No fuss :-)

6) If you walk during a road race you'll be disappointed with yourself. In hill running, everyone walks at some point... even the leaders.

7) Being 100% knackered half way through a road race means you've gone out too fast and ruined your race. Being 100% knackered half way through a hill race means you've paced to perfection... you're now at the summit and gravity will gently pull you to the finish line :-)

8) A 15 minute mile in a road race is usually post-wall pace in a marathon. My 25 minute mile on Stuc a'Chroin resulted in a new PB :-)

So.. lots of good reasons. Red Moss Revolution, Turnhouse and Caerketton are all reasonable races for a first timer over the next few months. Anyone interested in a chat about hill running, please give me a shout :-) johnmalcolm81@ymail.com

### **Dechmont Trail Race Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

Each June Lothian Runners puts on a high quality , low key trail race on Dechmont Law.

To make the event a success we need two things: lots of runners and lots of helpers. Entries are arriving by post and on-line and marshalls for key points on the course are in place. We do still need some help at the finish to record times and finishers. (Any one with a deft hand and experience in reading barcodes is most welcome!)

If you are free for a few hours on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> please contact Ted at **Chairman@lothianrunningclub.co.uk**

### **Summer BBQ**

Ted and Val will host a BBQ at 4 Bickerton Crofts , EH47 8RX on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July. They will provide BBQ hearths, salad and soft drinks. Please bring your own meat or veggie stuff to cook you're your favourite alcoholic drinks. There is an opportunity for a trail run nearby for those feeling energetic. Meanwhile there will be Commonwealth Games on TV!

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## Training Rota for June 2014

All sessions suitable for all ages from 6 years + (under 8's must be accompanied by an adult) and adapted for age and ability. Help from parents of younger children for our coaches is most appreciated. Contact [info@lothianrunningclub.co.uk](mailto:info@lothianrunningclub.co.uk) if you would like to know more about how you can help.

Sessions at Craigswood SC track, £2 per person or £5 for family. Wednesdays £1 per person  
All other sessions free

Date	Location	Session	Coaches
<b>Sun 1<sup>st</sup> June</b> And every Sunday	<b>Dechmont Law car park @ 10am</b>	Intervals and varying activities off road in wood & field	Martin (or alternative coach)
<b>Mon 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b>	<b>Dechmont Law car park @ 7pm sharp</b>	Reccy Dechmont law trail race	No coach (with Edel & Chloe)
<b>Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> June</b> and every Tues thereafter	<b>The Meadows, Edinburgh @ 7.30pm for 7.55 start</b>	Choice of intervals	Martin
<b>Wed 4<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Inveralmond @ 7pm</b> (Start at entrance to St. Margaret's)	<b>Fiddlers Handicap</b> (Summer Course)	No coach
<b>Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> June</b> And every Thurs thereafter	<b>Craigswood Track</b> <b>6.50 for 7pm start</b>	Intervals	Steve
<b>Fri 6<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Craigswood Track, 6.50 for 7pm start sharp</b>	<b>Parents Night</b> Main: Intervals ( <a href="#">see more</a> ) Adapted main: 10 - 16yrs 6 - 9yrs (multi event dev) Sprints	Susan Saran Alan Rita
<b>Wed 11<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Inveralmond, 7pm</b> <b>Committee meeting @ 8.15pm</b>	Oakbank Runs ( <a href="#">see more</a> )	Martin
<b>Fri 13<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Craigswood Track, 7pm start</b>	Main: Intervals ( <a href="#">see more</a> ) Adapted main: 10 - 16yrs 6 - 9yrs (multi event dev) Sprints <b>Introduction session</b>	Alan " Saran Rita Colin
<b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Inveralmond, 7pm</b>	Howden Park Reps ( <a href="#">see more</a> )	Saran
<b>Fri 20<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Craigswood Track, 7pm start</b>	Main: Intervals ( <a href="#">see more</a> ) Adapted main: 10 - 16yrs 6 - 9yrs (multi event dev) Sprints	Susan Alan Saran Rita
<b>Wed 25<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Inveralmond, 7pm</b>	Dechmont Law Woods Reps	Edel
<b>Fri 27<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Craigswood Track, 7pm start</b>	Main: Intervals ( <a href="#">see more</a> ) Adapted main: 10 - 16yrs 6 - 9yrs (multi event dev) Sprints	Susan Alan " Rita