

SCOTTISH HEALTH



EDUCATION GROUP

TUNE TO TAY

Fridays 6.30pm

or

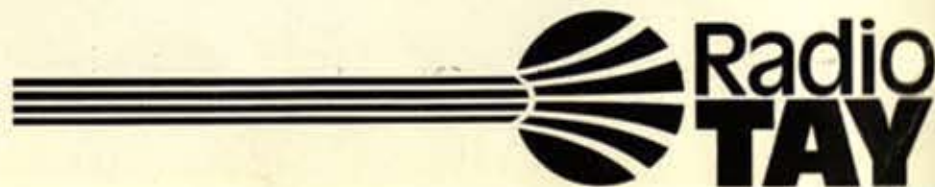
Saturdays 7.35am

for

Don Macgregor's
Sound Advice

on

Marathon Running



“ When I cross the finishing line after a good race, I feel a mixture of elation and relief:

elation that my training has paid off and that my legs have held out, and relief that at last I can stop running.

It's like coming out of a 26 mile 385 yard tunnel of concentration, of sights and sounds that I couldn't afford the time to do more than register on the way.

”

“ When I cross the line after a bad race, the relief is there in even greater measure, backed up by resignation and, somewhere in the recesses of my mind, the germ of the thought:

I'll do better next time.

”



Don Macgregor has been a top-class runner for twenty years. Now in his 45th year and having run — he thinks — as many marathons as his age, he is in a unique position to offer guidance to newcomers to running. There are few other marathoners better placed either to advise athletes at the other end of the scale — those who aim to beat three hours and the talented and dedicated among them who set their target at 2 hours 20 minutes or less. Read the Marathon Manual from cover to cover as soon as you can. To the novice, there will be some aspects of training that won't become clear until progress is made. That's the time to turn back to the Manual. Dip into it again and you will soon identify the sections that will unravel the mysteries of the marathon.

DON MACGREGOR won the first Dundee People's Health Marathon in a time of 2 hours 17 minutes and 24 seconds. That was a mere three minutes or so outside his personal marathon best — scored at the Commonwealth Games in New Zealand NINE years ago.

Don's victory in Dundee set the fastest time of the four city marathons in Scotland in 1983. He also showed a clean pair of heels to many fine athletes half his age.

That's why Don Macgregor, with a quarter century of running experience, is uniquely qualified to offer advice and encouragement to the thousands of men and women looking to a sport once shunned as a pastime for eccentrics. In Don's early days of running, marathoners formed a select band of sportsmen whose activities were given little recognition by the media and were regarded by some people as odd-ball, at least! Certainly it is true that runners of the Macgregor calibre are performers extraordinaire. Committed, self-denying, tenacious, the marathon runner at the top end of the scale rightly takes his or her place in the Royal Family of athletes.

Don's running career has earned him trophies sufficient to crowd most display cases. His distinctive head-cocked gait took him to the 1972 Munich Olympics (7th in 2:16:34) and to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh in 1970 (8th in 2:16:53) and the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch, New Zealand (6th in 2:14:15). Other titles include: 1965 SAAA 10 miles track, 1966 SAAA 6 miles track, 1973, 74, 76 SAAA marathon titles (2nd four times more). World veteran (over 40) Champion at 10km track (Hanover 1979) and in Marathon at Glasgow 1980. Scottish Cross-country International 1965, 1969, Scottish veteran cross-country champion 1980 and 1983. And he's still winning. Dundee 1984?

Donald Forbes Macgregor is academically able (MA Honours St. Andrews and now principal teacher in German at Madras College, St. Andrews); he's realistic ("my peak was 10 years ago") he's a likeable fellow unspoiled by success ("running is something I just enjoy").

Don was born in Edinburgh. He lives in St. Andrews with his wife, Kim (two marathons run so far — personal best 3:48) and children Rosemary and Michael.

He offers guidance to newcomers to running out of genuine interest. He's run 22 marathons in under 2 hours 20 minutes — and stresses that leading a normal life is essential if full enjoyment is to be gained from the sport. Don Macgregor's Marathon Manual is an important contribution to running in the 1980's.

George Mackintosh (Don Macgregor-inspired Dundee 1983 (4:07), Glasgow 1983 (3:52)).



CITY OF DUNDEE

PEOPLE'S HEALTH MARATHON

Sunday 29th April 1984 at 10am

Sponsored by:



SCOTTISH HEALTH



EDUCATION GROUP

CITY OF DUNDEE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Train—Don't Strain

People often ask me why should I start running? Runners are common enough nowadays but they still make up only a small percentage of the population, despite the fact that running's got clear benefits to health. So why don't more people run?

Well, many people are put off by what others'll think. The neighbours will be intrigued (amazed even!) but as your progress becomes obvious they'll probably get envious of you. They'll maybe even imitate you! In the initial stages you can always walk or drive to a park or wood away from your house.

Some people say they don't have time because of their work or their family. Even such people, busy people like American president Jimmy Carter found time to jog. Running will take up only about half an hour of your time, including changing, in the early stages at least. Obviously if you're aiming at a marathon it'll take more, but most people find that establishing the routine is the hardest thing. After that it's relatively easy.

Again there's no set time you have to go out. Run in the early morning, at lunchtime have a sandwich instead (you'll feel much better for it) or run after work. The only time you can't run properly is for two or three hours after a meal.

Some people say they're too old to start running now but most of the thousands of the new runners in Britain's streets and parks are in their thirties, forties and fifties. Some even are in their sixties and seventies. The only precautions you have to take are to ask your doctor to check you over if you're starting from scratch after years of not participating in endurance activity. Remember your progress has to be easy and gentle. Train, don't strain. That's a key to successful and enjoyable running.

Some people dismiss running because they confuse it with marathon running and that seems impossibly long and arduous at the beginning. Marathon running is not the be-all and end-all however. You should be able to get some satisfaction from this "experiment of one" of getting yourself into shape. So if you've been running for several months regularly and you decide to have a go at finishing a marathon, well, it's a realisable goal. But you'd be no less a person if you decide not to.

Other people start too vigorously with their running. They run hard for a week or so then they get stiffer and sorer. They enjoy it less and less and then they give up. It's here I hope to be able to help you plan a sensible programme of training which'll be more enjoyable and to increase your fitness gradually and relatively painlessly. Some people, especially women and girls, are afraid that running will make them muscle-bound and unattractive. But running keeps you slim, or at least can, eventually, even make you slim. Easy, aerobic exercise like running firms your muscles but doesn't give them bulk. Just you think of marathon runners like Leslie Watson or Joyce Smith!

You've got to start with a very short and easy mixture of walking and jogging. Everyone, of course, is at a different stage of fitness, or unfitness you might put it. So everybody has to try it out for him or herself. I would suggest about ten minutes walking or jogging say three times a week at the beginning.

It may be some comfort to you to know about my early days in running. I remember clearly my first training run at St. Andrews University. It was only three miles and I was so awful that with only a mile and a half completed I was asking how far there was to go. I was knackered! I was — let's say — "encouraged" to finish by the fitter members of the running team.

Money Well Spent

When we look at marathon gear the most important item is going to be shoes because the human foot wasn't constructed to run on tarmac. It needs support. All-purpose shoes like gym-shoes don't provide support where it's needed. So you've got to buy a shoe designed for running. Running shoes can be expensive (the high cost of research and development and the fact that they are being sold in a specialist market obviously affects the retail price) but despite that, money spent on good shoes is money well spent.

Should you buy the most expensive shoes available? I would say not. Buying the most expensive shoes, and remember it can cost you up to £70 for a pair which seems an awful lot to me, does not necessarily mean you're getting the right shoes for your purpose. The beginner's better advised anyway to choose a less expensive shoe, perhaps in the £30 region, although that's not chicken feed either.

You should try on several pairs of shoes in the shop. You're going to pay for them after all. Jog around the shop in them. Try them out. If this isn't allowed, go elsewhere. Go to one of the specialist running shops in the area, where they encourage you to do this and give you expert advice. What you're looking for, remember, is good support for your foot, good padding especially under the heel. Most distance runners land on their heel after all.

Go for a medium-weight shoe because very light shoes are probably designed for racing only. They don't give enough support for use as training shoes. If the shoe's too heavy on the other hand you get a real or imaginary feeling that you're being slowed down.

Another advantage of not spending the earth on shoes is that you can buy a different pair later. Then you can alternate your shoes in training and they seem to last a bit longer, probably because they dry out between training sessions. Check the sole pattern too. If you run mainly on roads you don't need very much grip but if you're often over the countryside then get a shoe with more grip — perhaps with waffles or studded rubber soles.

Having spent a fair amount of money on a pair of running shoes you'll want to know the best way to maintain them. Well, most shoes nowadays have nylon uppers rather than leather as they used to have, and the big advantage of the nylon is lightness and the fact that they can be washed in the washing machine just like the rest of your laundry — but probably not at the same time! They can be spun dry. But for heaven's sake don't put them in the tumble dryer otherwise bits of them might melt. The disadvantage is that they need frequent washing because they retain rather nasty smells.

A tremendous number of figure-conscious people ask me — can you lose weight by running? Well, you can, but it's a very gradual process. You can't hurry it up. You can't lose a stone in a week or anything like that. There's no point in wearing more clothes than you need to. Don't try for instance to sweat yourself fit by wearing extra layers of clothes. You perspire just water and you have to drink it all on again. Weight loss by running's a very slow process.

What you should wear for running is a track suit or an old pullover and loose trousers if you've no track suit. Not jeans. They're too tight. They restrict your movement. So a tracksuit's a suitable all-purpose garment for most weathers in this country. Optional extras you might choose depending on the conditions are a cagoule or a wet top, and a hat, because much of your body heat escapes via the head, and gloves in cold weather.

Training's not a fashion parade so you wear what's comfortable and keeps you neither too hot or too cold. Remember: if you're training in the dark, wear reflective clothing or at least something light in colour. What's the point in doing all this running if you're going to end up in hospital?

Beating Boredom



If you get stiff and sore muscles that is a symptom of over-use. This is very common in the early stages of training because most beginners do overestimate what they can do in those early days. People almost always do too much and too soon. You may find that even a small amount of running makes you stiff the next day. The answer for a small amount of stiffness like that is not to rest up as you might think, but to continue with a moderate and relaxed programme.

In the first weeks run sufficiently slowly so that you don't get out of breath. If you're puffing and panting, running isn't very much fun. Slow down. Walk if necessary to get your breath back. Then start jogging again. It doesn't take many runs — surprisingly few in fact — before you can keep going continuously for a mile or two.

If you started grossly over-weight it'll take you longer but that's all the more reason to keep at it. Incidentally, it's a big help if you do start skinny. The runner should never start extreme diets to lose weight. Exercise and common sense about eating will slowly but gradually bring the weight down to the proper level.

Remember the talk test when you're out running. If you don't have enough breath left to conduct a conversation, you're going too fast. That's not to say that you have to converse all the time. In fact, it would be rather peculiar on your solo outings! You just have to feel you **could** talk if you wanted.

If you run in unsuitable shoes, you're much more likely to get stiff and sore or even to incur injury. Make sure you wear comfortable, well padded and supported shoes.

Recently new materials have been developed for shoe insoles and the manufacturers of these claim they can absorb most of the shock of landing on the running foot. So ask at a specialist shoe shop if you think that might be worth trying.

Symptoms of having overdone it on the previous day or days are loss of appetite, feeling breathless or a general disinclination to run — a sort of stale feeling which can be difficult to shake off. Often it arises from monotony of surroundings. You could change your routes or run in company. That would give you someone to try out the talk test on.

What else can you do to make training less tedious? I think all you can do is to try to change one or more of the factors involved, the scene, the company, perhaps look around and see what's going on. Try and vary your routes a bit. Perhaps you could go out with an Ordnance Survey map and find a new route. Another problem may well be that because of work, you can't run until the evening and in the winter on the roads, that is obviously a hazard. Well, road running in the dark is, of course, very dangerous. I think you have to be careful that you're properly dressed with reflective gear. You have to keep to the pavements, and if there are no pavements you must run facing the oncoming traffic — don't be mowed down from behind. Run on the principle that every driver is out to kill you.

It may be possible if you live in any sort of settlement to do a circuit within a built-up area with proper street lights or you might even be lucky and find a park which is partly illuminated from the streets.

Now the big question! Some days you just don't feel like running at all. Well, you can only console yourself with the fact that Olympic champions right down to the humblest jogger go through these leaden, dull days, before they reach the golden moments. You have to endure them the same as everyone else. I do it. You do it. Everybody does it and you just have to put up with the boring days. It's only a temporary thing. Everybody gets them and there's no explanation for it.

When I'm out training and on my own, I think as little as possible about running. Generally my mind passes over family, work, the book I'm reading — or what I'm going to be doing when I finish. And if I'm out with someone else, we'll tend to talk about anything except running.

Racing is different. You need to concentrate and not let your mind ramble. You must think about your pace. Is it comfortable? And if not, slow down. And what are the others doing. Concentrate!

Running Routines



Training can lead to various problems in your family life. As your training increases, running can become a cause of friction at home or at work and then everything suffers, including, running and it just isn't worth it. For those of us who've been running most of

our lives, it's as necessary as breakfast and probably as normal, if not always as palatable! But it's impossible, and undesirable probably, for most of us to make running the centre of our lives. It has to remain in its proper place as a leisure activity — one which makes the rest of our life richer. It can take, at best, third place behind family and work.

People who are recent converts to running often fall into the habits of new converts to anything and talk with obvious but overpowering enthusiasm about nothing else. In short they become running bores. They don't realise that not everyone's interested in their training, their injuries, their new shoes and so on. Be warned. Keep a low profile. Let your deeds speak for you.

You must try to get your family and friends to regard your running in a positive way so that they'll encourage you rather than complain about you "wasting time" as they'll put it. Running isn't wasting time, but if, for example, you re-arrange the family meals around your training, it's easy to see how the others might regard your new passion as a pest.

In the same way, you have to fit your training into your daily work routine and not vice-versa. If you're a housewife the best time to run may well turn out to be early in the morning or it may be at lunchtime if you're on your own at home. If you do run early in the day, be sure you go extra easily at that fresh and often chilly time because your body's not fully awake and needs slow and gentle rousing. Whenever you train — try to make it a habit so you don't need to think about it much. You just put your gear on and out you go. The step out of the door's always the hardest.

There's something else you may experience when on holiday and that's finding the motivation to train. It's a case really of having too much time on your hands, and you've got to say to yourself at a certain time of day, other things permitting, "I'll try and get out and train." I know on holiday that may very well be in the early morning when other people have not started their holiday routine or in the evening after things have settled down and I think you've got to stick to something like that. I've a friend who's unemployed and he took up running partly to help fill his time but even he finds it hard to get out regularly. I think this is largely a case of the same problem as training on holiday, except much more unpleasant. You lack the desire to train if you've all day to fill. My advice is to set a fixed time to go out and if you can find someone else to run with, so much the better. Consider joining your local running club. The best times to train in my own personal view are at lunchtime, if you've got a long enough lunch break to do say 20 minutes jogging, and in the evening. However, other people are early birds and they prefer to get out in the morning.

What about eating and training? Well, I think the main principle you should go by is that training comes first followed by eating, as far as is possible. In the case of your evening meal, there's no point in trying to go out training after eating. You must train first and eat when you come back, otherwise it's impossible and you'll feel rotten. At lunchtime you can forego a big lunch and just have a sandwich. Again I would have that after my training session. Breakfast can also wait till you've finished your run. That's the general principle for eating.

Here's a suggestion. Your natty running gear may have omitted to provide a place for keeping such an essential as the house key. Put it around your neck on a shoe lace, or attach it to your shorts with a safety pin.

Training Schedules



We've got our equipment now, we've discussed the aches and pains you get at the beginning, your family routine and your eating. Now it's time to get down to think about more serious things — how much you should run, how fast and how far?

Theories abound about the speed of training. The trained human body is capable of speeds of up to 22.7 mph, (not my trained human body by the way), but that's only over 200 metres or so. If you run a marathon in 2 hours and 12 minutes, (beyond my compass as well) you're averaging twelve miles an hour or five minutes a mile. Six minutes a mile will give you around 2 hours 38 minutes, a bit more realistic for most people. Seven minutes a mile will produce 3 hours 5 minutes, still a good time. Eight minutes a mile (3 hours 33 minutes) is still very respectable and nine minutes a mile is just inside four hours, which is a target for a lot of first-time marathon runners.

In theory, the best way to run any distance event is at level pace. In practice nearly all marathon runners slow down towards the end so you'll probably find that you run part of the race slightly faster than your predicted average speed. There are other considerations such as the type of course you're going to be running. Is the first half harder than the second half? What about the wind? If it's strong, that's going to be a crucial factor in pace judgement, especially in a place like Dundee. So it becomes clear that you can't be content to be able to run all the time at your predicted average pace. In training you have to prepare yourself to cope with some faster speeds over part of the coming races.

Beginners should train at speeds between 10 and 6 minute miles, or to put it another way, at speeds between 6 and 10 miles an hour, with the bulk of training at the lower speeds. The talk test — the speed at which you still feel comfortable enough to be able to hold a conversation if you want to — will enable you to find your best training speed or the optimum, as the magazines say.

How often should you train? Well I would say that three times a week is the very minimum if you want to make any progress at all. If you only run once or twice a week, it's going to take a long, long time for any beneficial effects to be felt, since the previous run's effects will be wearing off before you start again. As your confidence grows you should increase your frequency of running to four, five, six days a week, even seven, though a day off will probably benefit most runners in their first year or two of training. Remember that training's a long-term process and you'll never reach the stage of absolute fitness with no prospect of further improvement. There's no maximum as you gain fitness. You'll need to increase your training load to improve still more. This running's a life sentence!

It's important — very important — that you work up your training schedule on a gradual basis. Let's say you've developed a routine where you are out three times a week. I suggest that you do one hour the first day, then you'll perhaps miss a day. On the third day, have a forty-five minutes run. On the fifth day, try half an hour of easy paced running or over mixed terrain. The distance is not so important as the time you spend actually on your feet running.

When you feel ready for five excursions a week, try this. On day one, do an hour's easy running then have a day's rest. The third day one hour steady pace, twenty minutes easy the next day. The fifth day, an easy jog. Then forty-five minutes steady on the sixth day. Then a rest. Then seventy-five to maybe ninety minutes easy jog on the seventh day which would probably be Sunday. On that basis, you would be spending between three and a half and three and three-quarter hours running each week, which is about half way to the hourage you'll need for a reasonably comfortable journey around the 26-mile marathon trail.

What about speed work? It does help if you integrate some faster running into your training but at your stage I'd wait until you can cope with these long runs. If you like, do two or three slightly faster stretches over a hundred or two hundred metres in the middle of your runs but as you're not Allan Wells, don't go all out — just enough to get a little bit puffed.

The three schedules here are my suggested routines for novices, improvers and experienced runners for an April marathon. There is no need to follow them too strictly. Just try to keep the principles in mind.

	Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
Novice Schedule A Novices, Oct-Dec (weekly total 12-30 miles)	4 miles, increasing every two weeks by one mile to 10 miles.	Rest.	3 miles, increasing every two weeks by one mile to 8 miles.	Rest.	As Tuesday.	Rest.	2 miles, increasing every two weeks by one mile to 8 miles.
Novice Schedule B 2nd year runners (Oct-Dec) and Novices Jan-April (weekly total 36-63 miles). Gradually increase distances to April approaches.	10 miles, increasing through Feb-March to 15 miles. Try a 20-mile run in early March and another 20 in late March, and a final 20 three weeks before Marathon.	Easy 3-5 miles.	5-10 miles with a few "strides" over 100-400 m.	Rest or jog 30 mins.	As Tuesday.	Rest or jog 30 mins.	5-10 miles or occasional hard run over 3-6 miles.
Advanced Schedule Experienced runners hoping for a sub-3 hours (Jan-April) (weekly total 45-67 miles). Average 55-60 over last eight weeks. Occasional short races are important.	15-20 miles easy pace (10-15 miles on last Sunday before Marathon).	6-8 miles "fartlek" (faster and slower running).	6-12 miles easy.	6-10 miles with some strides.	6-10 miles easy.	5 miles or rest.	Race (cross-country or shortish road race) or steady 6-10 miles.
Last Week before Marathon Week before Marathon — all runners.	Get up at 6 a.m. for Race 10 a.m. Good Luck!	7 miles.	5 miles easy.	Jog 20 mins.	Jog 20 mins.	Rest or jog 15 mins.	Rest or jog 15 mins.

Gearing Up



Beginners often ask: when should I start? Well, the answer to that question's always: right away. Today — before your resolution fades! It's always easier to start in good weather and, of course, on nasty days you're tempted to stay in and have an unscheduled rest or perhaps spend the remaining hours before bedtime deferring your run hour by hour. Procrastination is the thief of time, the poet Edward Young wrote in 1820. If you procrastinate in running, you suffer, if you're like me, from a guilty conscience! So decide you're going to go out training no matter what the weather throws at you. But be sensible.

If there's a heavy shower wait for it to pass, or at least abate, and always dress for the conditions. If it's at all cold, wear warm clothing — a track suit, not a singlet and shorts — unless you're particularly tough. Wear gloves if your hands get cold easily. My fingers tend to go white if they get too cold, so I wear gloves on most days when training from October to April. Remember your hands and your upper body are doing a lot and need to be kept warm, and dry.

If it's raining, it's a good idea for you to wear a light anorak which is also very effective for keeping chilly winds out. Personally I find that waterproof trousers are too much of an encumbrance and I prefer light training trousers. Long trousers can get waterlogged quickly and then they are a real drag, literally. If it's not too cold, I'd rather wear shorts and just put up with getting my legs wet. You can protect them with a layer of oil. Olive oil is often mentioned in connection with this but cooking oil is perfectly adequate. Remember to wash it off afterwards! And don't forget the wind-chill factor. Each mile per hour of wind speed lowers the temperature by about one degree Celsius. That's where the anorak is useful, and you can always take it off and tie it round your waist if you get too warm. Much of your body heat escapes via your head. When you are racing you probably want to dissipate body heat but when you're training in the winter you don't, so wear a woolly hat or something similar.

Clearly, you have to wear extra clothing to keep out the cold, but wearing extra clothing as a weight reducing process just doesn't work. Of course you do sweat more but all you're losing is a great quantity of water. The result is that you run into dehydration problems even in the winter, either on the run, which could be serious if you're in the middle of nowhere, or after the run, in which case you'll just drink on the weight again. Genuine weight loss — the loss of superfluous fat — is a much slower and gradual process and you can't hurry it.

In theory the wearing of extra clothing during training should help. In races however the idea is that if you accustom yourself to wearing more clothes you'll experience great liberation when you eventually throw off the track suit, arrive at the starting line and race off like a young colt in your skimpy gear. Well, such a procedure may bring minimal

improvement though it could just as easily slow you down because you've run so much more slowly in your training with all that stuff on. It takes most of the pleasure out of training and isn't that one of the main reasons for running? So wear no more than you need to.

Running in heavy or prolonged rain is a question of common sense. It's impossible, if you're running for two hours, to keep warm and dry if it's pouring with rain. So try to avoid days where it looks as if it's going to pour for two hours. Re-schedule your training at the risk of changing your long run to another day. You might lower your resistance if you get soaked over a long period. I used to do these miserably wet runs on a Sunday for two hours or more, but I'd go a long way to avoid them now.

Keep your training in moderation. Each run has to have its own quota of enjoyment.

MEN AND WOMEN — A DIFFERENCE?

It's a very good question. Women's marathoning is in a very exciting phase of development. Men had the roads more or less to themselves between the early days of distance running until quite recently. Now the principles of training are known to everyone and women are applying them just as men do. Both are doing similar training and thus achieving similar results, allowing for the average difference in muscular strength between the sexes.

The male's advantage makes it unlikely that the **very best** women will ever run faster than the **very best** men. However I confidently predict many more highly-placed women finishers in mass marathons within the next five years or so. It will eventually happen even in Scotland where, regrettably, women's distance running lags behind a lot of other places. Is it something to do with the perceived role of women in Scottish society?

In one respect at least, women tend to approach marathon running in a more sensible way from men. They are not victims of the debutant error of racing off too fast and in consequence "hitting the wall" or "blowing up" with several miles still to go. Overfast starts are the marathon runner's **machismo**, a sort of masculine bravado and brutality we associate with the Latin temperament. **Machismo** in marathoning produces a decrease in pace of up to 100% over the last leg-dragging miles.

Regular pace — which women seem more prepared to aim at — is the key to running a good time, and it is sensible to run a couple of 10 or 12-milers before the marathon proper to find out what your best pace is likely to be. If your race pace over 10 miles is six minutes per mile, you should plan to run the first 10 of the marathon say twenty seconds per mile slower. That would produce split times of 1 hour 3 minutes 20 seconds (10 miles), 2 hours 6 minutes 40 seconds (20 miles) and 39 minutes (6.2 miles) giving a total of 2:46:00. Similar planning for the person racing at five and seven per mile would give total times of 2:18:00 and 3:17:00 respectively.

If you know one half of the course is a lot tougher than the other because of gradients, or opposing winds, you have to allow time for these in working out your tactic, remembering that in gusty conditions a place in a group can save you minutes as opposed to running in isolation.

One complaint of both sexes is the so-called "runners nipple", caused by friction of damp vest and soft flesh. The first thing to try on one of your build-up races is to cover the delicate areas with a thick layer of Vaseline or lanolin. If that doesn't work, I suggest in the second built-up race putting adhesive zinc oxide tape, or a plaster, over the nipples. Do it the previous day, in case the plaster comes unstuck again during the race. My wife tells me that special supportive brassieres are available to reduce or eliminate the problem for women.

Fog, Ice, Frost, Snow, Rain & Wind



Sorry but . . . we're going to continue talking about nasty training conditions; and the nastiest training conditions you're likely to encounter in this country are in order of unpleasantness — fog, black ice, heavy rain, frost, wind and snow. Lovely. We're lucky in that we rarely have more than a few days of any of these at a time although it may feel like a few months.

Fog — it's unpleasant to breathe and potentially dangerous. You can't see where you're going, and worse still, drivers of approaching vehicles can't see you. It also mists up your glasses (if you wear them as I do) and brings out thousands of people who think they're the first to make that joke about windscreen wipers for spectacles. So if there's fog or haar stay off the tarmac. Keep to the country fields and woods or on pavements and don't make your runs too long. **IF IT'S DARK AS WELL AS FOGGY, MAKE SURE YOU WEAR SOMETHING REFLECTIVE. I CAN'T SAY THAT OFTEN ENOUGH.**

Black ice — it's very dangerous because you're very likely to slip on it and bruise yourself. You can't see it. A couple of years ago I had a nasty fall on black ice and it put me out of running for a couple of weeks. Most people seem to fall consistently to their right or their left side which means if you should fall a second time you'll probably injure the same part of you. Very painful. Fortunately black ice on pavements is relatively rare. The best advice I can give you is stay off it. Run on grass or even miss a session rather than teeter around on a dark ice rink straining your muscles and tendons avoiding toppling over.

Wet weather isn't so bad because you can dress to repel it. You may on occasion enjoy the challenge of rain and say to yourself at least I've got out tonight, others may have stayed at home. Just don't overdo it. Keep the distance down. Have a warm shower or bath and a hot drink when you finish and you'll be okay.

Frost's safer than black ice because you can see it and it's not so slippery, but take care. If you can find a roughish surface to run on, it's better.

The wind — being lazy I try to avoid it when I can. I prefer to run in sheltered parks and woods or organise my circuits so that I face the wind as little as possible. But everyone has to face the gales sooner or later. It's not so hard to cope with if you remember the wind's a lot more powerful than you're ever likely to be, so don't try to fight it. Adjust your pace to allow for the tugging of the wild westerlies. If progress seems impossibly slow, seek shelter or change your course to run across the direction of the wind.

Snow now. It's good fun running in snow for about two days, then it usually turns to slush, and running becomes very, very unpleasant. A good tip to keep your feet from getting frozen in snowy runs is to wear plastic bags over your socks inside your shoes. Fasten them round your ankles with rubber bands or elastic and things remain at least bearable.

In conditions like these, the risk of injury does exist. It's small, except of course if you fall over concealed objects under the snow — a big brick or something. If snow persists, you're sure however to get soreness of the muscles because of the unaccustomed movement. You lift your legs in a slightly different way. Different muscles are used, the upper thigh and the hip areas, particularly your knees; so you just have to keep warm and continue running. If snow's too deep, it's impossible to run in, although a marathon on snow shoes was fun in Canada in the 1930s. I don't think you should regard snow as an excuse not to train, in this country anyway.

As a matter of interest, races in snow are quite common because cross country particularly is not put off by white ground cover. If you are tempted to take part, you should wear spikes. They are probably the best form of footwear in a race but pattern soled shoes are quite acceptable. If you try to run in smooth soled shoes on snow you can imagine what happens. It's totally useless, so use patterned shoes when you're training. Snow is very tiring, so expect to go a bit slower.

A final thought on training in the sort of gales that we Scots have to thole. Wind has a great effect on your pace so there again if you're running against it, don't expect to be doing your normal pace. If you're running with a group you can arrange to take turns leading. For example someone might lead for half a mile and then you take over from them. The wind can be very cold, chilling and dehydrating so remember to wear suitable gear.

Fartlek—Speedplay



If you're aiming for a marathon time of three, four or even five hours, no-one would expect you to indulge in sprint training like Allan Wells. But it's now worth considering the value of speedwork in our training programme. I've stressed several times that good, steady pace is what we need for marathon running. So you may well ask, do I really have to have speedwork training to run the marathon?

You don't, you can do it all at a steady pace, but if you do spend all your running time padding along at the pace you hope to go in the race and never run any faster, you're neglecting one of the body's great assets. That's the ability to adapt to stress. Adaptation works like this. If you put your muscles under a work load heavier than normal they'll react initially by getting fatigued, but they'll quickly grow and adapt to cope with the strain. Your heart, which is really just like a powerful muscle and your lung system react in a similar way. A simple way to see how this works is to keep a check on your resting pulse rate taken at the same time of day under resting circumstances over a period of time during your training build-up. Gradually you'll notice your resting pulse coming down as you get fitter. Of course it'll still fluctuate but in general, training will bring it down as your heart gets bigger and more efficient.

When athletes are very fit, their pulse rates at rest can go down to fifty or forty beats per minute or even less than that. When you begin running after years of relative idleness, or at least as far as prolonged physical exertion's concerned, your cardiovascular and muscular systems can't really cope with the demands made on them all of a sudden and you get puffed, out of breath and sore. But in a few weeks you progress quickly beyond that and you're able to push up the distances you run mile by mile. However, neither time nor inclination usually permit most folk to continue increasing the distances run beyond fifteen or twenty miles at the very most, and of course you can't run these distances very often. So as a short cut to even greater adaptability, you can overload your system with shorter, faster running bursts, separated from each other by very easy, relaxed jogging.

The most pleasant way of doing this is by using the method known as fartlek or speed play or run as you feel. Speed play can be run anywhere. The word fartlek is Swedish and it means literally speed play. The famous Swedish coach, Gosta Olander, who was the coach to the great milers Gunder Hagg and Arne Andersson in the 1930's and 40's, developed it in the forests of Valadalen. Olander says he got this method from an English runner, the champion distance runner Walter George who ran in the 1880's following the beagles by the same method, fast and slow.

You might start fartlek by choosing one of your three mile routes. The idea is to vary your pace constantly so you start as always with a gentle jog until you feel fully warmed up. Then you might focus on some trees, say six hundred metres or so away, and run just a little bit harder until you reach it. You should feel somewhat out of breath when you get there but not to the point of staggering about, so you jog on until you feel all right again. Then you might run a shorter burst, jog, run another short burst, maybe as little as fifty metres this time. You take natural or man-made objects as your targets and most of the bursts are between two hundred and three hundred metres.

At the end of the whole session you should feel pleasantly tired but not exhausted. A varied terrain is best, uphill and downhill as well as flat, and preferably on grass, or in woodland or over the country. But you can do it anywhere. Remember, however, you shouldn't be racing the fartlek; it's only a means to an end, viz. to get you into better shape.

Cheers—Here's Tay Success



It's a good idea every so often to take a look at what you've done — or haven't done — in your training. If you've at least some months' running behind you, you should now be able to cover between five to ten miles without too much trouble, taking care to run at a pace that doesn't strain you.

Remember a useful guide is the talk test. If you can't converse as you run, you're trying too hard.

You'll also have found out by now that you have to dress for the conditions. If it's wet, an anorak is necessary. If you feel the cold as keenly as I do, you'll be wearing gloves and a woolly hat on most winter runs whether they're day or night time excursions. If you do have to run in the dark, and that's hard to avoid between November and March, you'll have taken the precaution of wearing a reflective or luminous vest, or at worst something white for oncoming drivers to see.

Some people achieve less than they hoped in the early stages. If you're one of them perhaps, you began too enthusiastically, so that your eagerness was used up quickly and replaced with a feeling of staleness and overtiredness. Well, the turn of the year's the best time for resolutions so it wouldn't be too late to make a fresh start to get your training on a regular basis, and still be fit enough to compete in the Dundee Marathon in April. If you make proper use of these four months, you could still get quite fit. The key phrase still remains **TRAIN — DON'T STRAIN**. Start slow and easy and work up in gradual stages. Finish each run with the feeling that you could, if you had to, do a little more.

It's a fair bet you'll take the chance of an easy week between Christmas and New Year. As a result you'll worry maybe about the effects on your hard won fitness. How many Christmas blow-outs can you allow yourself? Well, one of the great things about training consistently is that you can permit yourself the occasional excess and not suffer too badly for it. But be sensible, never drink those pints of beer or glasses of wine until the day's training is over, and stay within your capacity or your next run's going to be an uncomfortable one.

If you overdid it a bit at last night's party remember to start the day's run particularly gently. It's unwise to take an entire week off. Try, even though you're probably very busy with family celebrations to get out every other day. And after it's all over for another year you ought to get back to a routine as soon as you can. While some take a break around now, others (and I'm one of them) use the new year as a starting point for build-up for the spring. I usually take it relatively easy in November and December and when the school holidays start I begin to put my mileage up a bit with the happy thought that, slowly but surely, the afternoon darkness is going to recede as the winter runs its course. So that'll give you something cheerful to think about.

Here's Tay success. Cheers!

Three Hours Or Bust



If you've watched a big marathon on television you'll be used by now to seeing hundreds of runners cross the line in a more or less exhausted state. You may well have noticed that the runners don't finish in a regular way, but are sometimes well strung out or tightly bunched at certain other times. Among the most "popular" times are three and four hours, which are regarded as barriers just as the two-minute half mile and the five-minute mile used to be by schoolboy athletes. Of course, these runners have paced themselves to run inside three (or four) hours, with all their intermediate times worked out in advance.

What training is needed to crack three hours? (I assume that if you've followed my suggestions reasonably closely you ought to be inside four hours).

Once you start thinking about a specific time for the marathon or any other race you are putting extra pressure on yourself. At the "sharp end" of the field the runners are concerned primarily with finishing position, with concentrating on getting the distance in as comfortably as possible until a break is made — the intermediate times are less important, provided they are not too fast or slow. These top runners have no worries about whether or not they've done enough training to finish. Neither should you if you're going for under the BIG THREE.

Average weekly mileage over the last eight weeks should be fifty and that is a bare minimum. You will, I imagine, be in your second season of marathoning if you are aiming seriously for three hours, although of course there are plenty of young, active people who have achieved sub-three hour times on less training, in distance and time. They are the gifted, the lucky ones and we're not all like them.

Here is a suggested schedule which, while not guaranteeing a sub-three hour marathon — no one could do that — should point you in the right direction:

The schedule is based on an assumption that the race is in three months and that you're already up to between thirty-five and forty-five miles a week.

- Sunday — long, easy run of ten to twenty miles — run at least three "20's" up to three weeks before marathon.
- Monday — easy running over six to eight miles.
- Tuesday — fartlek session with eight to ten hard bursts (strides) varying in distance between 100 metres and 800 metres over a total distance of six miles.
- Wednesday — easy run of ten to fifteen miles (or two runs totalling same).
- Thursday — speedwork or hill session — if very tired, steady run of five to eight miles.
- Friday — rest or jog five miles.

Saturday — short race (perhaps a half marathon twice in six weeks before the full marathon) plus warm up — ten to fourteen miles.

WEEKLY TOTAL = 52.76 miles.

In short, you'll be doing very similar training to what I do, and that's quite right, because you too will be putting everything you've got into your sub-three hour marathon. During the last week, of course, you might ease right off and do no real training in the last four or five days, just gentle jogging over two to four miles. Stoke up on fluids and carbohydrates the day before and the morning of the race. Eat your light breakfast three or four hours beforehand and keep sipping the water. When the gun goes, get cracking on your 2:50 schedule.

Keeping A Diary



Some of the most famous athletes in history kept training diaries. Many equally famous runners didn't bother. So why do I recommend that you should? First of all because of human frailty and defective human memory. You can easily persuade yourself that you ran five times in the week from the 1st to the 8th for example, when in fact, you ran only four times. If you jot down each day what training you actually did, you'll be able to see from your diary's ominous blank spaces where you failed to do anything at all. In all probability your diary will mutely suggest to you that you get out running. Many of my club mates tell me their training frequency rose when they began keeping a diary.

There's no need to turn it into a novel. If you do it's certain to make awful reading! Just note the essentials — date, time and place of your run. How far. How long you ran for. What effort you put into it. What the weather was like, if that's relevant. Perhaps even how you felt on the run and who you were with, if anyone.

Distances are always bound to be approximate but after a time you know your favourite routes and even on unfamiliar ones you have a reasonable idea how far you ran from the time it took. I much prefer to underestimate the distance of my runs rather than swell a nine miler into a ten. You won't get any fitter by inflating the performances in your training diary.

I always tell the truth to the notebook record and rarely talk about my training to anybody else unless I'm particularly asked to. All runners know that wearisome individual who, given the slightest stimulus, will launch into a detailed account of his (it's usually a man) last outing. Beware of the marathon bore! His detailed, ego-massaging stories seem to take longer to tell than the time he actually spent on the roads.

Training diaries are useful also for charting progress week to week and month to month and even year to year. If you keep them over the whole of your running career, there'll be a record of the past which will be fascinating one day to at least one person. Yourself — and, with luck, to running researchers of the future.

Of course, keeping a diary is entirely a matter of personal choice. In my opinion, as I say, it's another aid to improving your running and to enjoying it more. If you don't use it for guidance, then it won't make you any fitter. It's what you do that counts after all — not what you write. I keep a diary myself and one of my regrets in running is that my earliest entries in the late 1950's (jotted down on pieces of foolscap paper) have got lost. In those days we didn't know what we were supposed to be doing in training, as far as I can recollect. It would be interesting to see what these efforts were in detail. I do have diaries going back to 1964 with gaps of a few months when I used to get disillusioned and gave up keeping a record. The diaries also lapse for a year, two or three times. These are old note books and they're more permanent than foolscap but nowadays I write my training down in corners of my ordinary appointments diary.

This is an example of the sort of record I keep: "Monday the 17th of December, 11 a.m. 12 miles easy in 84 minutes via Cameron Reservoir with Ian Grieve. Felt reasonable. Grazed my knee on barbed wire." That's all.

Off-Colour? Stop!



Running is not an activity in which improvement follows a steady and regular curve. Everyone, even the most famous like Steve Ovett (some would say especially the most famous) suffer set-backs. Even if you avoid injury, your progress often seems to have stopped completely. Sometimes you appear to be getting slower and feebler, instead of faster and stronger. The profile of a year's training, if you could turn it into a diagram, might look more like a series of steps up and down rather than a smooth graph heading up the paper towards athletic immortality.

If you fall ill, stop running straight away. Stop completely. That sounds obvious advice but many, many thousands of runners — of great potential or small — have tried to run off illness and by trying to do so have only prolonged their enforced lay-off. Indeed in some cases, they made it into a permanent one. So don't be like them. Rest until you've recovered and then you can start again. Of course, the temptation is then to try and make up the lost time by running twice as hard and, like all temptations, you must resist it. Start slowly and cautiously — as if you were a beginner again. This time, however, you'll find that after a couple of weeks your pre-illness form will rapidly return. If, on the other hand, you overdo things you'll merely delay your return to form.

On first consideration, it may seem paradoxical to hold back in training to get fit quicker but that's the way things work. It's a cliché to say you can't hurry nature but clichés contain more than a morsel of truth. Particular delicacy and gentleness in your training is needed when you're recovering from debilitating illnesses like influenza or glandular fever.

Injury affects all athletes sooner or later and it's true that most injuries are caused by silly behaviour on the runner's part — perhaps nine injuries in ten. The odd one out is due to circumstances outwith the runner's control, like being bitten by a dog or run into by a bicycle with no lights. One frequent injury is to the Achilles tendon — that long tendon that runs down the back of the leg with an insertion in the heel. If you hurt your Achilles, it's usually because you did too much too soon. That's called an over-use injury. Or perhaps you changed from one pair of shoes to another with different characteristics — for instance from road shoes with built-up heels into low heeled spikes. It might also be caused by a sudden switch to an all-weather track for training or simply by a new pair of shoes cutting into the tendon as you train. The Achilles tendon inflammation does usually respond to alternate ice-packs and heat treatment, but it can be very persistent and often requires several weeks rest.

Here's a reminder. Check the condition of your shoes and make sure they really are in good condition and not broken or worn. Another common injury is the so-called "shin splints". These are painful areas down the front of your leg, round the shin bone. A sudden jump in training mileage on hard surfaces is usually the cause of this stubborn complaint. Again, you can avoid it by wearing proper footwear and by gradually increasing your training.

Almost as an aside, some of the runners' magazines I read recommend yoga-type exercise for helping to relax before setting out on training and it's true that many runners do suffer from lower back pain and sciatic problems. These often originate because a lot of slow running lengthens the muscles on the upper side of the leg and throws them into imbalance — causing the other set to pull things out of place. You should compensate with stretching exercises to relieve the muscles at the back of the thighs. Try gentle but persistent yoga-type stretching exercises in which you hold a position for three to five minutes. Do avoid violent jerking.

Staving Off Staleness



In the period before the war (indeed in the first fifteen or twenty years after it) you frequently heard people say of a runner who's suddenly lost form for no apparent reason that he or she had gone stale. You still hear it occasionally today, usually meaning that a runner has perhaps had too many races in too short a time and has lost his or her sparkle — or gone off the boil, to use another metaphor from the world of food and drink. Staleness is something that all runners know and dislike. One week everything is going fine. Your training schedule is working out just right. You feel things are really building up well. Then suddenly, the next day you go out and you just can't raise any enthusiasm at all.

It's not just an off-day, because the next day you feel lethargic and fed-up again and the third day it's still no better. You're not ill. You've no dramatic family or work problems — other than the usual! You're just stale. Your training has become a chore. You contemplate retiring from running or something equally grave and then you come to the conclusion that that's not the solution. What is? It may or may not comfort you to know that I feel like this every few months and have done for a quarter of a century of running on and off. The dreadful feeling of staleness, the lack of desire to do anything much is not of course confined to running. It's a variant on the Biblical sloth — the medieval sin of "accidie". I believe it occurs when you're too much into a routine of training or whatever it is. That's not a contradiction of what I've said previously about training regularly.

Routine's bad when it's too predictable — when you always run in the same places for example. Being stale may also mean you've overdone it and the bored feeling is a warning. Ease back a little before something worse hits you. Sometimes a stale feeling may simply mean that you need a new stimulus, a change of direction.

Roger Bannister, the first sub-four minute miler, had a regular training session in the winter and spring of 1954 which he used to do with his friend Chris Brasher (now director of the London marathon) and Chris Chataway, another runner who became famous. They ran ten times 440 yards on the track with 440 yards jog on every alternate lap and they were aiming to get their times down to 60 seconds or less for each of the ten laps. But then they seemed to stick at 62 seconds or so and they were starting to get worse instead of better. They were stale, in other words. So off they went hill-walking for the weekend and forgot about running completely. When they eventually ran their session again, they averaged — for the first time — under 60 seconds per lap. That was the breakthrough they'd been after.

Now I'm the first to concede that hill-walking isn't everyone's cup of tea but there are a lot of ways you could have a break for a day or two. Not more than that, mind you, or you'll lose form in reality. Other things which could get you snapping back into form might be a new training partner, different routes, or a long, slow untimed run through unfamiliar woodlands or over hills. Perhaps even a new item of training gear to get you interested again? New shoes for example? Why don't you have the day out at a local beauty spot? Tentsmuir Forest near Tayport or Camperdown Park in Dundee are both good examples of great places for running. Or maybe you could go off into the Sidlaws. If you want someone new to run with, go down to your local athletic or harrier club. They'll give you encouragement and advice.

Staleness is temporary. After a week or two, something always turns up to break the spell of dullness and put back that sparkle.

Your First Race



Before you tackle a marathon, you'd be advised to tackle a shorter race or races purely for experience. Things are different in a race. You'll probably find yourself starting off faster than in training, even though this is exactly what you don't intend. The reason is that you'll be nervous.

Nervousness can sometimes have drastic effects on your digestive system. So choose a local race of some sort to rid yourself of these first-time nerves — perhaps one of the Hawkhill Harriers runs at Camperdown Park in Dundee or one of the local fun runs elsewhere in Tayside or Fife. Let's imagine it's over 20 kilometres (12½ miles) and let's see how your preparations will affect you.

You'll be faced with practical problems before the race that you hardly notice on ordinary training days: When do I have my breakfast? What do I eat and drink before a run? I suggest a light, non-greasy breakfast, three to three and a half hours before the run. Drink several cups of weak tea or coffee or water, or whatever you usually have. I always try for example to have three rolls with butter and marmalade but that's just a fetish. Others prefer cereals or toast. When should you leave the house? It never pays to rush, so aim to get to the race venue about an hour before the scheduled start.

When you arrive you'll have to collect your race number. Take some safety pins in case the race organisers haven't got enough. You'll have to change into your kit or you may prefer to go changed, in which case you mustn't forget a towel and dry clothing — including shoes and socks — to put on afterwards. Even for such a long race as 20 kilometres you still need a warm-up jog, even if it's just half a mile. Do this at a very, very slow pace wearing your track suit and wet top if it's cold. Start jogging, I suggest, twenty to thirty minutes before the start, run for five to ten minutes till you're perspiring just a little bit and you feel comfortably warm. Then make a final visit to the toilet if you need to and walk or jog about.

Don't remove your tracksuit until a few minutes before the start. Or on the other hand you shouldn't keep everyone waiting by being the last to strip down to your racing gear like some temperamental sprinter! This is your very first race. When the gun goes, don't leap off like a startled stag and try to win the race from the front. Unless you're a lot faster than I think you are, you'll fail ignominiously.

I still recall my very first cross-country race — which was at Caird Park by the way — and I blundered in exactly that way. I raced off far faster than I could keep up and by the three mile mark I was dead last. When I reached the golf course with a mile to go, I pretended to trip over in front of a course steward so that I'd have an excuse!

In a race you'll probably find the initial pace very fast indeed but most of the fast starters will have eased back after a mile or so. If you've set off at a sensible pace (that's one you can maintain throughout), you should come to enjoy the race as it progresses and especially so, as you begin to pick off those rasher individuals who didn't listen to this good advice.

Take your time on any steep uphill. Maybe shorten your stride — concentrate on keeping up a regular rhythm. When you finish don't hang around, go and shower if you can. Change and wrap up warmly then come out and encourage the rest. There's nothing stupider than allowing yourself to get chilled after a race or a training session for that matter.

Another thing that I'm asked is if there's any advantage in competing in shorter races. The answer is this — yes, I think that if you go in shorter races you have to run a bit faster and that's a shortcut to fitness. I think shorter races make you keener. They sharpen your training. I think it's like a sharp training session.

How much should you cut back on training before a race? I think this is something you can experiment with. Obviously you're going to cut back a great deal before the marathon itself. You could try one race cutting back, another race where you don't cut back but just train through and see what the effects are of not cutting back.

Go For Grass



If you violently bang your feet down on those hard road surfaces thousands upon thousands of times as of course you do in training — and you do it even more violently in racing since the faster you go the more force you use — it's hardly surprising you risk damage to muscles, tendons and even to your bones. That's the main reason we wear shoes, apart from reasons of weather, and why sports firms spend lots of time and money devising materials and types of construction to absorb as much as possible the vibration and shock imparted by contact with the road. The shoe firms don't do this purely out of tenderness! You can feel that clearly, because the price of the research is reflected in the ever-rising cost of running shoes in the shops — up to £70 now for the dearest.

One of the problems shoe designers face is that the shock absorbent material can't be too thick or the shoe will become too unwieldy and clumsy, rather like running in wellington boots. Over my running career — going back to 1957 I have to admit — shoes have changed shape remarkably when you consider that the human foot has remained the basic five-toe model!

Twenty-five years ago running shoes were flat and relatively heavy, with thin rubber soles and leather uppers. That's a very great contrast to today's light shoes with synthetic uppers, soft absorbent layers of new materials and well built-up in the mid-foot and heel areas. Some models appear to lay claim to as many technical advances as a formula one racing car! Where once it was almost impossible to get a really comfortable running shoe until you had soaked it, greased it and run it in, now it's difficult (but not impossible) to buy an uncomfortable shoe. We're spoiled for choice. However, we should remember that a shoe's merely a means to an end. It's what the person in the shoes does that counts.

Just because marathon races — according to the rules of the International Amateur Athletic Federation — have to be run on "made-up roads", we don't have to do all our training on such surfaces. I think that too much road training is boring although in any case I don't get stiff and sore from it because I rarely run hard on the roads in training.

I think it's better physically and mentally to run on paths, grassy fields and hillsides as much as you can. Those natural surfaces spare your feet and legs. I agree they're uneven but it's good to get used to uneven surfaces. They help to develop your balance.

Another advantage of softer going, and running up and down hills for instance, is that you needn't concern yourself with your speed. A steep, grassy hill demands that you run up it slowly and as you puff and pant your way towards the top you can feel it doing you good. That's what they say anyway. You're getting the benefits of tough heart and lung speed training without banging your legs about as you would be doing on the road or track.

If you run on varied terrain you can do your training by "time out" rather than by distance. I firmly believe that an hour in the woods seems much shorter than sixty unforgiving minutes on the open road.

Two Routes to Marathon Readiness



If you've reached the stage in your training where you're running between thirty and forty miles a week regularly without too much strain, or if you talk in "time out" terms, between four and a half to six hours a week, you can get yourself in shape for a marathon over a further three month period. Let's say there are twelve weeks to go. The American magazine "Runners World" sometime ago published a formula which is a reasonably accurate guide to what the average runner can expect to achieve from his training — emphasizing that the average runner is not a person who actually exists. The formula is this — your average daily mileage over the six weeks immediately before the marathon multiplied by three will be the distance you can comfortably cover in a race going at your usual training speed. To make this clearer — if you're running thirty miles a week, that's five miles a day average, times three is fifteen. According to the formula, you'll manage fifteen miles alright but you'll perhaps run into trouble over the last ten to eleven miles, a very nasty experience. Of course other factors such as previous experience in marathons may see you through. I say better safe than sorry. You've a lot more confidence if you can get up to an average of nine miles a day over those last six weeks, ie between 60 and 65 miles a week. Then, other things being equal, you should get to the finish relatively sane.

Nine miles a day seems a lot. How do you achieve it? Not by running nine miles Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday which is very hard, not to say tedious. Everyone has good and bad days and on bad days you won't feel like doing a nine anyway. I think you can do this sort of mileage by two methods.

PLAN A — You can run alternate "long and short" days. For example: Sunday 15 miles, Monday 7, Tuesday 10, Wednesday 6, Thursday 12, Friday 4, Saturday 9. The week's total is 63 miles.

PLAN B — You can run twice a day on some days. If you're doing more than 70 a week (and I don't recommend this for first time marathoners as they'll tire themselves out long before race day) you'd have to run twice several times a week. For example: Sunday 15 miles, Monday 3 + 6, Tuesday 8, Wednesday 3 + 4, Thursday 12, Friday 5, Saturday 7. The week's total is 63.

You can fit in the three mile runs which should be very easy in the early morning or at lunchtime. The main session would then be before your evening meal. The 15 mile outing needn't be on a Sunday. It could be any day and it's still possible to run 60 to 64 miles a week with a day off.

I've run three miles or so taking 20-23 minutes with the same partner, Ian Grieve, on most working days over the past 15 years. It's habit forming. If you're wondering how I have time to eat lunch, the answer is I only have a couple of rolls and a coffee. That's all most folk need for lunch anyway. Runners eat their main meal in the evening.

It does your confidence a lot of good to stick in a big week about three weeks before marathon day. I think it's a good idea to try to cover around 20 miles once every three weeks or so over the last two months. Try for three 20-mile outings in all. In the last fortnight you should taper down. Back off long or hard runs.

One question that I know you're asking is how long should you be running if you're aiming to do a four hour marathon? Well, logic would dictate that you should do a four hour training run, but on the other hand racing is very different from training and you would drive yourself crazy trying to do four hour training stints.

In the race you're carried by the crowd, you're encouraged to go on. It doesn't seem so bad. I honestly don't think a four hour training run is practical. The longest run, I would say, is two or two and a half hours, maybe three at the very outside — if you've got someone nice to talk to!

Some runners have to go away on business quite often and this could be critical in the few weeks before the marathon. Of course going away on business is always held up as a great excuse for not doing any training, but usually the business does allow you to fit in a run somewhere, if you can just make up your mind you've got to do it. If you don't do it, you won't fail to finish the marathon but it doesn't do you any good. You've got to fit it in somewhere.

The 64,000 dollar question — what's the lowest weekly mileage that you could hope to run a marathon on? The real answer to that, I suppose, is nothing, if you're prepared to commit yourself. It also depends how long you're prepared to take to complete the course. If you mean actually RUN the marathon, you've got to be doing at least 30 miles a week, and probably twice as much as that if you're hoping to do a decent time.

Two methods of achieving marathon fitness running a daily average of nine miles over the last six weeks of full training.

Macgregor PLAN	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Week's Total Mileage
A	15	7	10	6	12	4	9	=63

Macgregor PLAN	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Week's Total Mileage
B	15	3 + 6	8	3 + 4	12	5	7	=63

Running Togetherness



Steve Ovett runs every morning in Brighton with a school teacher friend, Matt Patterson. He has done for years. Paavo Nurmi, the great Finnish champion of the 1920's, won a total of nine gold medals at three Olympic Games and was a national hero in Finland. In fact, he still is. Nurmi nearly always ran by himself and if anyone trained with him, he used to speed up to burn them off so that no-one would find out exactly what training he was doing. Which of these methods is better?

As usual with such questions the answer is that there is some merit in both. As a runner you have to get to know your body to find out how it behaves under certain circumstances, how it reacts and how much of this can best be done if you're running by yourself. Concentrate on what you're feeling like.

On the other hand, solitary training can be monotonous. "The loneliness of the long-distance runner" is now a cliché but like all such sayings that catch the public imagination, it's got a grain of truth in it. Running long distances can be soul-destroying on occasion so most runners do appreciate company some of the time. But of course it has to be sympathetic company. You're a thousand times better off training by yourself than with someone who gets on your nerves harping on about their training, racing, their injuries and so on. When you run with someone else, it's good to talk about subjects other than running.

Another advantage of training in company is that if you have to keep the appointment, you're sure to go training. If you know your mate is out there waiting for you, you've no choice but to get changed and go out, instead of spending hours putting the run off and watching television and so on.

Only once have I deliberately missed a running rendezvous. It was in 1962 and I'd arranged to run with Fergus Murray, the Angus-born distance runner who later ran in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. It was a wet November evening. I'd had a day of teaching practice in steamed-up huts in Broughty Ferry and I couldn't face going along to Caird Park where poor old Fergus was presumably waiting. So I went back to St. Andrews on the train (you used to be able to do that in those days) and when Fergus eventually found out, he was furious, for I'd no way of letting him know. It was nearly a year before he would agree to do any training with me again. And that taught me a lesson.

After the initial period of training, I think everyone would be well advised to try and take out some membership at a club and get to know some of the other runners. You get more information that way, for instance about races. You get encouragement. Of course, you also meet your share of buffoons, but that's the same in every walk of life.

A problem that we often read about is the problem of water intake when we're actually running a marathon. What do we do about that when we're training? On a 25 mile run I was once doing with Fergus Murray, I ran out of water at 19 miles and it was a very painful experience until we got to the next farm where I was able to stop for a drink.

Certainly you do need practice in taking in water before the marathon comes along. It's difficult to organise unless you've got a willing husband or wife with a car loaded up with water unless you're prepared to take the chance of coming to a farmhouse or cottage along the route where they'll give you some water. Alternatively you could run round a circuit.

On marathon day you're sure of getting water every five miles or so. You might even consider getting special drinks organised — if you can spot them on the tables — with a bottle you can drink out of, rather than the cups which are supplied because it's very difficult to hold onto a cup. On the other hand probably if you're not too worried about running a 2 hours 10 minutes you can afford to stop and drink it. Even if you are doing 2 hours 10 minutes, Bill Rodgers in the Boston marathon one year still won the race, despite stopping for 25 or 30 seconds to have a nice long drink at about 20 miles.

Be Seen For Safety



When you're moving along on foot there's a tendency to think you're in control of things, even that you're lord or lady of the highway. But when you're driving your car or sitting in a bus, things take on a different perspective, don't they? That proud runner cruising along through the rain is just an object suddenly rearing up in front of your vehicle or a blur past in the night. A runner may be able to see the car approaching but there's no knowing if the driver's seen you. He could easily be dazzled by a car coming the other way or otherwise distracted.

The German coach and long distance guru, Ernst van Aaken, had to have both legs amputated after being knocked down by a car from behind along a well-lit road in town. Don't let such a terrible thing happen to you. Incidentally Dr. van Aaken didn't allow his disability to prevent him getting to runners' gatherings and races in his wheelchair. He's still very active, over 70 now. He has a simple message for distance runners — run slowly, run daily, drink moderately and don't eat like a pig. True words indeed.

I'd like to suggest that when you have to run in the dark — and all of us have to sometimes — you should stick to the following rules.

1. Run on the pavement if there is one.
2. If there isn't a pavement and you can't run in the daylight, wear a reflective vest or strip. You can get these for a moderate price through running, cycling and motor-cycling accessory shops and some big stores. If you haven't got one yet, start tonight by wearing something white and carrying a small torch and get to that accessory shop tomorrow.
3. If you have to run on the road, run facing the traffic so that if necessary you can jump off on to the verge.

Choose The Snooze



Everyone knows that we, as a species, can't do without sleep. We can last quite a long time without drinking or some of us can. We can exist much longer without eating but not long without being forced to nod off. Keeping prisoners awake is a well-known method of breaking down their resistance. If you try to train properly without getting ample sleep it's your own resistance you'll be breaking down.

Runners in regular training need ample sleep and if you're building up for the marathon you need more than usual because it's during sleep, of course, that your body's restored to a sufficient condition to undertake training again the next day. But sleep or no sleep, no-one can train hard day after day and expect sleep to restore them 100%. Everybody needs an easy day at least every third or fourth day and the wise know that you can make your recovery much slower by depriving yourself of sleep. Twice a week or so, if circumstances permit, you should make a special effort to go to bed really early and catch up. Apparently scientists say you can catch up with one good long night in dreamland. After a very hard training run (the kind of thing I always tell you to avoid) and very probably after your marathon when you will certainly be very tired, you may find you're too tired to sleep and it may take two or three days to get into the normal sleep pattern again.

When you're building up for the race your family circumstances may make it possible for you to have the occasional nap in the afternoon or evening. That will help you build up

your reserves. Quite often over the years I've postponed a late-afternoon training session and gone to bed for an hour or so instead. When I eventually did get around to running I felt much fresher for it. Of course, you have to give your body a chance to waken up. You don't bound out of bed and go running straight away after being asleep. That's why if you run in the early morning you should go very gently. Here's an example of that. Terry Mitchell, who at the age of 23 was second in the 1983 Dundee marathon, runs 6 miles to work every morning at 6.15 a.m. He runs there at seven minutes to the mile but when he races similar distances he's well under five minutes to the mile. So if you race at seven minutes to the mile, what speed should your runs in the morning be at? The answer is nine or ten minutes per mile. It does seem slow but it does you more good. If you run twice a day, the first slow run acts as a warm-up and you'll probably feel much better during the second run.

Many marathon runners — even people who are approaching two hours twenty minutes — underestimate the role of rest and sleep especially in the week before the race. If you're deciding in that period between a snooze and a run, choose the snooze.

Can you apply the principle of an easy morning jog to races as well as to training? Not I think to the marathon. You can to shorter races because a couple of miles jogging warms you up for the afternoon race. With the marathon your running day starts too early. You'd have to be up in the middle of the night to do a warm-up jog for it, so I think that's probably not on. I'm wondering if there is any special advice to offer to night shift workers. Never having been a night shift worker, I'm talking out of some ignorance but I think that you would have to do a pattern in reverse. You would have to do your training probably during the daytime and then sleep after the training. These are particular difficulties which a night shift worker would probably have to work out himself depending when he gets home.

You might wonder too why I'm sure that you'll have difficulty getting to sleep after your marathon effort. Partly it's the excitement. If you've been successful in completing the marathon, you're really up high. You're probably really exhausted and somehow the body isn't ready to sleep again. It's really looking for some more action. Not running, of course, but sitting around telling everyone how good you were and what happened at the 17th mile and so on. You're just too excited to sleep — rather like a child before its second birthday party.

Five Reasons For Ignoring "carbohydrate bleed-out"

The most publicised aspect of runners' diet is the so-called carbohydrate bleed-out diet or the Saltin diet — Saltin being the name of one of the scientists who pioneered the ideas. According to the theory, as adapted by most runners who practice it, you should start eight days before the race. In other words if race day is Sunday you start the diet on



the previous Sunday. Start with a long run, one and a half to three hours, to deplete your reserves of glycogen, the fuel for your muscles which is contained in most easily accessible form in high carbohydrate foods like potatoes, bread and so on. Thus depleted, you continue to train over the next three days as normally as possible, but you adjust your diet so that you are eating practically no carbohydrate. By the end of this you're feeling pretty weak and crotchety as well. On day five, you switch back over to a high proportion of carbohydrates in your food, drinking large quantities of fluid with it. The theory is that your system will super-compensate by storing up larger quantities of fuel than would normally be there. Sounds easy — no, it isn't really.

Anyway, I advise you not to attempt such a diet for several reasons. The improvements that it brings, if any, are very small in terms of percentage improvement. Secondly you've no idea how much difference it would make until you've explored the limits of your performance over several marathons using normal diet. I could run two hours seventeen minutes, for example, before I even tried the carbohydrate diet. Thirdly, there's a risk of serious side-effects like stomach upsets, weakening of your system and breaking down its defences against infection. It isn't worth a candle. Nor, number four, is it worth the irritability and the feeling of weakness you have on days three and four of this diet. And the last reason, if it doesn't work and you run very badly you'll feel that all that training you've been doing has been wasted.

It's true that I used the carbohydrate loading diet myself when I ran in the Olympics and Commonwealth Games so you'll no doubt think it's a case of "do as I say, not as I do." BUT I NO LONGER USE IT. I can't stand the first part of it anymore.

As I say, I didn't even begin trying it until I'd run two hours seventeen minutes without it so you wait until you can do 2:17 before you start as well.

What the runner needs for racing and training is a normal, mixed diet containing variable amounts of carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and a lot of fluids. You'll probably have found as your training increased that you feel the need to eat more bread, jam, potatoes or you need extra drink, especially in warm weather. Most of the world's best runners do eat such a diet. There's a few like Robert de Castella, the Australian, who are vegetarians. But you shouldn't change to a vegetarian diet without being certain of eating the right things to obtain a sufficiently balanced diet from it. In the last two days of the pre-race period it's vital that you should drink a lot to keep your fluid reserves topped up. No matter what you eat, you're unlikely to do well if you haven't enough fluid to keep you going. With that proviso it's fair to say that people make far too much fuss about diet. It's the training that you do that's likely to be the key factor, unless of course you suffer from some deficiency in diet which is very unlikely.

What about alcohol? I like the odd pint of beer or the odd glass of wine myself, and I don't find it does me any harm. But, of course, like anything else if you overdo it then it's too much of a good thing and it'll begin to do you harm. A little alcohol won't hurt. And what about smokers? I hate smoking, I hate smokers, I hate the smell of smoke and I'm sure it doesn't do your running any good whatsoever.

Confidence Is A Key



Remember when you started running? If you were anything like me, ten miles seemed an impossibly long way. Twenty-six miles? That was almost beyond the reach of imagination and of course when you creep home after a particularly feeble five mile jog and think, what's it going to be with twenty-one to go if it's like this now, it does seem impossibly far.

Cheer up. It's been the same for all marathon runners no matter how good they are. They all go through these dismal, leaden grey days. But one of the differences between the good marathon runner and the unsuccessful one is that the former can get him or herself into a frame of mind to tackle the race positively.

Confidence is a major factor in marathon or any other running. But confidence, if it's not to be rapidly exposed as false confidence, has to be based on something and the something is first and foremost having done enough training.

You would be wrong to be confident if you'd only been running twenty miles a week instead of sixty.

You can also give yourself confidence with a reminder of the factors in your favour. You'll have rested or at most jogged a couple of miles in the days before the race. You'll be much fresher than you normally are in training runs. You'll be fully supplied with fuel, both solid, as food, and liquid in the form of drinks. You'll be mentally geared up by the presence of so many other athletes and encouraged on your way by the applause of thousands of spectators and by the attendance of Radio Tay and television and all these other wonderful communicators.

Your kit'll be clean. Your shoes will be well run in and comfortable and well-constructed. You'll have a good idea of the pace you're going to run at.

And the last thing is to remind yourself that you're running the marathon because you want to. It will give you pleasure. You'll enjoy it, even if the sort of enjoyment it provides is rather different from everyday concepts of enjoyment. Marathon running can be fun.

You may just need some further convincing that faster runners have as many bad days as you. All I can do is to quote my own training lapses. There are some days when I've had to walk and on other outings of only four miles, I've had to stop after two miles. I'm just either fed up or I just can't do it that day. I just stop and walk.

Again, it's a question of personality whether you attempt to boost your confidence by discussing your marathon hopes and intentions with others. I have rooted reluctance to

say anything to anybody about races in the offing. I'd much rather keep it to myself and convince myself. I think it's unlucky, in a certain way, to say what you're going to do. You often hear of famous athletes who tell the world they're going to win the gold medal at the Olympics and so on and never even make the team. I think it's better to let your deeds talk for themselves.

Is it possible to be over-confident for the marathon? It certainly is. You can see the over-confident littered around the course. They're all the people who started off too fast. They are the marathon aspirants who thought they could do it on ten miles a week or the runners who wear old battered sandshoes and are surprised they get blisters. Remember, confidence is found on preparation.

Mapping Out Your Holiday Runs



Training is often most difficult to keep up when you're on holiday. That sounds ridiculous perhaps — because on holiday you should have all the time in the world to train. That's the trouble. Theoretically you have a lot of time at your disposal but somehow you never seem to spend much of it running.

It may be because your family activities take up a lot of time and you feel it wouldn't be fair to leave them to go running during your fortnight's break. But even when you've no real plans for the day you may find yourself putting off, putting off and putting off your run for no real reason. You know the sort of things, I'll just have another coffee, have a look at the paper, or there are one or two things we need from the shops and so on until the morning's gone forever. And with it is lost the ten-mile run you were planning.

When you're not on holiday, of course, you're thirled to your daily routine. You don't have time to waste so it's much easier to follow the routine and fit the run in without thinking about it.

The same difficulties are faced by runners who are unfortunate enough to be unemployed. A close friend of mine, who's a very good runner, was out of work for a few months in the autumn and winter last year. Although he had nothing much to do all day, his training fell right away and so did his enthusiasm for racing. When he found another job — luckily fairly soon afterwards — it wasn't long before he was piling in the miles and racing really well again.

If you're on holiday away from home there are some good things about running that can be different. You can, for instance, explore new territory with the help of a local Ordnance Survey map. One of the first things I always do when visiting a new place is to equip myself with a detailed map of the area. It's surprising how much you can discover about new countryside just jogging along at an easy pace. As you don't really know where your run's going to take you, apart perhaps from the names on the map, there's no pressure to finish your run in a certain time.

Wise Runners Take Precautions



Let's now look back and check over some of the principles we started with. You can see if you're still sticking to them or if you've — without realising it — drifted away into difficulties. The first principle and the one that's often the hardest to maintain is this "Train, don't strain." I use the phrase often. I don't make any apology because nothing is easier, particularly if you've been off running through injury or illness, than to get "tore in" to the training again and find that you've overestimated your rate of recovery.

I'll give you an example. Three weeks before the last Glasgow marathon in September I had a stomach upset. I missed a day's training and started again gently, as prescribed. Everything seemed fine again and I didn't worry until nine days before the blooming race when I went down with a thirty-six hour virus which made me all shaky and shivery. I had to have two days off. Fortunately I was able to jog again the third day — it was only a very minor virus — and only the most determined restraint stopped me from trying to test my fitness by running a hard ten miles four days before the race.

What I should have done, of course, was jog and rest up. It was only the thought of all the advice I'd given to you that stopped me from ruining my race day chances completely! As it was, I had recovered enough to run Glasgow in two hours, nineteen minutes and finish seventh.

The second principle is that you should increase your training gradually. Improvement is erratic. You don't run twice as fast in a race because you train twice as fast or run twice as far. Nor does your improvement follow a regular curve. It's more likely to suddenly move upwards, remain static, then jump up again. If you consider your training programme over years instead of months you should plan for a year by year increase in quality as well as quantity. But everything has to be done very, very gradually.

If you haven't done what you consider to be enough training for Dundee, for example, by the start of April, it's too late to throw in a few big weeks. Just keep to the level you're at. Taper down over the last ten days. Races can be won and lost in the pre-race recovery period. The marathon itself should be easier than some of your long training runs — for the very reason that you'll have rested up before the marathon whereas the long training runs just follow a normal week's work.

By now you'll be an old hand at deciding how much to wear when you go out running. Everyone makes mistakes and one long run with soaking wet track suit trousers, the elastic collapsing under the weight of water, will help you to remember to wear shorts the next time out. But you can forestall most of the problems by thinking about it a little. Don't forget the petroleum jelly to stop chafing, the tape to prevent blisters or the gloves in case it's cold on your hands. Are your insoles nice and smooth in your shoes or do they have nasty rough bits on them to give you trouble at the non-taped areas? That's the sort of thing you should be looking out for.

Something else you must look very closely at again are your shoes, especially in the light of reports I've heard about large numbers of runners in the 1983 Glasgow marathon using worn and broken footwear. I must say I'm surprised to hear that some people are insisting on wearing old baffies and so on to run the marathon, because they're putting their feet in danger. They really must wear properly constructed running shoes and they don't cost the earth. They cost £20 to £30 but it's worth it. It's money well spent.

Here's another potential danger. Cold and frost. Yes, it's true the danger of frostbite is real and it particularly applies to the bits that are not working particularly hard. For instance, no-one ever gets frostbite in the feet when they're out running because those extremities are taking a good hammering. But the fingers, nose, ears and other more delicate bits of your body need protection. Be very careful. Keep these parts wrapped up. Wear gloves for example, wear a woolly hat to keep the heat from getting out the top of your head, make sure you've got sufficient mid-body protection to stop yourself from freezing there.

In training, you can wear what you like. In racing, you're often tempted to throw it all off and get out in your vest and shorts but it might still be very cold. There you have to be careful. You remember perhaps, in last year's Dundee marathon, I won the race wearing a t-shirt and not a vest. I was also wearing gloves even though it wasn't particularly cold. I think that you can also consider if it's bitter wearing one of these synthetic, heat-resistant vests that don't carry much weight, or even the long-johns made of the same material.



The Last Ten Days

There's no point in continuing to bash in the miles in the last fortnight, or the last ten days. It's too late for you to do yourself any good. You can only make yourself tired now. You should be really fresh and ready to race, so the last ten days is tapering down time. Write down a plan of what you're wanting to cover in those last ten days of training and do not under any circumstances exceed it.

If you do rather less, so much the better. Of course, common sense dictates that you shouldn't do nothing at all because your physical condition, built up so laboriously (at least mine is always built up laboriously) over all these months, will start to go into reverse after four days of inactivity or so. So do just a little. Let's call race day "zero day" and count down from ten days out. You might if you're doing 60 miles a week or so (that's what I recommended remember) consider doing something like this:

Day Ten — an easy 10-12 miles at a nice comfortable pace;

Day Nine — 8 miles at about your race speed for the marathon, ie not full out;

Day Eight — Sunday — a very gentle 12-15 miles. It's too late for twenty miles in my opinion although other authorities recommend it.

After that it's easy, easy all the way in;

Day Seven — 7-8 miles, slow;

Day Six — 5 or 6 miles jog;

Day Five — 5 miles;

Day Four — 4 miles;

Day Three — how many miles? — 3 miles;

Day Two — Rest or at most jog 20-25 minutes.

I think it's better to rest on Day Two rather than on Day One.

Day One, I think, is right for a slow, delicate two miles or so, just enough to tick over and keep your muscles loose.

You'll probably feel terrible on these slow jogs but it's just your imagination in anticipating the unknown and not liking the prospect. I've always found the pre-race period more of a strain than the race itself — from the mental point of view at least. So try over these last two or three days to catch up on your sleep and rest up when you can.

As far as diet's concerned, I've already made my view clear — that you should NOT attempt any weird diets. The only adjustment you need to make is to move the balance of what you eat towards carbohydrate. That doesn't mean you have to eat enormous quantities of bread and potatoes or put away a kilo of pasta the night before the race. Be moderate.

Some weight increase over the last two days is desirable because you'll lose quite a bit of weight in the race by sweating. But just as the sweat is mostly liquid, so you should drink the extra weight on. And I mean soft drinks or water in preference to alcohol, though a glass of beer or wine I don't suppose will damage you.

One of my athletic heroes is Paavo Nurmi, the Flying Finn as he was called, who was doing unaccustomed things to excess. Your wife's going to try to persuade you to paper the ground floor or perhaps this is the time you've decided to move house. I don't advise you to do either of these things. Nor should you go on long cycle runs three days before the race or go hillwalking because you'll just get stiff. Try and relax. Persuade others that it's necessary!

And Prevention Is Better Than...



One of my athletic heroes is Paavo Nurmi, the Flying Finn as he was called, who was victorious nine times at three different Olympic Games. He broke countless world distance records. In 1920, Nurmi was taken to a pre-Games training camp, somewhere in the remote Finnish forest, with his team-mates. After just three days he returned home

saying he was bored and could run just as well at home. He wanted to lead a "normal" life! So, when you're momentarily envious of the supposed glamour of the globe-trotting stars of today, perhaps you should count your blessings.

Most runners can do far better if their routine is not disturbed. That should be your watchword over the last day or two of your marathon training and indeed, all the time, **LEAD A NORMAL LIFE.** Running's a normal activity.

As race day comes in sight, reduce your running to a minimum. Jog just enough to keep your muscles loose and your digestion regular. Adjust the balance of your food to slightly more carbohydrate and consume a lot of fluid.

Two nights before the race I suggest that you put zinc oxide tape or something similar on your toes and any other bits of your feet, which you know from experience of previous long runs are liable to rub. If you put the tape on the night before the race I find it tends to come off very easily.

The night before the race, get your kit ready. Go through it from feet to head and that way you won't miss anything. I'll never forget the time I was taking off my tracksuit just before a race and discovered my shorts were at home. By great good luck someone had a spare pair in his bag.

Shoes — are the laces okay? What about the insoles, are they rough, smooth? Get some new ones.

Tape, got that? Scissors, elastoplast for after the race, petroleum jelly, to put on the chafing parts?

Socks — are you going to wear them? You should have decided long ago.

Underwear? — take a thicker or thinner pair of underpants to suit conditions on the day.

Shorts — got them? Tracksuit bottoms for warming up and afterwards?

Vest or t-shirt — which are you going to wear? Take both. Decide on the day.

Your number, if you've already checked in for the race, and pins? Now be careful when you're pinning your number on. A friend tells me that at the Glasgow marathon he got an attack of "runner's nipple" because his pin happened to be lying just where his left nipple was and it became very painful without him realising the cause. So pin them on the right place.

Track suit top? A wet top or plastic bag with holes in it for just before the start? You can discard it at the start.

Take a hat and gloves just in case.

A towel, soap for afterwards, comb, shampoo, toilet paper, dry underwear, a change of clothes for after the race?

Emergency rations? I always take Mars bars and bananas and include some drinks.

Take some money — ten pence or five pence coins to 'phone your friends if there's news of a success. They'll be delighted to hear from you — just like the maternity hospital calls!

Pack all this in your bag and attach your label and place the bag in an obvious place so that you can't go out of the house without it, even if you trip over it. It doesn't really matter as long as you don't hurt yourself!

START

Marathon Day



Get up early on race day — at least four hours before the race start time. That's six o'clock for Dundee. Have your breakfast then or within half an hour at latest.

It's a mistake to eat too much. It's also unwise to run on an empty stomach over such a long distance. Drink plenty, keep drinking up to half an hour or so before the start — but avoid gassy drinks. The warmer it is, the more drink you'll need. Don't rush, get there in plenty of time. Don't panic.

A little walk immediately after breakfast will get your digestion going and nervousness will probably do the rest and you'll want to visit the toilet. You shouldn't eat glucose or sweets before the start because they dry your mouth out and they raise your blood sugar levels suddenly and you may feel weak and dizzy instead of strong.

When you get to the venue, immediately register if you haven't done so already. It's probably better to have done so the previous day. Travel changed or take a little time over changing in the stripping rooms. Don't rush.

Fix on your number firmly — preferably low down over your stomach — on your vest or t-shirt with four pins per number. Arrange it so that it doesn't flap. Nothing's more annoying than a flapping number during the race. Try to relax for a few moments. Sit down or if you can, lie down. Think of pleasant things, I'm sure you'll be able to think of something! Remind yourself you're doing this because you want to. Remind yourself of all the months of training you've gone through just for this day. Then, relaxed, get up, hand your bag in, and jog off to the start area. Line up in the correct area for your estimated time.

It'll do you no good to go off with the leaders if you're aiming for four and a half hours. Go to the proper pen. When the gun goes, start sensibly. Of course, if you're away back you won't have much choice. Try to keep clear of trouble — the runners will soon sort themselves out. A mad rush to get away is the sign of a dazzling talent or an idiot. Twenty six miles is a very long way and you can lose much, much more by slowing down later than you can ever hope to gain by running fast over the first couple of miles.

So if you feel early on it's too fast, you're almost certainly right. Slow down, don't get out of breath, that's the test.

If you or someone else in your group is wearing a watch you can always check your time at every mile marker, but remember only the 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 mile points will have official timers. Don't worry if you're down on your estimated time at five or ten miles. If you're running comfortably, you'll be fine. At drinks or sponge stations you can trip up yourself or other people by swerving all over the road. So signal your intention before moving — just like a motor car. If you miss a sponge someone will probably pass on their one, so if you get a sponge don't just bung it away without checking to see if anyone round you needs it. Marathon races are as much against yourself as against other runners, if not more.

The worst parts of the race are usually the first few miles until you settle down and then from fifteen to twenty two miles. Once you get that far you should be able to finish. I always try to look at things positively in a marathon. I say to myself, only 11 miles to go, the last mile doesn't count, so it's really only 10. And a bit later, it's only 6 miles, even if I slow down, it can't take me more than so-and-so minutes. And when you get to the finishing straight and hear the applause and the people shouting and your friends in the gallery, it'll all be worthwhile.

There are a few sensible steps to take to help you reach the finish. With drinking, for example. I think if you're not hoping to be in the leading group of runners you should stop and have your drink properly. You can't drink on the run unless you've got a specially adapted bottle because you'll spill it all. Of course, if it's a cold wet day you won't need much in the way of drink but if it's warm you need to drink; so stop at the early stations for a drink. It's only a few seconds and then you'll get going again.

Once you've crossed the line, walk to where your kit is and have a nice shower if you can or have a rub down. Get dressed and then go and see everyone else coming in. It's also time to show off that well-deserved medal. Congratulations!

You're A Runner — What Next?



You are sure to be a bit stiff and sore by the evening of race day, once you've recovered from the elation of having completed the 26 miles 385 yards (or if you think in metric 42km 195m) still in reasonable nick. You'll rise from your bed the next morning in good spirits. And you'll become aware as soon as you set your feet on the floor and allow them to bear your weight that you're not Superman. You're not superhuman and you **have** got a lot sorer overnight.

The day after that (if my own experience is anything to go by) you'll be even sorer and stiffer and by the third day things begin fractionally to improve. You should be physically more or less normal by the weekend. It's the over use of your muscles (and remember, doing anything for between two and a half and five hours is exhausting) and this, combined with all the pounding on the hard streets, is responsible for your soreness.

Showers and warm baths do help to relieve it a little as do jogging in the surf if that's feasible and if it's not too cold for you. Race-horses do that after all! A useful tip which I picked up in Holland is that if you're footsore you should try doing some cycling, using a very low gear, so you are moving your muscles more and thus getting rid of the nasty by-products of the race. In the saddle you put very little weight on your feet and get a little pleasant exercise for a couple of days.

Although you may well feel that you deserve some time off from running completely, you shouldn't really take longer leave from the routine of training than that. You're a marathon runner now and you need to keep running regularly or you'll feel there's something missing from your life. This is known in runner's jargon as "positive addiction" — you pick up these expressions from too much reading of American sports magazines. They tend to deal in pseudo-psychology. Positive addiction is the good clean mirror image of negative addiction, like smoking or drugs and so on. But until you're fully recovered, and it could take some weeks, keep your total mileage down to two thirds of it's normal level and avoid doing any long runs or speedwork because they'll probably exhaust you again. During this fallow period re-state your aims to yourself. The marathon, although it's very popular at the moment, is a race that can't be done with any feeling of pleasure more than two or three times a year. Of course there are exceptions, like Leslie Watson, who races marathons about fifteen times a year. So why not try some other shorter road races next? Why not become a member of a running club if you haven't already done it? The advantages of joining a club are several — you find out more easily what races are on, you're eligible for team medals and prizes and best of all you're likely to make friendships, based on common interests, which last for life. All runners started modestly. There's no reason why you shouldn't be a successful runner at one level or another. You must have the ability in you. After all, you've just run a marathon. Will you go on running? I hope so, although you may very well be asking yourself — why should I bother competing if I'm not really all that good and I'm never going to win any prizes? I can answer that best perhaps by quoting a poem that was written just before the First World War by Charles Hamilton Sorley. It's called *The Song of the Ungirt Runners*, and that has the answers.

We swing ungirded hips, and lightened are our eyes,
The rain is on our lips, we do not run for prize,
We know not whom we trust, nor whitherward we fare,
But we run because we must through the great wide air.

The waters of the seas are troubled as by storm,
The tempest strips the trees and does not leave them warm.
Does the tearing tempest pause? Do the treetops ask it why?
So we run without a cause 'neath the big bare sky.

The rain is on our lips, we do not run for prize,
But the storm the water whips and the wave howls to the skies.
The winds arise and strike it and scatter it like sand,
and we run because we like it through the bright broad land.

Dreaming Of 2.20?



Two hours twenty minutes is regarded as the four-minute mile of marathon racing, and to cover the 26.2 miles in that time requires an average rate of about 5:20 per mile. To run 2 hours 15 minutes you have to make them under 5:10, and to get down to 2 hours 10 minutes you will have to dip under 4:58 every time.

Clearly you are going to need some sustained speed. In my view the 2:20 marathon runner must be capable of 14:30 or faster for 5,000m, and his (or her — it's coming!) training must include a reasonable amount of fartlek, interval-type training done on grass, paths or tracks, and "fun races" over distances between 800m and 5,000m. A good speed-improving session is to run a set of 10 x 100m with very short (40m) interval jogs at the end of a slow, longish run (one hour to one hour thirty minutes).

Of course, you mustn't overdo the speed training either, or you'll have nothing left for the race. Fast running should form only 5-10% of your total weekly mileage.

How great should that weekly mileage be? Opinions differ but I have run under 2:20 several times, and as fast as 2:17, on about 65-70 miles per week over a ten week period. That is not a lot.

Scotland is full of runners blocked around 2:25-2:30 who do a big mileage but lack speed endurance over two to three miles. They tend not to do enough short races and to do too little speed training. Instead they believe in hard road runs over seven to fifteen miles. **No! My advice is to combine EASY distance runs (6:00-7:00m per mile) with a little regular speedwork and several light-hearted races.**

If you are a 2:25 man covering 90 miles a week, try cutting down to 50-60 a week for a couple of months before your next marathon and do some form of speedwork (not to exhaustion) every two to three days. It might work.

Paavo Nurmi, the "Phantom Finn" (1920's journalist's alliteration) used the principle of "atonement", a word with religious connotations. The athlete "sins" by doing fast, anaerobic (oxygen-debt) running, and he must "atone" for it by running easily and slowly over much longer distances. Nurmi used to add morning or midday jogs and easy after-race ambles to his regular work during an American tour in 1925-6 in which he had 68 races — and won all but two of them! His contemporaries thought the jogs would weary him, but in reality they freshened and stimulated him for the next race.

If you neglect the "atonement", and "sin" every day, you'll win all the Championships awarded for training hard — until you get browned off and quit!

Everyone aiming for really fast times has to devise a schedule to suit him or herself, but as a possible guide I append two weeks of my own training. One is from the days of my peak ten years ago, and the other from my preparation for the 1983 Dundee Marathon.

1974 JANUARY 6-12. (This was in my build-up to the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch, New Zealand in which I came 6th in 2 hours 14 minutes and 15 seconds. During the last ten weeks I covered 83, 104, 90, 100, 61, 111, 100, 74, 88, 99: average 90 miles per week).

- Sunday 6: 2 hours 6 minutes for 20-mile run, raining.
- Monday 7: Lunch: 4 miles easy fartlek.
7.30 p.m.: 8 miles with some fartlek (7 bursts).
- Tuesday 8: Lunch: 3½ steady.
4.15 p.m.: steady 9 miles in 60-61 minutes.
- Wednesday 9: Lunch: 12½ miles (off work, leaving for New Zealand on Thursday) in 75 minutes, woods.
- Thursday 10: 7 a.m.: 8 miles steady (because with Olympic 5,000m medallist Ian Stewart) in 46 minutes — faster than normal — tired.
- Friday 11: Flying to New Zealand, no training.
- Saturday 12: Half an hour jog — 4 miles — with Ian Stewart. Groggy, but expect to feel better tomorrow (I did). Total 74 miles.

1983 FEBRUARY 28 — MARCH 6. (This was my build-up to the Dundee Marathon which I won in 2 hours 17 minutes and 23 seconds. During last ten weeks: 60, 75, 69, 71, 81, 82, 87, 76, 53, 51: average 70 miles per week.

- Monday 28: Ran back from Cupar-St. Andrews via Blebo Woods.
64½ minutes for 10 miles. Tired.
- Tuesday 1: 5 p.m.: 4½ miles with 4 x 400 in 67-71 on grass.
8 p.m.: 6½ miles easy in 45 minutes.
- Wednesday 2: Tired, wet, fed-up. 0.
- Thursday 3: Lunch: 3½ miles in 26 minutes with Ian Grieve.
p.m.: hilly 9½ miles in 62 minutes, Grange Road, Stravithie.
- Friday 4: 7 miles p.m., felt useless.
- Saturday 5: 3 miles jog a.m.
Race: Cupar 5.6 miles in 26 minutes and 44 seconds (7th) at 3 p.m.
Run back (exhausted) as Monday but in 76 minutes! with Terry Mitchell (2nd Dundee Marathon 1983).
- Sunday 6: One hour "easy", Ian Grieve and Terry Mitchell. Very tired. Total 69 miles.

Running, especially marathon running, is — and must be — fun. You must keep it in perspective and never let it "run" your life.

Good Luck!

Ten Marathon Commandments

1. Train — don't strain . . . that's a key to success.
2. Establish a training routine and stick to it.
3. Wear shoes designed for running — don't skimp on them.
4. Variety is the spice of training — change your route.
5. Be safe, be seen . . . wear something reflective.
6. Do a little speedwork regularly — and warm up for it.
7. Don't train if you're ill or injured — STOP.
8. Racing or training, dress correctly for the weather.
9. Start a race stocked up on fluid and carbohydrate.
10. Ease right off training a week before the marathon.

Here's Tay you on marathon day
Don Macgregor

Radio Tay is a Marathon Day must. Outside broadcast units will bring you minute-by-minute coverage of the Dundee People's Health Marathon on Sunday, April 29, 1984.