

33RD MARINE CORPS MARATHON



Training Tips from the ClifBar Pace Team

The ClifBar Pace Team is a regular sight for runners along the MCM course. They form pace groups to help runners achieve their time goals. Whether it's to finish their first marathon, or set a PR, the ClifBar Pace teams helps runners throughout the marathon to do their very best. Check out great tips below from Tara Dellolacono Thies, RD.

The 2008 Marine Corps Marathon may be several months away, but now is the time to prepare for your performance in this year's event! Certain aspects of training can help runners of all ability, and this includes incorporating pacing into your preparations. Here are some tips for using running on pace as part of your marathon training:

1. Weekly long runs – your long training run pace should be about 1:30 to 2 minutes slower than your marathon goal pace. If you are training to run a 4:00 marathon, for instance, the race pace is 9:10 per mile, so try to do your long runs at a steady pace between 10:40 and 11:10 per mile. Start at the slower end of this range, and work up to finishing more quickly.
2. Marathon pace runs – Each week, try to do some running at your goal marathon pace, if not a little faster. Do a two mile warm-up, then try to run for 3 miles at your goal pace, followed by a two-mile cool-down. Each week add a mile until you reach six miles at race pace, then alternate adding a mile with going back to six miles each week (seven miles, back to six miles the next week, eight miles, back to six, etc.) until you build up to 10-12 miles at race pace.
3. Marathon pace in shorter races – Find a five-mile, 10K or half-marathon and run it at your marathon pace. **DO NOT RACE!** This will help you get a feel for the pace in a race situation but won't leave you too tired for your training.
4. Marathon pace in longer runs – During your final long runs (September, October) throw in three miles at marathon pace at the end of the run.

This will give you an idea of what marathon pace feels like when you are tired (and help you understand that the pace team leaders on race day really aren't speeding up at the end of the marathon, it only feels that way!).

5. Drinking while running on pace – One of the places that many runners falter from keeping their pace is at the water stops. Carry fluids in a Fuel Belt or bottle, or place a bottle within easy reach on your training route, and try to drink without stopping. Slowing is fine – you want to get the fluids in! – But you won't lose much time and will learn how to better stick with your pace group come race day.
6. Practice eating during your runs – Energy depletion is a challenge for marathoners, but many times we don't want to eat for fear of getting a cramp or otherwise losing time fidgeting with a gel pack, energy bar or plastic bag full of candy or other food items. Since you never want to try anything new during a race anyway, practice makes perfect when it comes to eating on the run.

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