



From Da' Coach by Coach Will

WHICH TRAINING PROGRAM IS BEST FOR ME?

Now that marathon season is here many runners begin considering running their first marathon and ask the question, "*Which training program is best for me? I see many options on the Internet and in training books and I don't know which to use*".

What might appear to be a simple and incomplete answer is, whichever program works best for YOU. To determine which program IS best we need to answer some basic questions.

1. What is your current level of fitness?
2. How often do you run now and what is your longest recent run distance?
3. How long have you been running?
4. Have you already run the half-marathon distance in a race?
5. How much time each day and week can you devote to training?
6. How much time do you have to train before your goal event date?
7. What is your goal for the marathon? Just to finish or to achieve a specific time?

When you have answered these questions you will have a better picture of what type of schedule will work for you, taking into consideration that training for a marathon, even with a simple schedule, is a time consuming process, so work and family obligations must be considered.

Without trying to sound like I am soliciting business, this is where a coach can help. They can consider all of the answers to the questions above including your current medical information and custom tailor a training program for you to just finish or to meet a specific time goal.

There are some good online programs that you can use as a starting point if you decide to coach yourself and one I recommend is the one developed by Hal Higdon (www.halhighdon.com).

Another option for training is to join one of the marathon training groups. Some require you to raise funds for a cause and some only charge a coaching fee. Whichever you chose you will most likely receive a generic training schedule and will only receive minimal one on one coaching. These programs are great for their purpose and you do have the benefit of the camaraderie of other runners on your long runs.

Whichever course you chose remember that marathon training is one of the most stressful things that you will do and the most important aspect of any program is to allow for rest and recovery, so don't chose a marathon date that will not allow you adequate time to train.

See you at the races...

Coach Will