

Coach's Corner

Final preparations for your fall marathon

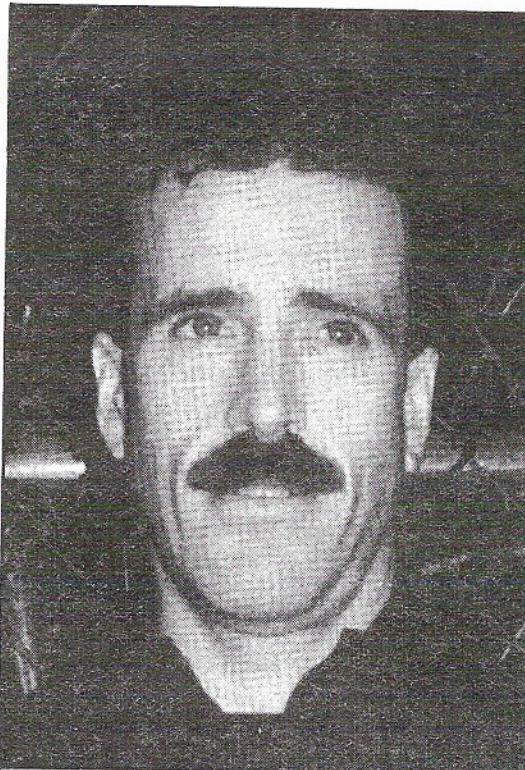
With your fall marathon fast approaching, it's time to set up a taper to prepare yourself for the big day.

The taper for a marathon can make or break your race. For many runners, the thought of cutting back on training doesn't go over well. Many feel they will lose fitness. This is not true. The decrease in training will allow you to recover and become stronger for race day.

The following suggestion can make your taper successful. Your longest run should be completed three weeks before the marathon. The duration of this long run should be equal to your expected finish time for the marathon. This run is crucial to the mental and physical strength that is need for a marathon. Once this run is completed, you will know that you can finish the marathon, but how fast? Two weeks before race day, you should include some time of quality running (mile repeats) or find a 10K race. This is preparing the body to run fast. Ideally, the mile repeats should have been done throughout your training in a progressive manner (starting with a small workout and increasing over time). If you choose to race, a 10K is ideal to test yourself. The total run time should be 1:30-2:00. Following this, the next week of training would decrease by about 20-30%. You should continue to include some quality, but with long rest periods. On the last Sunday, before the marathon, a 60-90 minute run should be included. During the last week, decrease the training volume another 25-30%. By the middle of this week, you should notice your energy levels increasing. Take Friday off before the marathon. On Saturday, you should include a 20-30 minute run with some 20-second bursts of speed. Remember that you are better off being over-rested than over-trained.

Marathon nutrition includes concentration on fluid intake the week prior to the marathon. You should be drinking enough to be voiding clear urine. This is a sign that the body is fully hydrated. Food intake doesn't change much. Your decrease in training will allow your normal food intake to completely fill your glycogen stores. You may notice a small weight gain just days before the marathon. This is due to increased carbohydrates being stored by the body and some water weight. This gain will be used up on race day. Your food intake should include proteins, carbohydrates and fats. This will assure proper balance for the body. Your last big meal should be at noon the day before the marathon. Later that day, take in a small meal. This will prevent waking up with a large appetite and result in an easier time at releasing the intestines. Your pre-race meal should include protein, carbohydrates and fats. This will allow for a slow rise and a longer even level of blood sugar. Do not eat energy bars or sip sports drinks before the race. This will cause a large spike in your blood sugar, followed

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Maine Track Club clothing available

Plenty of Maine Track Club clothing is available to those members who like to show their club spirit whenever they race. Just contact Howard Spear at 856-6496 if you're interested in purchasing MTC singlets, shorts, gymbags or other paraphernalia. Howard also can obtain wind suits by special order. MTC clothing is produced by Bill Rodgers Sportswear, so the quality is very good. Be sure to get some MTC gear of your own and display the club's green and white colors at your next race.