



Lewa Wildlife Conservancy

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**TRAINING NOTES FOR THE SAFARICOM MARATHON
LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY, KENYA
BY BRUCE TULLOH**

ADJUSTMENT TO ALTITUDE

Ideally, one needs 5-6 days for the body to respond and build up its haemoglobin level. Taking iron tablets for at least one week before travelling will help. If you arrive only 3-4 days before, I recommend going out for short runs twice a day to speed up your adjustment. You may feel very slow, but it will help you on the day of the race. Even so, your speed at 5000 feet will be a lot slower. For the Lewa event, expect to run roughly one minute per mile slower, compared to your time in cool conditions at sea level.

TRAINING FOR THE HALF-MARATHON

Anyone aiming to do this properly should be thinking of running 30-40 miles a week during April, May and the first 3 weeks of June.

The essential part of the training is the long run, done once a week. If you can work up to doing 10 miles every other week and eight miles in the easy week you should be OK. Those wishing to be sure could go up to 12 miles once in May.

How Fast Should One Train?

Those who train slowly, race slowly. Once a week you should put in a quality session, which might be 10-12 x 400m on a track, or 15 x 1 min fast, 2 mins slow, or 5 x 3 mins fast, 3 mins slow. As the long run is normally done at weekends, you should include one, good midweek run as well, say 7-8 miles, with the middle 4-5 miles done at a brisk pace.

Apart from these three serious sessions, you should try to increase your endurance by running 4-5 mile on 3 other days, at a comfortable pace. Gym work and swimming will help you in terms of strength and flexibility, but will not make much improvement on the your half-marathon performance.



TRAINING FOR THE FULL MARATHON

Amount of Training

You can run a marathon on as little as 50 miles/80 km per week, but most serious marathon runners are doing 150 km per week and the very best go over 200 km per week. This means training twice a day for 40-60 minutes in the morning and 30-40 minutes in the evening, plus a long run once a week.

Those who have to work for a living have to compromise. A good pattern would be to run for 40-60 minutes 5 days a week, including two quality sessions, have one easy day and one long run, which would be 15-20 miles. If possible, early morning or lunchtime runs of 30 minutes could be added to increase endurance.

The most important part of the training is from 10 weeks to go until 2 weeks to go. In this time you should try to include 5 or 6 long runs that is to say, runs of between 32 and 42 km. Most good runners cover the full 42 km at least once in training.

A typical weeks training, from weeks 8 to go to weeks 2 to go will be as follows:

- **Sunday:** The long run. Start early in the morning and run for 2 hours to 3 hours
- Try starting slowly and finishing more strongly. Take some water with you and drink every 20 minutes
- **Monday:** The rest day
- **Tuesday:** Easy run in the morning and again in the evening
- **Wed:** Morning: Warm up and then run one hour at a fast pace. Evening 30 mins easy
- **Thursday:** As Tuesday
- **Friday: Morning:** Some fast running, e.g. 10 x 800m fast, 200m slow, or 6 x 5 mins fast, 3 mins slow, or 8 x 1km fast, 2 mins slow. **Evening:** 30 min easy
- **Saturday:** A single run of one hour at marathon speed

As a general principle, train hard for 3 weeks, then have one week of easier training, to allow the body to recover.

The Last Two Weeks

- **Sunday:** Run 15 miles /25 km at a good speed
- **Monday:** Rest
- **Tuesday:** 2 easy runs
- **Wednesday:** 2 easy runs
- **Thursday:** A one-hour run at a good pace
- **Friday:** Rest
- **Saturday:** 4 x 1 km fast
- **Sunday:** 10 miles/15 km at marathon pace



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- **Monday:** Rest
- **Tuesday:** 30 mins easy
- **Wednesday:** Rest
- **Thursday:** 20 mins easy, in your racing shoes and clothes
- **Friday:** 20 mins in racing clothes, easy pace. Eat well.

COMPETING IN HOT CLIMATES

Leading up to the Event

1. **Injections/ medication.** If you are having inoculations or taking anti-malarial medication, make sure that this is started well before your departure from Europe
2. **Iron tablets.** When competing at altitudes or over 1500m 5000 feet, it is advisable to increase your iron intake, so that you can make more red cells when you arrive at altitude. Tablets that include Vitamin C, as well as iron will increase the uptake, or you can just take iron tablets and eat lots more fruit
3. **Travelling.** Airports and planes are usually overheated, so you tend to dehydrate. Drink bottled water during your journey and don't over-indulge on the free alcohol
4. **Hygiene.** In tropical countries bugs seem to breed more quickly, so be particularly careful of personal hygiene, use disinfectant on bites and scratches, wash your hands regularly, don't consume food and drink or ice from unknown sources
5. **Sunburn.** Nowhere are you more likely to get sunburned than on the Equator at high altitudes. If you are out in the sun for more than 20 minutes, make sure you are wearing a hat and put sun cream on exposed bits of flesh
6. **Race clothing.** You will sweat a lot, which can lead to chafing and soreness. Don't run in anything tight and make sure that you have Vaseline with you (we will also have this available at the feeding stations)

Race Day Precautions

1. **Breakfast.** A light carbohydrate meal is the best thing before a race, e.g cereal and banana, toast and honey, tea or coffee, but you need 2 hours to digest it. Those aiming to run hard and fast should take energy bars or carbo drinks between 4 and 5 a.m. Those running more slowly can get breakfast in the camp cookhouse as soon as it opens
2. **Pre-race hydration.** Drink water or a dilute (5% carbohydrate) energy drink, sipping regularly until 30 minutes before the start. Allow time for a loo stop and a walk to the start. Take another drink 2- 3 minutes before the start
3. **During the race.** It will be cool at the start, and half-marathon runners can get away with drinking water at 10k, 15k and 20k. It is not necessary to take



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carbohydrate drinks because you have enough stored glycogen to last you for more than this distance. The slower runners will be metabolising quite a lot of fat and so will make less demands on their glycogen reserves, but they will be sweating a lot and should take water regularly all the way through, there are water stations every 2.5km. Marathon runners will need to take on carbo drinks during the run and these will be available from 10K onwards at all water stations

4. **Sponges** will be handed out at all water stations, but these do NOT contain drinking water
5. **After the race.** Everyone will need to put back water and salts (electrolytes). Bottles of water and Cups of rehydration drink will be available at the finish. There will be a recovery tent with medical staff on hand and we recommend that you rest there until you feel recovered