

**Everything You Wanted to
Know About WDW
Marathon Weekend, But
Were Afraid to Ask**

Forward

I confess, I am a “planner”; I try to imagine what should/could happen and try to make plans accordingly (just ask anyone in my family about my spreadsheets). Not that I’m OC, and everything has to happen with split second precision; but, I do like to have a general timeline and a general feel of what is supposed to be happening. That is what I am trying to accomplish here, to put on paper what I imagine is going to happen leading up to and through a WDW endurance event. If I can picture the process, then I can think through all of the steps, anticipate what will happen, and make sure that I am prepared.

I hope that you will find this a help in visualizing what you can expect.

Acknowledgements

My experience with WDW Endurance Events is limited, and I cannot speak with any authority as to exactly what to expect at every event. However, there are a multitude of experienced experts on the forum pages at <http://www.runningoftheears.com> who can. Over the past few months of lurking and reading, I have come across many good tips, suggestions, checklists, and more, regarding what to do, bring, and expect the days before and the day of the big event. Usually, as I came across one of these nuggets, I would cut and paste it to another document. As I began to sort thru and organize these notes into some meaningful form, I thought that it might be of value to others who happen across these pages. I wish that I could give credit to the originators of these tips, but I did not cite the references when I “cut and pasted” (I know, I should be beaten severely about the head and shoulders with your favorite style manual). If you recognize something that you may have contributed in another thread, let me say “Thanks”. There is little original content on my part, but rather the cumulative efforts of many on what is to follow.

Here then, is what I have pieced together. Any suggestions, comments, additions, or deletions are always welcomed. I hope that this is helpful.

The Week Before

Your training taper period begins a couple of weeks prior to the big race. During the taper, you reduce your mileage to give your body time to rest and recuperate; it will also reduce the chance of injury. After all of the hard work you have put into getting to this point, you don’t want to jeopardize your performance by pushing yourself too hard now.

As you begin your taper, you may want to increase your protein intake a bit at the beginning to help your muscles recover and repair themselves. About a week out from the race, increase the percentage of carbohydrates in your diet. Notice, that you are not simply adding more carbs to your diet. The fact is that you will want to decrease your total calorie intake, since you are running fewer miles you will need fewer calories as you don’t need to add on a couple of pounds at this point. Instead, try to aim for 65-75% of your total caloric intake to be from carbs. Also begin hydrating well. You can’t adequately hydrate the day before.

The Day Before

This will likely be your last chance to go to packet pickup. Here you will get your race bib, timing chip, race shirt and goodie bag. Be sure to bring a photo ID and your signed waiver. The times and location for packet pickup should be in your Final Race Instructions, which are typically e-mailed a couple of weeks prior to the race. Some races may have more than one day for packet pickups, and some smaller races may have pickup the day of the race. The Final Instructions will let you know the times and locations. At larger races, there may be an expo where you can visit with various vendors and buy their products. Smaller events may not have an expo at all, or they may have a very limited expo.

Included in your packet will be a clear “check-in” bag. In this bag, you can place anything that you might need immediately after the race. Everything must fit inside the bag, and you are limited to only one bag. At the start area the morning of the race there will be a tent where you can leave your bag. When you finish the race, there will be an area where you can then retrieve your bag. The bags will be tagged with your bib number, and you will need to have your bib in order to pick it up.

Try to get in a brisk walk or a light jog just to loosen up, especially if you have had a long drive or flight to get there. Your training is over, so keep this light and easy; you certainly don’t want to risk an injury at this point. A walk thru one of the parks is good, but don’t go “commando” and try to do too much.

Stay hydrated. Travel, especially airplane travel, can leave you dehydrated, so make sure you watch your fluid intake. But again, be careful not to over do it; too much fluid can lead to electrolyte dilution. Hydration is about right when urine is pale yellow rather than dark yellow; think more like lemonade, less like orange juice. If you feel bloated or your stomach is making “sloshing” sounds, you may be drinking too much. Remember, you have been hydrating over the last 3 – 4 days; this is just to top off the tank. You cannot adequately hydrate in just one day.

For dinner, try to eat your normal diet. This is not the time to try that new spicy Moroccan dish, or see if you might like sushi after all. Stick with what you know. The typical pre-race dish is pasta, or some other high carbohydrate meal. Just remember that carbo-loading is more than just eating a bunch of pasta the day before; there are specific carbo-loading regimens (with depletion/without depletion). If you are following one of these specific regimens, then by all means stick with it. If you want to go with a traditional pasta rich dinner, that is fine. Otherwise, just eat your usual healthy balanced dinner (might want to avoid high-fiber and high fat though).

The Night Before

You will want to turn in early, but there are still things to be done before bedtime. Decide what time you want to wake up and set your alarm(s). Many opt for multiple alarms; the alarm clock in your hotel room, another alarm clock brought from home, your cell phone and/or watch alarm, AND a wake up call. May be overkill, but you're this close, why take a chance?

Lay out what you will wear during the run.

- Tech shirt/singlet
- Running shorts
- Socks
- Running Shoes
- Briefs/Compression shorts/Sports bra (guys, use your discretion on this)
- Hat/visor
- Sunglasses
- Pacing chart
- Braces, compression sleeves, or wraps

Pin your bib number to your shirt (some prefer to pin it to their shorts, just a personal preference. And by the way, in either case, it goes in the front). Attach your timing chip to your shoe lace. Pacing charts, if required, can be on a card that you stick into your waist pack or pocket, you can find pacing charts on wrist bands, you can even find them as temporary tattoos (<http://www.pacelat.com/>).

If you will be wearing toss-away clothing for pre-race, go ahead and get those ready. An old sweat shirt and sweat pants; old jogging suit; leisure suit from the '70's; or just a couple of big trash bags will work. You may want to take a trash bag anyway, so that you can have something to sit on while you wait for the start, or in case of rain. If you have cold hands, some light throw away gloves or an old pair of socks work too. Tube socks with the toe cut out will function as sleeves if you don't want to wear a long sleeved shirt. (There are few style points at 4:30 in the morning).

If you are using a waist pack or belt, this is a good time to get that ready. You may want to carry:

- Cell Phone
- Digital Camera
- iPod/MP3 player & headphones
- Sports gels
- Tylenol (travel or trial packets)
- Biofreeze (sample packets)
- Wiping cloth or handkerchief
- Ziplock sandwich bag with some toilet paper inside
- Empty Ziplock bags for phone, mp3, or camera in case of rain
- A *small* amount of cash, if you decide to make a stop for something to eat or drink on your way back to the hotel.
- ID

Make sure that any electronics devices (cell phone, camera, iPod, sports watch, heart rate monitor) are FULLY CHARGED the night before. Nothing worse than having something go DOA at the start line and still have to carry it the whole distance.

If you are going to use gels/blocks/beans/snacks (pretzels, gummies, sharkies) during the run, decide which ones and how many. Better to decide now, than to take a chance on forgetting them in the rush to get out the door in the morning. And again, stick with what you are familiar with from your training. This is not the time to try that new Jalapeno-Mango gel you picked up at the Expo. If you plan on carrying your own hydration, make sure that it is mixed and ready to go for the morning.

Foil packets that have two Tylenol capsules are easy to carry and not too difficult to open if you may need some pain relief on the road. Avoid NSAIDs (like ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Aleve) before or during a run. According to Runners World, "NSAIDs decrease blood flow to the kidneys, which regulate salt levels. If you also overhydrate, this heightens your risk of developing hyponatremia, a low concentration of sodium in the blood." Save the anti-inflammatory NSAIDs for after the run.

I wear glasses, and trying to wipe the sweat off of them when I can't find a dry part of my shirt can be annoying. Having a dry cloth to wipe glasses or wipe your brow during a run can be a welcome relief.

Ziplock bag with toilet paper??? Consider these scenarios, late run Porta-potty stop where several hundred runners who have already stopped ahead of you OR you really, really, really have to go now, and there's nothing in sight but some trees and bushes ...enough said?

Packing your check-in bag.

- pair of dry shoes or sandals
- change of clothes (socks, shirt, shorts, light jacket)
- a small towel
- wet wipes
- recovery drink (e.g., Boost, Ensure, Endurox) - optional

If you use a powdered recovery drink and there will be water at the finish, you can just put the powder in a sports bottle and dump water in when done. Less chance of it spilling out in your bag and you get a colder drink.

Some wet wipes and a towel can help clear away some of the road grime and sweat stains. A clean, dry shirt and comfortable shoes after the event are most welcome. Some people have changed clothes in a bathroom stall, but don't count on having a place to modestly change clothes.

There will be food and drinks available at the finish area, but, if you are used to a specific recovery food or drink, you may prefer to pack your own in your check bag. Be careful with cash or any other valuables in your check-in bag. They may be safe, but there are no

guarantees. Anything that you will need immediately after finishing, and before you return to your hotel, goes into your check-in bag.

Before going to bed, you should also consider what to do about breakfast. Some of the on property resorts will open their food courts early. But they may have limited choices. So best to check with the front desk to see if the food court will be open, when it opens, and what they might be serving. You may prefer to have something in your room. In which case, you might want to get some bagels, fruit, juice, etc to keep in your room. If your room has a mini-fridge or a kitchen, then you have more options. If your room has an in-room coffee maker and you have to have a cup-o-joe in the morning, make sure that you have the necessary supplies (filters, cups, sweetener, cream) and if you are not familiar with the coffee maker, look over the instructions beforehand. Your goal is to do anything to make the morning go smoothly.

If you are staying on property, you will want to find out when and where to catch WDW transportation to the start line. There is a cut off time for the last bus/mono-rail to get you to the start line on time. Make sure you know when this is. If you are driving yourself, be aware that some roads will be closed so make sure you know a good route to the start.

This is not the time to plan race strategy. Pacing, run/walk intervals, meeting up with family and friends (before, during, and after), all of these details should be planned days and weeks before the race. Not in the last few hours when you are trying to fall asleep. Having these plans written down a day or two ahead of time will help put your mind at ease and allow you to relax.

Now, go to bed and try to get some sleep. (BTW, as a psychology student in college we learned some deep relaxation/self hypnosis techniques, for examples search “Progressive Relaxation Technique”. Those techniques do work, but they take some practice. If you have trouble calming down and getting a good night’s sleep, you might want to look into something like this).

The Big Day

The alarm goes off and you awaken from a deep restful slumber....yeah, right.

Showering before the run is optional (afterward, it is strongly recommended for the sake of everyone around you). For some, it helps to get awake; others figure, “what the heck, in a few hours I’ll be surrounded by thousands of my close, personal, sweaty friends so why bother”. Your call.

Even at zero-dark-thirty in the morning, you might want to consider sunscreen. Especially in the full marathon, the mid- to back of the packers may be out in the Florida sunshine around mid-day. Even on a cloudy day, you can get overexposed to UV rays. So, trust me on the sunscreen, and slather some of that all-day, can’t sweat it off, waterproof sunscreen. Your dermatologist will thank you when you get older.

Consider chaffing prevention. Anywhere skin runs skin, or skin rubs clothing will be a source of irritation. Application of Vaseline, Bodyglide, or similar products can help prevent chaffing. Typical applications would be:

- Feet. Especially, between the toes. (And while you are down there, double check those toe-nails. A long nail, or a rough edge can cut into or irritate an adjacent toe and can be a real pain.).
- Inner thighs
- Under arms
- Back of neck where shirt rubs
- Waist band of shorts
- Mid-section where waist pack or belt will ride
- Heart monitor strap
- Straps of sports bra
- For the guys, nipple guards, bandaids, or heavy Vaseline treatment (unless you opted for the sports bra, which is a whole 'nother topic for another time)

Basically, if it can get rubbed over 13.1/26.2 miles, it will. Be liberal with the protection now.

Your running clothes are ready from the night before.

Eat breakfast in your room or head on out to the food court. Go ahead and get started on topping off that hydration. It is still a few hours until start time, but start sipping on water before hand. Try for about 8 to 16 ounces of fluid, but stop drinking about 1 hour before the start to avoid early pit stops.

As you head out the door, have a final checklist to review:

- Hat/visor
- Sunglasses
- Bib
- Timing chip
- Toss-away clothes
- Check-in bag
- Electronics
 - o Sports Timer/Heart rate monitor
 - o Cell phone
 - o Digital camera
 - o MP3 player
- Waist pack/belt
- Hydration belt
- Trash bag to sit on (or wear)
- Room key (you do want to get back in don't you?)
- Car keys (if required) –just pull of the key(s) that you will need, and leave the rest in the room. You can keep the one key you need to get into your car in your running shorts (most have a small pocket for this).
- Bottled water or Sports Drink

Some prefer to carry their running shoes and to wear their comfy shoes, figuring that they are going to be wearing the runners long enough, and then change shoes just before bag check. Again, do what you feel most comfortable with; YMMV.

Catch that ride to the start area, check your bag, and head on over to the H Tent. What is the H Tent? Well, at the Start/Finish area, there are “reunion” tents set up as a post-race meeting place for family and friends. The tents are designated with the first letter of the runner’s last name (this is also where you can pick up your checked bag, if you checked one). The Smith’s will meet at the S tent, the Brown’s will meet at the B tent. Just be aware that the letters may be grouped; so, the tent may be labeled something like G – K for example. If that tent is where the H’s would meet, that is the place to be. (Just remember, H is for Home).

Be aware that only racers with bib numbers are allowed past the checked bag tent and in the start areas. If you are wearing some outer layers of clothing, you may have to raise a shirt or open a jacket to show your bib number. Don’t worry about pinning your number to the outside of your throw away clothing. You may forget to remove it before tossing that old sweat shirt; and you may not have time to take it off and re-pin it to your race shirt. Just make sure you can flash someone your bib number if you need to.

During the Race

There are some rules of etiquette for making the race more enjoyable, for yourself and for those around you.

- Pay attention to announcements. There may be important last minute changes that you need to be aware of.
- Start in the correct Corral. If you are a slower runner or a walker, don’t try to get to the front. Let the faster people get on their way, and let the congestion clear out.
- Try not to weave in and out of traffic until things have had a chance to spread out. Weaving expends energy and could be a tripping hazard.
- If you are running with a group, don’t spread out more than 2 abreast. Allow runners behind to get around.
- If you do pass someone, pass on the left. And give a verbal, “Passing on your left”, or “On your left” to let someone know that you are there. Also, check behind you before passing to make sure you aren’t cutting someone else off.
- If you need to stop, slow down, or speed up, give a quick look behind you to make sure you are not impeding others. Raising you hand and calling out “Walking” will let others know that you are slowing down so they can adjust. Then move to the right side before slowing/stopping. You may find it necessary to start your walk break several seconds early or late to order to wait for a safe time. Not to worry, it is better to adjust the start of your walking interval than to get run over and expose yourself and others to injury.
- Most people slow down through the water station. Be aware of this. If you do not intend to get a drink, stay to the middle of the road. Try to keep moving through the water station. If you must stop, wait until you have cleared the station, then move to

the side before stopping. But be aware to look for a good stopping place, otherwise, you may get water and or empty cups tossed your way by those continuing on.

- As you approach the water station, pay attention to the volunteers. They may have both water and sports drink. Make sure you know which you are getting (don't want to pour that sports drink over you head to cool off). And be sure to thank the volunteers, smile and be courteous.
- Don't just drop empty cups on the road where they may be a hazard. Try to toss empties to the shoulder of the road, or into a garbage can if possible and practical.
- Move predictably, and watch the arm swing. Avoid sudden direction changes and don't fling your arms out.
- Look before you spit, sneeze, or vomit. Please.
- Don't be a hog. At the water stations, and at the finish line, if you need fluids and/or food take what you need, but remember there may be others behind you that need some too.
- Don't stop when you cross the finish line. Once across the line, slow down and follow the directions of the race officials. Others may be sprinting for the finish line right behind you.
- The 2 abreast rule still applies at the finish line. Even though you might want that great picture of your group of 6 crossing together, remember that the person behind you really wants his personal record (PR) or Boston Qualifying time (BQ) and may be sprinting for the finish. The rules of courtesy remain the same throughout the **entire** race, including at the finish line.
- Congratulate the other participants at the finish.
- Smile. You never know when a camera will be on you.

Two key concerns are hydration and fueling during the run. For hydration, don't pass up the fluid stations on the course. Early on, drinking just water is fine. But no later than 60 minutes into the run, you should be consuming some sports drink. Sports drinks contain electrolytes and carbohydrates. You should aim to consume 3-6 ounces of fluid every 20 minutes. An ideal temperature would be in the mid-50's. If the temperature climbs into the 70's or 80's, you may need to drink more. Alternate between plain water and sports drinks at the fluid stations. Thirst is a good indicator, but don't rely solely on the thirst mechanism. If you are sweating heavily, you need to start replenishing fluids.

Most runners use a gel energy supplement. These are a quick source of carbohydrates. When consuming a gel, be sure to take them with water; NOT a sports drink. Since sports drinks also contain carbs, the extra carbs from both the gel and the sports drink may cause some abdominal distress. The water will also aid in the absorption of the gel.

Some water station tips.

- If you are drinking on the move, pinch the cup to make a smaller opening and drink through this small V opening. You will end up wearing less of the liquid.
- If the course mix of sports drink is too strong for you, grab a cup of water, dump some out (look around you first), then grab a cup of sports drink and pour some into the water cup (or vice versa if the sports drink tables come first).

Some people don't like the taste and/or consistency of the gels. There are also chews, blocs, and beans which are used for energy supplements. Some people find that certain candies or pretzels work for them. Be sure to try them during training. The day of the race is not the time for something new.

If you do feel a severe increase in pain, do consider dropping out. No race is worth the risk of serious injury. There are medical tents and medical personnel available along the course. It is also helpful to recognize the **warning signs** of

- 1) dehydration/heat illness (headache, fatigue, dizziness, nausea, muscle cramps, weakness, irritability, vomiting, heat flush, abnormal chills)
and
- 2) hyponatremia, or over hydration (swollen hands/feet, confusion, dizziness, throbbing headache, nausea, apathy, severe fatigue, cramping, bloated stomach, wheezy breathing).

If you need assistance, be sure to check in with the medical staff. That is why they are there.

Out on the course, you need to stop all negative thoughts. This is what you have trained for, and what you have been looking forward to with anticipation. Concentrate on the feeling of accomplishment, and how proud your family and friends will be. Banish any of those negative thoughts and doubts. And above all, take the time to enjoy the spectators, the participants, the sights and sounds of this experience. This is your moment.

At the Finish Line

You've reached the finish line, so now it is all over, right? Not so fast there Speedball, recovery starts the moment you cross the finish line.

Someone at the finish area may try to wrap a mylar blanket around you; go ahead and take it (if nothing else, you just scored a mylar blanket! Sweet!). Why do they do this after an endurance run? Well, when you (1) stop a strenuous (and sweaty) exercise, while (2) wearing lightweight, breathable clothing, and are (3) outside, then any wind will evaporate the sweat from your exposed skin and body heat will be taken away. This didn't matter during the run when your body was expending energy and generating heat. Now that you have stopped running, you begin to cool down. However, when the body loses more heat than it produces, hypothermia can result (mild hypothermia is defined as a body temperature between 90 and 95 degrees F). The blanket is a preventative measure, and if you find you don't need it, you can always take it off later. The mylars are also great to use to keep warm before your next early morning race.

Keep walking for at least 10 minutes. Take a nice easy pace to allow the body to gradually come down. Blood needs to circulate back to normal distribution and regions of the body (such as the stomach for digestion). Lactic acid and other waste products need to be flushed from the muscles.

Drink a sports drink as soon after your finish as possible. Sports drinks increase blood sugar levels and electrolyte levels. Plain water at this point can be dangerous. You have just sweated away significant amounts of salts and other electrolytes. Plain water can dilute the concentration levels even more, resulting in a serious electrolyte imbalance. Eating salty foods like pretzels also help with restoring electrolytes.

There will be an elaborate medal ceremony, photo ops, autograph sessions, media interviews, teeming throngs of adoring fans, and food. Try to get something to eat within 30 minutes of finishing. Eat something rich in carbohydrates, a little lean protein, and low in fat. Grab a bagel with peanut butter, a banana, an apple, or a sports bar. Eating will replenish depleted glycogen stores as well as provide the protein needed to start rebuilding damaged muscle. The body is very receptive to absorbing fuel within a 60-90 minute window following strenuous exercise.

Some people may not have an appetite after finishing. In that case, try a recovery drink such as Clif Shot Recovery, EAS, Powerbar Recovery Drink, Boost, Ensure, or simply chocolate milk. Chocolate milk as a recovery drink is a very good source (and good balance) of carbs and protein. These drinks may not be available in the food area, but you can pack one (with the exception of the chocolate milk) in your checked bag.

Waiting more than 30 minutes to stretch, after your tired muscles have cooled down, increases the chance of injury. So stretch gently and slowly while your body is still warm.

Consider an ice bath within 2 hours of finishing. The ice slows down the blood flow which reduces swelling and inflammation. The 2 hour wait is necessary because you don't want to slow down the blood flow until the body has had time for normal circulation to flush waste products from the muscles and to replenish nutrients. So how much ice do you need? Well, you don't need to arrange for a delivery of 50 pounds of ice to your room. Instead, just bring some plastic bags from home (you know when you are at the grocery and you have the option of paper or plastic? Opt for the plastic a few times, and you will have some cheap plastic bags). Fill a couple of those bags with ice from the hotel ice dispenser. Sit in a tub with lukewarm or room temperature water that covers your feet, legs and hips. Start adding the ice, and more cold water if necessary. This is less of a shock then just plunging into a tub of icy water. How long should the ice bath last? No more than 10-15 minutes. You can wear a shirt, sweat shirt or towel to keep your upper body warm. Also, move your legs around as you soak so that the cold water gets to all parts of your legs and hips.

An ice bath not sounding like your cup-of-tea? Then try walking in the shallow end of the pool (at least waist deep), even just taking a cool bath will help, or you can simply use those plastic bags to make up some ice packs that you can put on your knees, hips, or ankles.

After the ice bath, you can take a luke-warm shower to clean up. Avoid hot showers or hot baths for at least 24 hours. Your muscles and joints are already inflamed. Hot showers/baths increase blood flow, which can lead to increased inflammation, and didn't you just take an ice bath to reduce inflammation? For the same reason, avoid hot tubs. Putting on some clean compression gear (tights, calf sleeves, etc.) after your clean-up can also help.

Wait about three hours after your finish, to begin to take NSAIDs (ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, etc) to help reduce inflammation and pain. A rule of thumb is to start NSAIDs after you know your kidneys are working. Wait until you can urinate and don't start with the NSAIDs until then, no matter how long it has been.

After the ice bath, you may be tempted to crawl back into bed and catch a quick nap. Fight that temptation, otherwise you will wake up about dinner time stiff and sore. Not to mention spending another night unable to sleep.

Besides, you have some serious bragging time to put in. Put on some clean clothes, comfortable shoes, your medal, and head out for one of the parks. The more you walk around, the better you will feel over the next few days. Continue hydrating throughout the day. Eat simple balanced foods; avoid fried or greasy food. And enjoy all of the adulation and attention you will get wearing your well earned medal.

However, you must listen to your own body. If your feet or legs are painful or swollen, or you have blister issues, a more prudent option may be to apply massive doses of RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation).

So, to summarize:

- First 10 minutes, keep moving and begin hydrating with a sports drink
- 10 minutes to 30 minutes after, recovery drink, something carb rich to eat and begin stretching
- 60 minutes to 90 minutes after, refuel with a light meal
- 2 hours after, ice bath or soak in cool water
- 3 hours (or until after you have urinated), begin NSAIDS for inflammation
- 24 hours after, can resume hot bath or shower

Your recovery is complete when you go from “Never again...” to checking the calendar for upcoming races. You know you want to.

Tips for Spectators

Training for an endurance event is a long, lonely endeavor. This makes it especially gratifying on the day of the race to have family and friends there cheering you on. Runners do get a boost from seeing a familiar face, or hearing someone call out their name. Balloons, signs, banners, and distinctively colored clothing will make it easier for your runner to pick you out of the crowd. Knowing that a cheering section may be at certain spots along the course will also help give a much needed boost.

So, where are some good spots to cheer on your athlete?

Surprisingly, the start is not a good location. Participants have to be at the starting area very early in the morning and anyone without a race bib is not allowed past the bag check-in tents.

The actual start line is along a major roadway and race officials will begin moving the runners/walkers to that area about 1 hour prior to the start while it is still dark and perhaps a bit cool. There is not adequate space for safe spectator viewing along the roadway, and facilities are limited. Finally, other than the spectacle of the start, the odds of seeing, or being seen by, a single runner in the mass of humanity are pretty slim.

Better to let your cheering section sleep in and then stake out a cheering spot further along the route. There are some good locations along the way, and if you plan and execute correctly, you can make it to multiple cheering locations. The key is to know the approximate pace of your runner/walker. Knowing the pace, the distance, and the race start time, it is easy to arrive at a rough time frame as to when your runner will be approaching the various mile markers.

A favorite location is the Ticket and Transportation Center (TTC). This is about mile 4 for the ½ Marathon, and mile 9 for the Full Marathon. Depending upon their pace, once your runner has passed the TTC spectators then have several options.

If there is time (again, depending upon runners pace), you can hop on the Monorail and travel up to the Magic Kingdom. Main Street is just a bit past mile marker 5 for the ½, and mile 10 for the full. Since it is before the park officially opens, race spectators are allowed along Main Street. This has to be one of the most special times for the racers. They enter the park, round a corner and start up Main Street. To have the street lined with cheering fans and the castle in the background is quite a thrill for the racers and spectators alike. If you can only make it to one location along the route, this may be the most memorable.

When your runner passes you on Main Street, return to the Monorail. The Grand Floridian is just past mile 7 for the ½, and mile 12 for the full, if you want to exit the Monorail at GF and watch them along Floridian Way. Or, you can exit at TTC. From there, it is a short walk over to Floridian Way, mile 8 for the ½ and mile 13 for the full. For those running the ½ Marathon, at this point the best option for spectators would be to return to Epcot via the Monorail and stake out a spot at the Finish.

Miles 13 through 16 of the Full Marathon are along a relatively lonely section of road that is not easily accessible for spectators. Miles 16 through 18 are in and around Animal Kingdom. To get to AK, you would probably need to use WDW bus transportation, as there will be road closures all around the property. Even using WDW busses, traffic may make getting into and out of AK an “iffy” proposition. After AK, miles 18 through 22 are along Osceola Parkway and World Showcase Drive heading toward Disney Hollywood Studio. Again, not easy to get to, no safe viewing areas, and no facilities make this less than ideal for spectators. After leaving DHS, the route from mile 24 to mile 25 is along the Studio Pathway, passing by the Swan and Dolphin hotels, and the Beach Club Resort. This could be a good viewing location, but it would certainly mean that you would miss the finish.

The Finish line for both the ½ Marathon and the Full Marathon is in the Imagine Parking Lot at Epcot, just a short walk from the Monorail station. There are spectator viewing areas at the finish line.

If you prefer, the Disney Wide World of Sports web-site has a handy tool for spectators to select viewing sites. It can be found at http://disneyworldsports.disney.go.com/dwws/en_US/marathon/spectator/detail?name=SpectatorDetailPage

So, if you can, get out there and cheer on your runner, and all of the other runners. You will have fun and the runners will greatly appreciate the encouragement.

Pre-Race Information

Packet Pickup:

- Dates : _____
- Times : _____
- Locations : _____

WDW Transportation

To Packet Pickup

- Bus Location : _____
- Times : _____

To Race Start

- Bus Location : _____
- Last Pickup Time : _____