

ANOTHER GO

Make your recovery and taper a priority and you'll be ready to race again.



OCTOBER

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Take Two?

You can follow a marathon with another 26.2, and soon, with careful planning **BY LISA MARSHALL**

WITH THE FINISH LINE barely behind them, many marathoners spend their recovery days doing something counterintuitive: Plotting a next attempt, sometimes within a month. While some runners want to maintain their hard-won fitness or combat postrace blues, others plan a second event when they fall short of their goals the first time around. "I see it all the time," says David Allison, owner and coach of Marathon Coaching Consultants in Phoenix. "Either they loved the experience and want to do another one

right away, or they didn't do as well as they'd hoped and they want to redeem themselves." Conventional wisdom has long held that runners should attempt no more than two marathons a year, six months apart. Yet according to Running USA, one in four marathoners completes multiple 26.2s each year. So are they nuts? Not necessarily. "If you plan and listen to your body, it can work well," says exercise physiologist and Olympic marathoner Pete Pfitzinger. Use the following guidelines to determine if you can safely run two 26.2s within 12 weeks—or less.

EVALUATE YOUR FIRST RACE

If you pushed it to the edge, endured withering humidity, or cramped and bonked on your first 26.2, your body is likely too taxed to resume training. If, however, that first race was on a relatively easy course in mild weather and you finished with a little left in the tank, you should recover more quickly and feel strong enough to get back on the training wagon soon. ➔

Generally speaking, the harder you ran in your first marathon, the more time you should allow before running your second event.

RUN
better

ASSESS YOUR FITNESS

Consider a second marathon only if you trained properly for the first event. You should have been running four to five days a week, logged a minimum of 40 to 50 miles a week, and completed at least one 20-plus-miler at the peak of your training, says Pfitzinger.

STRATEGIZE YOUR TIMING

If you want to run a second marathon simply for fun—not a PR—schedule it about four weeks after your initial 26.2. This gives you time to recover without losing your endurance, says Jenny Hadfield, coauthor of *Marathoning for Mortals*. Ditto if a sour stomach or painful blister sabotaged your first effort: Consider your initial attempt a training run, then rest up and toe the line again a month later. If you want to train harder to run as fast as you can in your second marathon, however, give yourself eight to 12 weeks between races (six if you're in great shape).

RESIST SHORTCUTS

Running back-to-back marathons abbreviates the typical schedule—once you've recovered from the first race, it's nearly time to start tapering for the second. "The priority has to be recovery," Pfitzinger says. If you have four weeks between events, recover for two and taper for one. If you have six weeks between starts, recover for two and taper for two. Runners with eight to 12 weeks between events should block out three weeks each for the recovery and taper.

MAINTAIN INTENSITY

Runners aiming for a time goal in their second attempt should prioritize intensity over distance during the weeks (or days) of training between the recovery and taper. "Your body will forget how to run fast before it forgets how to run long," Allison says. In addition to your weekly long and easy runs, do an interval session (like 400-meter, 800-meter, or mile repeats) to remind your brain what a quick turnover feels like, and an "up-tempo" workout (five to seven miles with 20 minutes spent at 10-K to half-marathon pace) to keep your lactate threshold high. Start your mileage at about 75 percent of the peak volume you reached during your first marathon buildup, and work up to no more than 90 percent before beginning your taper, says Allison. If possible, log at least one 16- to 20-mile run. If you feel tight or fatigued, back off.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

The less time between races, the lower your expectations should be. If you're gunning for a PR, you need a plan. "You don't have much room to get it wrong pace-wise on race day," says Pfitzinger. If possible, run a test 10-K three weeks out and use your time to determine if you're on track for your goal. One week out, assess how you feel—do you have any niggling injuries or lingering fatigue? Are you feeling energized through the taper? If all is well, devise your race-day plan and stick to it. Once it's over, no matter the results, take a break. You deserve it. **EW**

Repeat Halfs

Tips for racing consecutive 13.1-milers

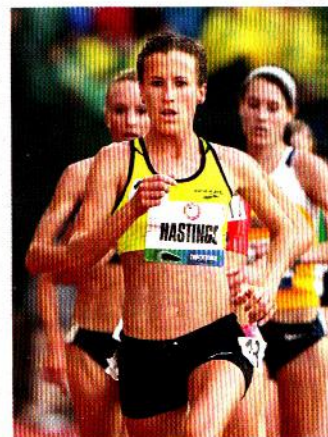
→ Double up only if at the peak of training for your first race you ran at least four days a week, logged 25 miles a week, and completed at least one 10- to 12-mile run.

→ Schedule your second race three to four weeks after the first event.
 → Recover and taper for one week each.
 → During your training week(s) do one long run,

one to two recovery runs, and one day of short intervals (400- to 1600-meter repeats). If you have three to four weeks between halves, run one 10- to 12-miler.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Advice from the world's best runners



AMY HASTINGS, 28, of Mammoth Lakes, California, won the Olympic Trials 10,000 and placed 11th in a PR of 31:10.69 at the London Games.

1 Get Loose

"Stretch out your back and shoulders before each run. A slight imbalance up high can lead to an injury down low, as your whole body is connected."

2 Get Fast

"Sprinkle the third quarter of your long runs with up to 10 surges of 30 to 60 seconds at 5-K race pace. This gets you stronger for the end of long races."

3 Get Squeezed

"I wear compression socks during and after hard workouts, and even in bed, so that I'm better recovered for the next session."
 —BOB COOPER