

2023 TEAM GDMF
BOSTON MARATHON
TRAINING AND RACING GUIDE

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I. GETTING STARTED

A. TEAM GDMF TIMELINE

JANUARY

- **By Jan 1** - Complete your training plan
- **By Jan 1** - Create fundraising page on GivenGain
- **By Jan 1** - Send personal fundraising email to friends, family, colleagues & neighbors
- **Jan 18 - REGISTRATION** - Register for Race via BAA email
- **Mid Jan** - GDMF new year newsletter & Boston Kick Off
- **Jan 30** - Fundraising Goal: \$2,500 & Long Run Goal: 13 miles
- **Jan 31** - Have main fundraiser planned and ready to send invites

FEBRUARY

- **Feb 15** - 2nd Fundraising Request / Training Update via email
- **Feb 25, Saturday - SuperHero 17 Natick to Boston**
- **Feb 28** - Fundraising Goal: \$5,000 & Long Run Goal: 17 miles

MARCH

- **March 15** - Boston Marathon Day of Giving - 3rd Fundraising Request / Training Update via email
- **March 25, Saturday** - Hop 21 miles from **Hopkinton to Heartbreak Hill**
- **March 31** - Fundraising Goal: \$7,500 & Long Run Goal: 21 miles
- **End of March** - Donor Raffle! All donors entered to win a GDMF Mug
- **Fundraising incentive** - all runners to reach \$7,500 by 3/31 will receive an official piece of Boston Marathon Gear

APRIL

- **April 14, Friday** - Thank donors and provide app/bib #/fanclub info
- **April 15, Saturday** - Team GDMF dinner
- **April 17, Monday - MARATHON MONDAY!**
- **Long Run Goal 26.2 miles / Fundraising Goal \$12,000+++**
- **April 23** - Wrap up donor thank yous with pictures & story about your experience

MAY

- **May 19 - FINAL day of fundraising, send any final thank yous**

QUESTIONS? / CONCERNS: Contact GDMF Team organizers

Kristin Donahue

kdonahue@glendohertyfoundation.org

Cell: 617-290-5443

Tara Doubman

tdoubman@glendohertyfoundation.org

Cell: 781-799-4635

I. GETTING STARTED

B. REGISTRATION

Tara will kick off the on-line registration process for the 4 charity runners. Registering together should get you close to sequential bib numbers - same wave / corral is the goal.

You will receive an email from the BAA with a link to the registration site and a password. Tara will monitor the site and get notified of your confirmations. Please just follow the instructions on the website. It is very straightforward. You will be required to pay the \$375* registration fee on a personal credit card with a valid expiration date. Thank you VERY much for accepting this challenge on behalf of Team GDMF!

Please note, you MUST use the same name and email that we have uploaded into the BAA system. A few days before registration, we will send an email to confirm the information that we have entered to make sure that the data is correct. If we upload a full name and you try to register with a nickname the data will not match and you will not be allowed to register.

IMPORTANT:

- **Bibs cannot be reassigned after February 1st**
- **Runners are committed to ENTIRE fundraising commitment if injured after February 1st**

If for some reason you are NOT feeling confident about getting trained up in time, please let me know ASAP! We can always get you a spot for Falmouth in August or Boston the following year. We would rather have you healthy and happy!

For our qualified runners, we will be able to add you to Team GDMF once we have the 4 charity runners registered. You will all show up as a team for race day tracking purposes.

II. TRAINING

A. CREATING A TRAINING SCHEDULE

Creating a sound training plan to follow is imperative for every athlete. However, everyone's mind/body is different so I encourage you to develop a training plan that is best suited to your needs and limitations. Your training plan will allow you to meet weekly distance goals, keep motivated and prevent injury.

The best place to start is to review some of the training programs that are available to you on-line and take ideas from them. I will also share my individual plan with you. I believe that the most important part of marathon training is scheduling an achievable long run schedule. Once a week you should be logging 1 run longer than the rest to build your endurance for the race and to prepare your body for the length of time on your feet.

Here are a few marathon programs that I have looked at to create my personal plan:

- [BAA Training plan & links](#)
- [Hal Higdon's Training Plans](#)

Several of my friends that try to achieve specific 26.2 times also use the Yasso 800 plan. There are many opinions about the efficacy of this plan. Here is a [link about the workout](#) and you can decide if you want to incorporate it or not. I have yet to try it myself but my faster friends swear by it.

Please take all of these plans with a grain of salt. I find many of the marathon programs overkill on the running. I like to cross train to keep my mind sound and my body safe from injury. Having had a back injury in my early 20's, I keep my days running to 3 to 4 days a week MAX. Some of the programs have you running 5 days a week. My advice is to borrow ideas from each program and tailor a plan that is best for you. There are also personal coaches that will devise plans for you for a fee. Right now, Team GDMF does not employ a coach so if you would like to explore this option it would be at your own expense.

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B. SUGGESTED TRAINING PLAN & PACING

Long Runs: Below is a target list of long runs starting the last week of December. Marathoners usually schedule their long runs at the end of each week. This plan is 16 weeks long like most marathon plans. I build my mileage gradually over a 2-to-3-week period, then bring my mileage back to a 13 mile run in between once I have built up the base. Please note, I do not necessarily run my long runs on Sunday, but my goal is to get one long run in before the week is out. Weather, family schedules and just life will play a role in when you can get in your long runs.

16 Week Long Run Schedule

Goal for each week ending Sunday

Week 1, 1/1 - 5 miles

Week 2, 1/8 - 6 miles

Week 3, 1/15 - 8 miles

Week 4, 1/22 - 10 miles

Week 5, 1/29 - 12 miles

Week 6, 2/5 - 14 miles

Week 7, 2/12 - 16 miles

Week 8, 2/19 - 13 miles

Week 9, Saturday 2/25 - 17 miles

Week 10, 3/5 - 13 miles

Week 11, 3/12 - 19 miles

Week 12, 3/19 - 13 miles

Week 13, Saturday 3/25 - 21 miles

Week 14, 4/2 - 13 miles

Week 15, 4/9 - 8 miles

Week 16, RACE DAY, 4/17 - 26.2

Weekly running schedule: I tentatively schedule all of my workouts from 15 - 16 weeks out to race day. Obviously, things will change. However, it is a good way to plan your long runs around your family schedule and weekend activities. You may need to move around long runs to Fridays vs Saturday / Sunday certain weeks to account for weekend plans, family schedules, etc., especially if you know you're going to be out of town.

I have two main goals with my weekly training log:

1. **Diversify my workouts to prevent injury.** I love to swim and do yoga on my non running days. Cycling is another great way to get in cardio shape without the pounding on your back and feet. Yoga / Pilates are fantastic to help your muscles recover from the running, keep you stretched out while building your core.
2. **Hit my mileage goal to make sure I am increasing my endurance** – My mileage goals tend to be low relative to many marathoners. I try to run 26 plus miles a week with my heaviest weeks between 30 and 35 miles. Many of my track friends run 40 – 50+ miles during marathon training. My goal is to stay healthy and enjoy running. I can manage my back and still complete the 26.2 with the miles listed on my spreadsheet. You may need to tweak these distances to suit

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your running style. Again, it is important to do what is best for you!

PACING

If you are an experienced marathoner and have a particular finish time goal, you may want to check out the Boston pacing workbook. This thing has been around for decades. The version you have attached to our Constant Contact updates was revised in 2008. There is probably a more updated version out there if you look for it. Start at the tab furthest to the left and work your way to each tab to the right. Please note the last 4 tabs are woefully out of date. As race day gets closer, the BAA will be putting out maps of the start and finish. I will make sure that you have all of this info when it is available.

Start with the pacing tab. If you are not a spreadsheet weenie, stick to entering your basic data:

- **Estimated start time** – wave 4 is 11:15am, depending on your corral, may take a few minutes to cross the starting line
- **Goal time** – you will need to put in a specific finish time
- **Pacing strategy** – read the guide to decide how you think you will run your race. Faster during the 1st half vs 2nd? Even pace? You can try multiple options and save different spreadsheets.

I have found the spreadsheet helpful in setting my ½ marathon goal. I know that if I hit the 13.1 mark by a certain time I should be able to qualify again barring any potential issues on the back 1/2 – bonking, cramping, etc. I always assume that I am going to slow down on the back ½ in the hills at the very least! You will never really know how race day is going to go, but I like to have an idea of what my mile by mile pace should be if I am feeling good on race day.

The spreadsheet also provides printable wristbands to tell you your pace for every mile. I highly recommend having a pace bracelet if you are working on a finish time goal. My watch did not pick up a satellite in 2014 when I was trying to qualify for the 1st time.

Thankfully, I had bought a plastic pace bracelet at the Expo that weekend. This assumes that I am running an even pace for every mile and trying to finish in 3:50. I was able to keep track of my pace by looking at my watch every mile and comparing it to the total elapsed time on the bracelet. (stop watch was running just not the pace / mile). Technology can be a blessing and a curse and I was thankful to have this simple technology at my disposal!



C. Charity Teams Long Runs – Each year I work with Susan Hurley of Charity Teams to participate in the larger organized long runs. Susan’s organization manages several marathon teams for various charities. She is super organized, unbelievably enthusiastic and a huge supporter of veterans. Although we are not part of her program, she graciously includes us in her SuperHero 17 from Natick to the finish line in February and the Hop 21 run from Hopkinton to Heartbreak hill 3 weeks before race day.

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Hop 21 is usually on a Saturday. We all drive to Boston College and board buses around 6:45am. We are transported out to the start at Hopkinton along with thousands of other runners. Police coverage is decent but the roads are still open and one needs to be mindful of the traffic.

Participating in either the SuperHero 17 or Hop 21 is a great way to get familiar with the course if you are unable to train on it. SuperHero allows you to see the course from mile 9 on through the hills to the finish in Boston. Hop 21 gets you to experience the feeling of the downhill start and get to see what is left in your legs for the uphill battle that starts between mile 16 and 17. Hop 21 ends at the top of Heartbreak Hill at mile 21. Water stops / food is provided by many charity volunteers. If you have friends that would like to help out that day please give me a shout!

Best part of Hop 21 is the team brunch that follows. We usually head a mile or so off course to Aquitaine for lots of hot coffee, eggs, bacon...whatever your stomach desires! Fun way to get to know your teammates on and off the course.

I usually send out confirmations before each event to see if you would like to participate. Charity Teams charges \$20 / person for the bus that the GDMF is happy to cover.

LINKS:

THE BOSTON MARATHON COURSE & ELEVATION MAP

- <http://www.baa.org/races/boston-marathon/event-information/course-map.aspx>

II. TRAINING

D. FUEL & HYDRATION

Once you get into your long runs you really need to pay attention to your fuel intake. Marathon running can take a toll on your system and sometimes you won't realize it until it's too late. In endurance athlete speak, you don't want to "bonk." Scientifically, the bonk occurs when you deplete the [glycogen](#) stores in your [liver](#) and [muscles](#) and the result is sudden fatigue and loss of energy. In plain speak, your legs feel like lead and you become so tired and disoriented that your forward progress basically stops.

SO, to avoid the BONK...eat, drink, eat, drink...and drink some more even when you don't think you need it. You need to practice this, just like you practice your running. Boston Marathon Race Director, David McGilvray recommends carrying ALL your fuel on the day of the race, "Best to rely on yourself, not the race volunteers". There are plenty of liquids – water & gatorade - for hydration on the course but some do decide to carry it anyway.

Supplies on the course

- a. Water
- b. Gatorade
- c. Clif Shot GELS ?
- d. Vaseline – for chafing
- e. First Aid Stations
- f. Porto potties

Water stops: TBD...usually every mile past mile 3. Will confirm.

Porto potties: TBD...will confirm.

Fuel Belts

[Fuel Belts](#) are a great way to carry your fuel and keep your bib secure. Your timing chip is in your bib so you certainly don't want to lose that along the way. There are several brands out there with 2 or 4 bottle carriers, pockets for tablets, attachments for gels. I have 2 different fuel belts that I typically use – 1 for training the other for racing. My training belt has 4 bottles and a pocket for gels. Race belts typically have just toggles to hold your bib number and straps for gels and maybe a small pocket for salt tabs, Advil, etc.



Training Belt



Race Belt

II. TRAINING

In 2014 I used a fuel belt with 2 bottles. Once they were depleted I refilled them at the later water stops. Last 2 years I only used a race belt with a pocket and straps for gels – no liquids (above right). How much you want to carry water wise is up to you. There is plenty of hydration available on the course. Carrying it is only so that you can take it when you want to and you can avoid the chaos of water stops.

I HIGHLY recommend carrying your food fuel – gels / blocks, etc. on you. There may be fuel on the course (again TBD) which is great, but I still recommend carrying your own. **You should also be sure to carry EXTRA fuel.** You may end up dropping something and not realizing it OR you may not want to bend down and pick it up. With crowds of runners around you could get hurt, not to mention you may not be ABLE to pick it up if you drop it around mile 20!

How much to eat / drink?

Each individual is different. Some of us sweat like crazy and lose lots of fluids and SALT. Salt replacement can be important during the 2nd half of the race. **Hydration guidelines** are put out by the BAA and can be found in this link: <http://www.baa.org/races/boston-marathon/participant-information/hydration-information.aspx>

My fuel of choice is a combination of [CLIF shot blocks](#) and [GU](#) gels. Shot blocks are like pieces of gummy candy and GU gels must be ingested with water. The GU therefore requires either a water stop or carrying your own water. I like the Strawberry Banana GU's with no caffeine and the Salted Caramel or Tri Berry that include caffeine.

I try to fuel up at least every 45 minutes if not sooner and alternate the Shot Block and GU's. I take my first fuel around mile 5 or 45 minutes in so my schedule looks something like this:

- :45 – Shot Block (as you enter into Framingham)
- 1:30 – GU with caffeine
- 2:15 – Shot Block
- 3:00 – GU without caffeine (bottom of heartbreak hill if at all possible!)
- 3:30 – Shot Block / GU depends on how I am feeling – GU has more punch.

FYI, some sports watches have fuel options where you can schedule different chimes to go off when it is time to eat. Check out your settings you may be able to set timers as well.

I am also ingesting Gatorade along the way adding to my carb intake. Here is an article that insists on 45g of carbs / hour. Looking at their fuel intake, it seems like a lot, but again everyone is different so practice your fueling on your long runs!

<http://www.runnersworld.com/nutrition-for-runners/how-to-fuel-for-your-first-marathon>

13.1 Refueling Station

The Team GDMF Fan Club meets at Peet's Coffee at the ½ way mark of the marathon. It is located at the corner of Central Street and Crest Drive. Great place to watch, grab coffee and snacks. Friends and family can meet at our house then drive to the course. There is a parking lot at the Wellesley Square Train Station. Usually fills around 10:45am. Other parking is available down the street at Roche Bros.

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Taking items along the course

Folks will hand out fuel items along the course. Kids will hand out oranges / bananas – always great to have REAL food on race day. Some folks have candy – never my favorite – but if you have trained with jolts of sugar, go for it.

Word to the wise, be careful what you take from spectators that seem to be partying hard...never know what is in that solo cup. **Also – that “goo” on the stick handed out by volunteers– is NOT for eating!!** This is how they hand out Vaseline on the course, on tongue depressors. It is for chafing. Apply pre-race to avoid chafing around your waist – fuel belt rubbing, arms, legs and on your feet. Again do this on your long runs to try it out. Vaseline between the toes can help prevent blisters, but too much can make you slide around in your sneakers and cause other foot issues.

OTHER FUEL OPTIONS:

Salt tabs – I may try to experiment w/ these on my next run. My stomach was queasy in 2014 and made it difficult to eat the pretzels. But I think just sucking on them gave me enough salt intake. Here is Runner's World article on salt intake. Offers some other ideas besides pretzels.

<http://www.runnersworld.com/nutrition-runners/pass-salt?page=single>

Nuun – Stomach problems are common during long distance races. Many people find Gatorade too sweet and like the Nuun tablets much better. You would need to carry this with you however, since it is not offered on the course. Check out their website for all of their products:

<http://www.nuun.com/products/nuun-energy>

Coke – Some folks swear by various concoctions made with Coca Cola. Flat Coke, Coke mixed with Gatorade, you name it. The sugar / caffeine combo is a kicker so I can see why it works, you just need an iron stomach to handle it.

Other Gels – PowerBar makes Gels which are more liquid than the GU products. There are ALL kinds of flavors no matter what the brand.

Bottom line, try out various combinations of fuel on your runs, **do NOT add anything new on race day**. You never know how it will affect your stomach and therefore overall performance. Listen to your body during the race. If you feel you need something, take it. Just make sure you have what you need on your person. You don't need to look like a Sherpa...Team GDMF fans can resupply you at 13.1...but it doesn't hurt to have critical items. Practice, practice, practice and enjoy the post run fuel! Always the best incentive for me!

III – RACE WEEKEND

A. COURSE INFORMATION

THE BOSTON MARATHON COURSE

The Boston Marathon is historic and unique. The Boston Marathon is run every Patriot's Day which tends to be the 3rd or 4th Monday in April. Training for Boston can be grueling given the time of year, especially for runners in northern climates. Now that you have put in training miles, you can start thinking about how you want to run your race. This document contains information about the course, a little bit about race day logistics sprinkled in and a final section on pacing, if you have a finish time goal in mind.

- **Temperature:** Temperatures on race day can vary significantly. In 2012 runners saw temps over 90 degrees while 2015's race saw high forties and rain, lots of it. The good news is that was the worst weather since 1970. Let's hope we wait another 30 years to see weather like 2015! 2016 and 2017 were warm, too warm for my liking. There is often a slight wind on the course and you never know if it will be a tail or head wind. Temps from start vary significantly from temps at finish. If there looks to be an on shore breeze for race day, the city can be much colder than the start of the race.
- **Field Size:** Field size is large given the width of the road – 2023 will bring 30,000+ runners to the starting line. Boston is somewhat unique with its one direction course. Runners are bussed / driven to the start in Hopkinton. There is a lot of waiting and most runners are exposed to the elements. The charity runners are usually in wave 4 and you are likely to start somewhere around 11am.
- **No Bag Policy:** Since the tragic events in 2013, the BAA has enforced a no bag policy. There is a bag check at the buses early Monday morning. You can check your bag downtown before you board. For details [CLICK HERE](#). If you are not taking the bus and want items to pick up at the finish (clothes, food, etc) you can give them to me at bib pick up on Saturday. I intend to leave my car in town on Sunday so that Team GDMF has a place to store warm clothes and food post race. You can bring food and beverage to the start and clothing to discard. More on that below.

I am including information based on my personal experience. I have run Boston 7 times, in different weather conditions and various states of preparedness. Please seek other "official" sources for guidance. There are several out there and I list a few in the sections below.

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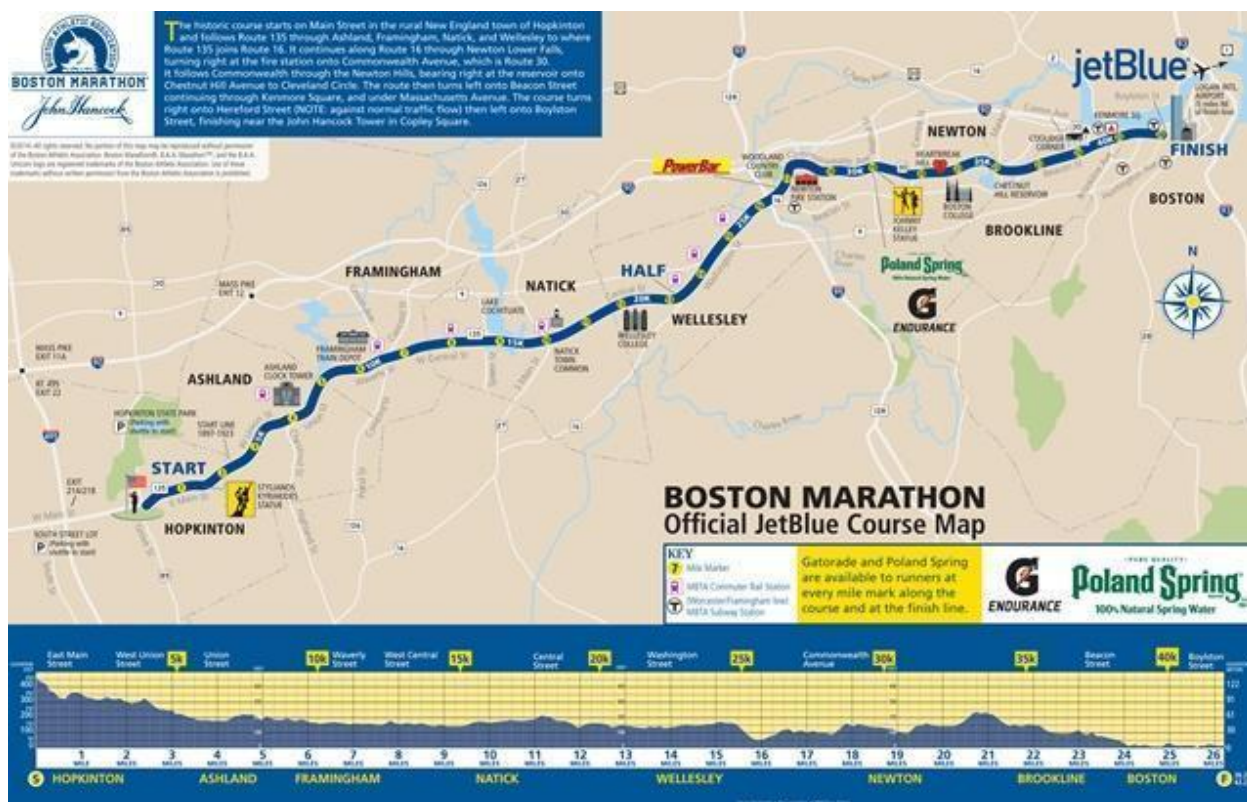
THE BOSTON MARATHON COURSE

The course itself is challenging in many ways:

- **The Start:** runners must be bussed / driven to the start out in Hopkinton, MA several hours before the gun goes off. Preparing to stay warm and dry at the start is critical as most runners are outside with limited tent space to keep clear of the elements. Bring plenty of throw away clothing – trucks are located on site to donate your discarded items to charity. Trash bags are helpful to sit on the ground and keep you dry as well as wearing to stay warm. Food and beverages are available, but you should bring your own stash to make sure you get the items you need / want.
- **First 9 miles:** The roads in Hopkinton and subsequently in Ashland are rural and narrow. With 30,000 runners on the course getting a stride is not easy. These first miles are also significantly downhill. To the runners it may feel rolling up and down, however, elevation is decreasing. With the adrenaline rush at the beginning of the race it is easy to go out too fast with the help of the downward slope. This is often the downfall of well-prepared / seasoned runners. The pounding downhill fries the quads and builds up lactic acid.
- **Middle course Natick – Wellesley:** Elevation fluctuates mildly from miles 9 to 15. Crowds may thin in lake region around mile 9 before Natick center and again leaving town but the Wellesley College scream tunnel will push you through the 13.1 mark in downtown Wellesley. Leaving Wellesley there is a significant downhill at mile 15.5. This is where your months of training will need to kick in.
- **The Hills Wellesley to Heartbreak:** If you feel good at mile 16 you will be in good shape. This is usually where runners that have gone out too fast break down. You are starting the succession of 4 hills that cover 5 miles.
 - The first hill starts as you are crossing the highway, route 128 and passing by Newton Wellesley Hospital. This hill is long and gradual.
 - The real fun begins when you take a hard right onto Commonwealth Avenue just after the 17.5 mile mark at the Newton Firehouse. Now you will be looking at 3 hills that culminate in the renowned “Heartbreak Hill.” The 1st hill is a steep ascent but thankfully it is somewhat short. You will level off, keep a steady pace, fuel up and prepare for hill #2.
 - Mile 19.3 sets off another short, steep incline. Fuel is key in the hills to keep the lactic acid down and the quads from seizing up! Try to keep the strides long and stretched after the ascent to prepare for Heartbreak.
 - Heartbreak starts at mile 20.5. There will be lots of walkers yet TONS of fans cheering you on this last ½ mile climb! You clear Heartbreak at mile 21 at Boston College. Here you start your descent towards sea level. Again, can be tough on quads and now calves. Fuel, fuel, fuel! However, be wary of taking anything to eat/drink from the college students.
- **The Finish:** Mile 24 to 25 is flat but boy is it unattractive. Rows of 5 story apartment buildings, nothing new to look at. You feel like you should be done...but not yet! Mile 25 is your LAST hill...looks like a blip on the elevation chart but it certainly won't feel that way. It is actually a bridge over the Mass Pike highway that brings you into Kenmore Square near Fenway Park. Tough on the legs but good news is you are a mile from the finish! The final stretch is when you

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take the right on Hereford, left onto Boylston. At that left you will see the finish line in all its glory! Downhill slightly it will feel great!



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B. RACE DAY TRANSPORTATION & BAGGAGE

See separate PowerPoint Presentation. Link to last year's transportation document is on weekly notes.

C. SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT BOSTON

- There are many things that make this such a special race. The fans are amazing – you never feel alone on the course. The runners are elite – 80% of the runners are qualified runners and demand is so high for a Boston bib that many qualified runners get shut out each year. 20% of the 30,000+ field are charity runners. Boston marathon charities raised \$34.2million in 2017. I will highlight a few charity teams to be on the lookout for on the course:
- [Team Hoyt](#) – Rick and Dick Hoyt were a competitive duo in the Boston running and triathlon communities for decades. Rick has been bound to a wheel chair his entire life. Dick pushed Rick in over 1,000 events including the Boston Marathon and Hawaiian Ironman. Dick and Rick actually had to qualify in order for the BAA to let him run this first time. Their PR is a 2:40! Their last Boston was to be in 2013 but the bombings kept them from finishing. Their last Boston together was in 2014. Rick continued to compete with another Team Hoyt member as his “legs”. Dick died a Boston hero in 2021 and Rick retired from racing. But Team Hoyt continues on with several duos and individual runners on their charity team. Be on the lookout for them on the course. They are an unbelievable inspiration!
- [Children's Hospital](#) - “Miles for Miracles” has been a strong team at Boston for years. They field almost 200 runners and many run with a “patient partner.” As a charity runner you are paired up with a patient at Children's hospital and you get to know them and their family throughout the training season. Many of my friends have been running for patient partners for years many going on 10+. The kids love the race and they are all at mile 25 on the left-hand side of Kenmore Square. Some are in wheel chairs but if you can get over there to give them a shout and a high five, they will feel great and so will you!
- **Dana Farber** – Dana Farber is world renowned for its work to treat and end cancer. So many folks are touched by this horrific disease that Dana fields and enormous marathon team of hundreds of runners. My friend [Carol Chaoui](#) is running for Dana Farber as a fundraiser AND a patient. Carol has 2 stage four cancers yet runs every week, organizes a group of women to run on Fridays – her themed runs are fun and well known around town, while raising 4 kids. She is truly Wonder Woman and will be wearing her outfit on race day. Please give Carol a shout if you see her on the course. She is a former BAA elite runner and a true competitor. Her running keeps her going. She is the epitome of Boston Strong.
- [MR8](#) – Team MR8 was formed 3 marathons ago in memory of 8 year old Martin Richard who was killed in the 2013 Boston Bombings. His family has created a foundation in his name to support education, athletics and community. So many qualified runners have stepped up to run for MR8 this year that they outnumber the charity bibs.
- The running community's support for all of these organizations is truly amazing. The Glen Doherty Memorial Foundation is fortunate to be a part of this special event!

FUN BOSTON FACTS

- **Johnny Kelley** - Johnny Kelley was a Boston icon. He ran Boston 61 times. He won in 1935 and 1945 and ran his last Boston at the age of 84. Unbelievable! There is a statue dedicated to him in

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the Newton Hills – 2 versions of him, one as his younger competitive self and the other as the older die-hard finisher. He often gets decorated during marathon season.

- [Heartbreak Hill](#) – Heartbreak Hill is actually a series of Hills starting at Mile 17 and culminating at mile 21. There are 3 hills in all in this stretch that roll up and down and the final hill is the steepest and the one that is known as Heartbreak. While not overwhelming when you look at them on an elevation map, they are really tough on the quads due to their placement in the race. The downhill at the start of the course builds up the lactic acid if you start out too fast. By the time you hit the turn onto the hills at the Newton fire station, that initial speed can catch up to you fast!. You are also climbing gradually from mile 16 to 17 so some consider this first bump over the Route 128 highway the first of 4 hills.
- **Right on Hereford, Left on Boylston** – This is the best part of the race. You are in Boston's historic Back Bay. The brownstones are beautiful. The streets are lined with people. It is a little bit of an incline up Hereford Street, but that turn onto Boylston is spectacular! Look to your right and the old fire house will have out the ladder truck and its flag. Look to the left down to the finish. Enjoy every moment! It is amazing!
- **100,000 Daffodils** – Another thing to notice, which may not be easy due to the crowds, is the thousands of daffodils that line all 26.2 miles of the course. After the 2013 tragic events, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society along with other gardening groups organized the planting of 100,000 daffodil bulbs that fall along the course. The timing is perfect. They all seem to be in bloom on Marathon Monday. They are a ray of hope for all to enjoy.