



## 6 WEEKS TO GO

**With about six weeks to go to race day now is the right time to consider some sound training principles so you can maximise the benefits from your training. Below are a few tried and tested ones which you should use to build on what you have already been doing.**

- Re-visit your training programme to ensure it is progressive and ensure you have built in quality rest days. It is important that you start slowly and build from a good base to avoid injury.
- 'Listen to your body' - never run/walk through an injury or train hard when you have flu or chest infections – it will only get worse. A couple of easy sessions, extra stretching and a good sports massage will limit long term injury or recurring illness. You should boost the bodies' immunity and recovery with good quality nutrition and fluids. A good diet when you are training is very important.
- Most sports injuries are caused through repetitive and over use of the limbs and so it is likely to have been caused over a number of weeks and possibly months. Pay attention to those niggles and do not try to run them off. If in doubt seek medical advice.
- Vary your training activities and improve your overall pace. You can do this with runs/walk which are long and steady, easy and short, quick and tough as well as hills and intervals work. Include sessions in your training programme which strengthen the core sections of the body because the more you exercise, the more you will find you are dependent on stronger core muscles and the less likely you will be injured. Please ask if you want some examples of these exercises – pilates is good for this.
- Stretching is very important – not only before you go out for a run/walk but include quality stretch sessions in your programme working on all muscle areas. If you can spend at least 15mins per session at least 3 times per week this will prove beneficial in the long term.
- Remember to strengthen and then use your arms - they help you to run/walk faster and increase your speed if you use them efficiently and effectively. Work on the upper body as well as the legs. It is surprising how much you use your elbows, especially when getting tired. For Nordic Walkers spend some time perfecting your style so your walking gets maximum benefit from the use of your poles.
- Make sure you eat good quality carbohydrates, proteins and essential fats and quality sleep is also essential if you are training hard – remember you recover and repair your muscles optimally between 10pm and 2am.
- Stick to your training programme but now is the time to experiment with your food and drink intake – what food makes you feel fitter; how much should I eat and when before a training session; what best aids my recovery. **DO NOT EXPERIMENT ON RACE DAY.**