



## David Fairlamb THE FIT FACTOR

*Preparation is the  
key to success  
and enjoyment*

Don't miss David's tips every  
Saturday in your Journal

**T**HE iconic Great North Run is now in its 38th year and is just over one week away.

From the very beginning this event has been a celebration of what makes the North East great; thousands of supporters lining the course, hundreds of volunteers helping you along the way and runners from all over the world who embody dedication and determination, in completing the 13.1 miles from Newcastle to South Shield's.

Despite the impressive elite field, the

heart of the Great North Run has always been the fun-runners and those raising thousands for charities.

So what final plans should you be making for the big day?

- If you are behind on your training and think you can cram lots of miles in the final few days, forget it. You will end up exhausted and aching before you even start.

- The long mileage should already be done, you could complete a seven or eight-mile run

tomorrow then early next week complete a four or five-mile run at a slightly quicker pace than your race speed. I would also advise a walk and a light jog over the final few days leading into Sunday. This should allow your body to be fully charged and fresh for the run.

- There is a world of difference going in to the race day knowing the work has been done, allowing you to enjoy the day rather than worrying unnecessarily whether you can even complete the distance.

- For the final five to six days, I wouldn't change your diet too much. You know your body best, therefore stick with the food that has worked well during your training runs. If anything, you could add some slow release carbohydrates into your diet such as sweet potatoes or brown rice in the final week. Changing your diet dramatically in the final days could make you feel bloated and work in reverse.

- It's going to be a hugely emotional day for many people, especially those who are running for the charity and indeed those who will complete the run for the first time. Being sensible and preparing correctly will give you the best opportunity to enjoy the run and take in the amazing atmosphere.

- Avoid buying any new kit and wearing it for the first time next Sunday. If it's not tried and tested don't wear it, stick with what you know works, especially regarding trainers and socks.

- If you have only been training in the evening, I would suggest you try a run in the morning before next weekend. This will give you a chance to practise your routine, as if it is event day.

- Make sure you keep hydrated leading up to the big day. If you are taking the run seriously and of course want to feel as good as possible on the run, try to avoid drinking alcohol.

In general, be sensible and avoid doing anything out of the ordinary.



**> Mighty Mo Farah is going for his fifth win in a row**

### THE RUNDOWN . .

It takes almost two weeks to build the finish line and one week to take it all down again.

Mo Farah will be attempting a fifth win in a row.

The Great North Run is a truly international affair with 178 countries represented on the start line in 2016.

The first IAAF World Half Marathon

Championships was incorporated in the 1992 event.

The millionth finisher crossed the line in 2014.

The average age of Great North Runners this year is 39.

Medals take 243kilos of metal to produce.

The course record is 58:56 set by Martin Mathathi in 2011.