

Conquer Those Satara Hills!

Some Important pointers to get you to the Finish in good shape!

Take some time to consider and implement the following things you can do to run well on our beautiful but demanding course, through those lush green hills, both during training and the actual event.

Be Prepared:

This might sound obvious, but if you are going to run a hilly course like the Satara Hill Half Marathon, you need to train on hills. Actually any marathon / half marathon training should always include some hill work.

You must do this hill work to get your heart rate up and exercise some under-utilized muscles. Running successfully up a long hill is also a great confidence booster. If you can do this regularly, without over-training, you will be mentally well prepared to tackle the Satara Hill Half Marathon.

Uphill:

Don't push too hard on the hills, because you will expend a lot of energy you are going to need later on. Especially in the first 7 kms of the course, which is a continuous uphill climb, you climb approx 370 meters in the first 7kms.

It's much better to relax, slow down and try and maintain your normal running form (stride, posture) as much as possible. Your stride will be shorter of course, and you'll need to lift your knees instead of pushing hard from the back of your legs. Ideally you will be putting out the same, or just slightly more, effort than running on the flat.

This needs practice, which is why you include regular hill training in your training program.

During the race don't try to keep up with others, who seem to 'storm' up every hill. They could easily be running into oxygen debt, and if you stick to your hill training routine you will soon catch up with them.

And don't forget to **"WALK A LOT"**!

Including frequent walks in your uphill run, is the smartest way to stay in control of this beast.

This is just a more polite way of saying that it's rather a very STUPID THING [for most runners at any rate] to try and run up all the way.

Every minute that you go too fast or run uphill will slow you down by at least 3 minutes in the second half downhill section anyways!

Even seasoned runners and elites often incorporate such breaks in their strategy on our route, except maybe the African gazelles who want to finish on the podium!!!

Downhill:

Running downhill can cause as much pain as going up. If your legs are tired you will definitely feel this (especially in the quadriceps muscles, in the front of your thighs) as you descend. If the hill is steep and you have to hold yourself back it gets even worse.

During your training you should focus on downhill running as well as the uphill parts.

Again, the more you have pushed yourself in the Uphill part earlier, the more punishment you'll get on your way down.

Other Training:

The reason we have a harder time running the hills is that we use different muscle groups.

The quadriceps especially will suffer if you haven't trained properly.

Some things you can do to strengthen your quads are:

- Weight training – leg curls are good. Knee bends with free weights will work also. (As a general note, weight training is a great way to complement your running).
- Cycling – this is an excellent cross training sport. Nothing gives your quads a better workout than pumping those pedals up a steep hill.
- Hill Repeats – for the truly masochistic, there's always the hill repeat workout. Yes, you run up a hill, then go back down and do it again! Repeat several times!

Walking breaks:

If you find yourself struggling to get up to the top of a hill, then walk! You won't be going much slower than you would running, and you'll be in much better shape for tackling the downhill.

Know the Course:

It's a very good idea to familiarize yourself with the course. Find out where the hills are near you, so you will be mentally prepared at least.

Take a look here for the details of the course
[<http://shhm.co.in/about/race-info/route-details>]

Summary

- Include regular hill work in your Half Marathon Training program
- Don't push too hard up hills and run out of energy later
- Slow down and try to maintain your running form and level of effort
- Focus on downhill running as well during your training
- Do cross training exercises like cycling and weights
- Choose to walk up a hill if necessary, you will recover the time later
- Know where the hills are on your half marathon route!

COMMON MISTAKES [TO AVOID!]

NOT RESPECTING THE IMPORTANCE OF A TAPER WEEK.

The week before a race is typically a week reserved for tapering—a time when training time decreases and rest time increases; ideal for peak race performance.

NOT DOING ENOUGH VARIETY OF HILL TRAINING.

You may practice running short sprints up the incline for 30 or 40 seconds at a time, but it is also important to do *longer* hill repeats that more closely mimic what you are going to experience along the course.

Try to drive down to Satara on a Sunday, and join one of the 16 Official Sunday Long Runs, which are very well organized and supported by the organisers every weekend, right up to Race Day.

When training make sure you look at the course and elevation maps and tailor your training to them as much as possible.

DOING TOO MUCH ON THE DAY PRIOR TO THE RACE.

Going for a run the day before the race, then standing in line to pick up your bib and finally dancing at the pasta party is not exactly a good idea.

Try to pick up your Bib, and head back to your room as quickly as possible to put your feet up, before coming down later in the

evening for your early dinner / pasta. If you are going to take a route tour, try and opt for the BUS TOURS arranged for you, rather than driving the course yourself.

NOT PREPARING YOURSELF MENTALLY FOR THE RACE.

The final mistake and probably the biggest mistake you can do is to not mentally prepare yourself for the race.

You should think about the course and give the difficulty of the course the respect it deserves. Of course it is important to pump yourself up mentally into feeling ready and prepared, but it is also key to understand that not every race is going to feel great and it is okay to not finish every race the way you intended.

The most important thing is to know you gave it the best shot you could at the time and there is always room for improvement at future races. Keep training and keep smiling; there might be a photographer right around the corner just waiting to take your picture.