

Naomi's London Marathon Training Blog

Week Fourteen 1.4.13

The week started well, with a quick 8 mile run on Tuesday, around Battersea Park. My quad and hip flexors were feeling very tight though and the last two miles were very uncomfortable.

Following the advice of "The Butcher", I've started having ice baths after training, to help my body recover quicker. Ice baths are thought to have a positive effect on the body and help sore and tired muscles to heal, speeding up the recovery time and enabling a faster return to training. When engaging in vigorous activity, tiny tears will begin to develop in the muscles fibres, resulting in muscle soreness around 24 to 48 hours after the exercise. An ice bath helps these tears to heal quicker and also causes the blood vessels to constrict and flush out the lactic acid that has built up.

Unfortunately, despite an ice bath after Tuesday's run, my muscles were just too tight to run comfortably on Wednesday. I was especially annoyed as I had set the alarm early for a session in the gym! But after 5 minutes of plodding on the treadmill, it was clear that I was going to do myself more harm than good at this late stage in the training, so I switched to the bike and cross trainer instead, which has much less impact on the muscles.

After two days of stretching, foam rolling and more ice baths, by Friday I was feeling better and tackled my longest run in this training plan – 21 miles.

After my usual breakfast of chocolate spread on toast and cereal, I set off along the Thames, to Barnes Bridge. All was going well in the early stages, the pace felt easy and I was relaxed, enjoying the scenery. However, at 13 miles I started suffering from cramp in my feet. The next 8 miles were very tough, and I could not shift the cramp for any length of time, meaning my stride was often interrupted while I tried to release the muscles. On reflection, I don't think I took on enough water, so this is something I'll need to watch for on marathon day. I finished the run in 3 hours and 46 minutes, which should still have me on track to finish the marathon in under four and a half hours.

It's good to know that I've completed the difficult training now. The next three weeks are the taper period, where the mileage drops to ensure I reach the start of the marathon with fresh legs.

Total weekly mileage: 37 miles

Total mileage: 476