

READY TO FULFIL YOUR DREAM?

AFTER SIX TOUGH WEEKS IT'S TIME TO SIT BACK, RELAX AND GET READY TO ENJOY THE BUZZ OF RACE DAY, WRITES **LIZ COSTIGAN**



With just three days to go before our race in the park, I really hope you are all feeling fit, strong and ready to kill it on Sunday morning. Before I go into some dos and don'ts for the coming days, I would like you all to take some time to look back on how far you've come.

No matter what happens on Sunday, you had a dream of running, you've worked hard to prepare yourself for it and now it's time for everything to fall into place and to reap the benefits. Setting yourself a goal like running a 10k is no mean feat. The weather has been against us over the past six weeks but we have made it and, thankfully, the forecast for Sunday is good. It's time to sit back, relax and get ready for your big day with some of my handy tips.

STICK WITH THE TAPER

As I said last week, cutting back on training this week is massively important and will have a huge impact on your run on Sunday. Follow the programme and rest tomorrow and Saturday. Your body needs it!

PHANTOM PAINS

They will haunt you but do not panic, it's not an injury! Now is the time for your muscles to relax and in doing so they are going to twinge and ache. Phantom pains are totally normal and tend to be your nerves kicking in. Stay off your feet, at this late stage there's not much you can do to improve your performance, but there's a lot you can do to mess it up. So trust the taper, ignore the phantoms and rest.

H2O & FUEL

Keep well hydrated in the days before the run,

the same goes for food. Make sure you are eating well over the next few days; your body needs energy from food to run.

Stick to what you have been doing during your training sessions, change nothing! If at all possible, stay away from alcohol between now and Sunday. It dehydrates the body and will affect both your sleep pattern and performance.

DRESS REHEARSAL

Think about what you are wearing and bringing with you before Sunday morning. No matter how tempted you might be, don't buy new gear for the day.

Wear only clothes and trainers that you have tried and tested. You don't want any surprises like chafing or blisters on the day. The same goes for your accessories. Make sure you are comfortable with what you are running in and with.

RECHARGE

Remember to recharge your watch and iPod or whatever gadgets you will use on the day.

PLAYLIST

Spend time on your playlist if you run with music. Inspirational speeches and songs can really boost you and carry you through.

KEEP YOUR FEET FAB

Be aware of what you wear on your feet today and over the coming days. Stay comfortable and be kind to your feet. Bathe them in warm water with Epsom salts to relax and detox.

SLEEP

Get to bed early, you might be excited and not sleep a lot on Saturday night so get those zzz's in tonight and tomorrow night.

BE PREPARED

Get everything ready in advance. Here's a helpful checklist:

- Race number
- Gear: Hat or visor, runners, short or long-sleeve top, sports bra, shorts/leggings, socks.
- Vaseline or other anti-chafing cream
- Sunscreen/Lip balm — you never know!
- Safety pins
- Sunglasses
- Plasters
- Running belt if you run with one
- Old tracksuit top
- Water bottle
- Watch or GPS
- Energy bar/banana

BE INSPIRED

I love to watch inspirational movies or documentaries the night before I run. It really helps me focus on why I am doing this and on how important it is for me. Seeing others living their dreams helps to erase any self-doubt I might be feeling.

Visualise the end goal, the finish line, and let that push you through. Tell yourself you can do it and you will, even if at times you don't believe it.

Focus on doing your very best and enjoying the experience. Running is a privilege, and remember you always have three choices during a race; you can give up, give in or give it all you've got! It's entirely up to you.

Best of luck everyone, see you on Sunday!

Enter the March 9 FIT Phoenix Park 5k/10k at www.fitmagazine.ie/events

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