

# **Larking Gowen City of Norwich Half Marathon 2011**

## **Frequently Asked Questions v6**

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### **About the organisers**

#### **Q: Who organises this race?**

*A: This race is organised and staged by the members and friends of City of Norwich AC. Most of the work behind the scenes in the weeks and months leading up to race day is undertaken by a race committee led by Race Director Hugh McGill.*

*All of the race committee have full-time day jobs to attend to and give their time to this race voluntarily. This means that all enquires are dealt with outside of normal office hours and on some occasions it may take a day or two for us to get back to you with answers to any questions you may have.*

*As we approach race day, club members, friends and other volunteers step forward to make up 3,000 race packs, to deliver 1,500 leaflets by hand to advise local residents and businesses of the road closures in place on race day and - very importantly - to assemble the finishers' goody bags ready for race day itself.*

*When the weekend of the race arrives, around 200 members and friends of City of Norwich AC are on hand to set up the race, welcome around 5,000 runners, supporters and spectators to the Norfolk Showground and then pack away everything afterwards.*

*Without the unpaid efforts of our club members and friends, there would be no City of Norwich Half Marathon for everyone to enjoy. Please contact [manpower@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](mailto:manpower@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com) if you would like to give us a hand on race day - thank you.*

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### **The race**

#### **Q: Why is this race called the City of Norwich Half Marathon when it's obvious that it doesn't go anywhere near the centre of Norwich?**

*A: When this race first got going in 1985, it was based in Norwich city centre and in the early years this was the perfect place to hold it. However, with the advent of Sunday trading and a growth in the popularity of this race it soon became evident that Norwich city centre did not have the infrastructure to cope with such an event. And so we decided to move to the Norfolk Showground in 1993 and it's been there ever since.*

#### **Q: I've heard that it's a two-lap course. Why is that?**

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*A: A two-lap course offers several advantages to the race. It causes much less disruption to other road users and the general public; it's easier to manage from our point of view - for instance, we need fewer road closures, fewer signs, fewer marshals, fewer first aid stations etc - and a two-lap course means that we can utilise two of the drinks stations twice rather than only the once as would be the case if it were just a single-lap course.*

*And your family and friends can also cheer you on at the half-way point as you run through the Showground on the start your second lap!*

### **Q: Where does the course go? Not just round and round the Showground, surely?**

*A: The Start and Finish are both located within the Showground and the race follows a two-lap course through the villages and parishes of Easton, Honingham, Colton, Marlingford and the campus of Easton College. The runners pass through the Showground at the end of their first lap and - apart from a very short stretch of grass within the Showground - the race takes place entirely on metalled roads. The course will be clearly marked at every mile and also at half-way.*

*There will be digital clocks showing the official (gun) time on the lead vehicle, at half-way and at the Finish. Please visit the Race Day Info page of our race website at [www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com/race-information.asp](http://www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com/race-information.asp) for more details.*

### **Q: Where can I view a video of the race route?**

*A: Please click on this link [www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7\\_jC\\_Lrijs&NR=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7_jC_Lrijs&NR=1) to take a ride round the course with Granville Courtnell. Granville was Race Director of the City of Norwich Half Marathon for many years and is now a member of City of Norwich AC's race committee.*

### **Q: Are the roads going to be closed to through traffic during the race?**

*A: Yes, they are - but you will still need to be vigilant while running as residents and those wishing to visit local businesses and the Easton College campus are entitled to vehicular access at all times during the road closures..*

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## **Entering the race**

### **Q: Is there a minimum age for this race?**

*A: Yes, you must be at least 17 years old on 27 November 2011 to take part. This age limit is set by UK Athletics who are our governing body and providers of our road race licence.*

### **Q: Where can I get hold of a paper entry form?**

*A: Sorry, but we don't do paper entry forms any more; this race is online entry only. Please visit the "How to Enter" page at [www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](http://www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com)*

### **Q: Not everyone has access to a computer or wants to shop online, so why don't you accept postal entry forms as well? My own club still accepts postal entry forms for our races so why can't you?**

*A: We expect to sell around 3,000 entries for this race and an online registration system provides us with a very efficient method of processing those entries. It means we don't have to mess about with entry forms we can't read, missing dates of birth, cheques made out to the wrong payee, cheques made out for the wrong amount, cheques that bounce, envelopes with no stamps that are waiting to be collected at the local sorting office, etc, etc.*

*And please remember that this event is organised by a band of volunteers in their spare time and online entry is therefore the way to go these days. So if you don't have a computer yourself, please help us by asking someone who does to let you use theirs.*

### **Q: How will I be able to enter this race after the Runner's World online entry system has closed?**

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*A: Sorry, but you won't be able to. When the online entry system closes (ie when the entry limit of 3,000 is reached or at midnight on Saturday 19 November, whichever is sooner) then that's that.*

*And please note that we do not accept entries on the day.*

**Q: I've tried several times to enter online but my computer just won't let me. I'm desperate to do this race so please can you make an exception and allow me to enter by post?**

*A: One or two people seem to have this problem every year but we've found that it's usually something to do with their computer rather than the Runner's World online entry system.*

*If you are trying to enter at work then it may be that your employer's IT policy prohibits you from this kind of activity so please try to enter from another computer instead - perhaps at home or at a friend's house.*

**Q: I think I've entered this race but I can't find my confirmation email from Runner's World anywhere - what should I do please?**

*A: First of all, please check your spam folder to see if it's there. If it's not, then please send an email to [info@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](mailto:info@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com) stating your name and date of birth and the date when you think you entered. We'll check our database and then get back to you.*

**Q: If you sell out, will I be able to join your waiting list please?**

*A: Sorry but no - we don't operate a waiting list.*

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### **Time limit**

**Q: I'm not a particularly fast runner - is there a time limit?**

*A: Yes there is - it's 90 minutes at half-way. Last year, too many runners exceeded the three-hour time limit by a considerable margin and we had to wait ages for them to finish before we could start to dismantle the course. So this year we are introducing a cut-off time at the half-way point and anyone who hasn't reached half-way by the time the official race clock shows 90 minutes will be directed to retire and not allowed to continue. This is to ensure that we can get everything packed away in the remaining daylight and to allow local roads to be re-opened to through traffic as promptly as possible.*

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### **Race packs**

**Q: I've just entered this race - when do you think I will receive my race pack?**

*A: The first race packs were posted on 14 October and after that we are posting in weekly batches.*

**Q: I've mislaid my race pack. How do I get a replacement race number and timing tag?**

*A: Please go to the Help Desk in the Race HQ by 10am on race day with some photo ID and £2 in cash and we will issue you with a replacement pack. It would be good if you could advise us at [info@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](mailto:info@cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com) in advance so we can have a replacement ready and waiting for you. Please visit [www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](http://www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com) for all the race day information in the meantime.*

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### **Withdrawal**

**Q: I entered this race but now find that I can't do it after all - may I have a refund please?**

*A: Sorry, but no - the Race Rules state that we don't give refunds.*

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**Q: I've got my race pack but now find that I can't do the race after all - do I need to inform anyone that I won't be running?**

*A: No, that's not necessary but thanks for asking. And please send your timing tag back; it's in a pre-paid envelope in your race pack.*

**Q: I won't be able to do the race myself but my friend says he's now interested so will it be alright if I give him my race number and timing tag so he can run in my place?**

*A: Certainly not! The transferring of race numbers is strictly forbidden by the Race Rules. Your race number & timing tag were issued to you on the basis of the details you provided to us when you entered and must not be given to anyone else. Imagine the anguish and grief that would ensue if your friend had a serious accident or worse during the race and we had to break some terrible news to the wrong next of kin.*

**Q: Ok, so you don't want my friend to run wearing my race number and tag - fair enough. But if I contact you before the race and give you all his details, then surely you can just update your database and everything will be fine?**

*A: Sorry, but it's not as simple as that. We simply don't have the time or resources to deal with lots of additional bits of administration in the weeks leading up to the race. So we have a "no refunds and no substitutions" policy that's written into the Race Rules and we bring these Rules to the attention of everyone during the entry process. And we're no different to the vast majority of other road races who have operated the same policy for many years.*

**Q: I can't run the race after all. May I transfer my place to next year's race please?**

*A: Sorry, but no. We don't transfer places between races.*

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### **Race charity**

**Q: How do I get hold of a sponsorship form for this year's official race charity?**

*A: A sponsorship form for Macmillan Cancer Support is included in every race pack and you can also download a copy from the Race Charity page at [www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com](http://www.cityofnorwichhalfmarathon.com)*

**Q: Am I obliged to raise money for this year's official race charity?**

*A: No you're not. But while Macmillan Cancer Support will be delighted if you do decide to raise money for them, if you prefer to raise money for another worthy cause then that's fine by us. And if you don't want to raise money for anyone at all, then that's fine by us as well.*

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### **Getting there on race day**

**Q: What's the best route to take if I want to avoid the queues for the car parks?**

*A: You should try to avoid the A1074 Dereham Road out of Norwich and the Longwater interchange in particular as it usually gets very busy both before and after the race. Our advice is to take the A47 to the Ringland roundabout on the western outskirts of Easton (where the dual carriageway become single carriageway) and then follow the yellow car park signs from there.*

*And please travel early; the car parks will open at 8am on race day and you should aim to be parked and in the Showground by 10am at the very latest. The race will start promptly at 11am*

**Q: If I'm being dropped off, where should my driver aim for?**

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*A: The best place to get dropped off is at the Costessey Park & Ride from where a pedestrian route to the Start will be signposted.*

**Q: I'll have a disabled passenger with me, where should I aim for?**

*A: Parking for blue badge holders will be available within the main Showground car park. Please approach from the A47 Ringland roundabout and then through the village of Easton.*

**Q: If I'm coming to Norwich by train, what's the best way of getting from the station to the Norfolk Showground?**

*A: The local bus service is infrequent on race day so a taxi is probably your best bet. A typical one-way taxi ride from the train station to the Showground will probably cost around £12 and you should allow 25 minutes for your journey. Ask your driver to drop you at the Costessey Park & Ride from where a pedestrian route to the start will be signposted.*

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### **iPods, MP3 players and similar devices**

**Q: Are you really going to disqualify anyone you see wearing headphones during this race?**

*A: Yes we are! As race organisers we take the associated duty of care to our customers very seriously. There are several thousands of people involved in or affected by this event and we simply can't have people wearing headphones and drifting off into a world of their own when there are dozens of other runners around them or a car coming up behind them. So please don't wear headphones.*

**Q: But if the roads are closed during the race, then what's the problem with wearing headphones? There won't be any traffic around, surely?**

*A: Yes there will! While the road closure order will prohibit "through traffic" from driving along the course, those who live and work on the race route will have a legitimate right to vehicular access to their properties at all times during the race. So we need you to be vigilant throughout the race for your own safety and that of others. And we also want you to hear the instructions of the race marshals and police officers who will be on duty on race day .....*

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### **Facilities at the Norfolk Showground**

**Q: I'm bringing my family with me to watch while I'm running. What facilities will there be for them at the Norfolk Showground?**

*A: The Norfolk Showground is the traditional home of the Royal Norfolk Show, one of the largest agricultural shows in the country. As such it has extensive permanent facilities which we will have at our disposal on race day. There's a large indoor area with loads of room if the weather's a bit grotty, plenty of toilets and lots of refreshments on sale - teas, coffees, burgers, hot dogs, crepes, freshly made cakes, a beer tent and also the Sportlink shop offering a wide range of Saucony shoes and running-related products.*

*And as this is a two-lap race, the race route passes through the Showground between the six and seven mile marks and so provides great opportunities for spectators to cheer on the runners as they complete their first lap and set off on their second circuit.*

*The leading runners are expected to reach half-way just after 11.30am and from then on there will be a pretty constant stream of runners through the Showground until the back markers complete the course at about 2pm.*

*And please make some time to visit the Macmillan Cancer Support crew - they'll be delighted to meet you.*

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### **T-shirts**

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**Q: I ordered one of those commemorative t-shirts when I entered this race - when do I get to collect it please?**

*A: You can pick it up on race day, preferably before the start of the race please. We will be open from 8am; please show your race number when collecting.*

**Q: I didn't order a commemorative t-shirt when I entered - how do I go about getting one now please?**

*A: We should have a limited stock of this year's t-shirts available for purchase from 8am on race day (price £10) but you'll need to be quick as they will be sold on a "first come, first served" basis.*

*And we'll also be selling off any remaining stock of previous year's t-shirts at clearance prices on race day.*

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### **Bad weather**

**Q: If the weather's bad on race day, how can I check if the race is going ahead before I set off?**

*A: We got caught out last year by some unexpected snow & ice and were forced to postpone, So we've added a "weather line" this year - please call 07840 866036 to listen to a recorded message or check out the race website. We'll be updating both of these as we approach race day.*

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### **Departure**

**Q: What are you doing this year about the queues to get out of the car parks?**

*A: With lots of people trying to leave the Showground car parks at the same time, some delays are inevitable. Please be patient and follow the directions of EventGuard staff as you depart - they are fully accredited to carry out traffic management duties and regularly engaged to manage the Showground car parks at other events. They will get you on your way as quickly as they can.*

*You can help yourself by planning a route home which avoids the Longwater interchange if at all possible:*

- *When leaving the Showground car park, please turn left and drive through the village of Easton to join the A47 at the Ringland roundabout.*
- *When leaving the Costessey Park & Ride car park, at peak times EventGuard staff will direct all vehicles to turn left and follow a signed route through the village of Bawburgh to the A47 Southern bypass.*