

Brighton Marathon - 18th April 2010

2010 saw the inaugural run of the Brighton Marathon. This is now apparently deemed the second largest after London, and it comes highly recommended. It is a generally flat course with only a couple of steady inclines. The race starts in Preston Park, about 1.5 miles from the City Centre. There are bands etc and other entertainment and plenty of toilets. The first 6 miles is right through the centre, with excellent support (as good as London). As you leave Brighton at around the 6 mile mark, there are a couple of steady inclines and this part of the course is quite exposed as is on the cliff top. When I did it, it was not windy, which was a result. However it was very hot. As you return back into the centre of Brighton on around the 12 mile mark the support really picks up and the streets are literally solid with people cheering you on. From here to around 18 miles is all flat city centre or seafront. This leads you out towards the West side of the city where you go through an industrial estate, which is a bit on the tough side but there are still pockets of support to help you through. At the 20 mile point a local school had built a wooden wall for the runners to run through. This was supposed to symbolise 'hitting the wall'. For most of us though, we don't need a wooden wall to remind us what 'hitting the wall' is. It was quite entertaining to see it though! The last 6.2 is all seafront with excellent support. At the finish, once you have collected your medal and goody bag etc, there is a long walk past a load of marquees before you can exit the finishing area. This feels like miles once you have just run a marathon!

The weekend was excellent though, with plenty to do in Brighton with hundreds of restaurants etc. The Marina is definitely worth a visit. Having done London and Sheffield marathons before, I have to say this is easily the best!

Positive Points

1. Great course with loads of support
2. Relatively flat course
3. Nowhere near as crowded as London, so a good PB is definitely on the cards if that's your goal
4. Good quality goody bag with excellent medal
5. Great place to stay with easy transport links
6. Hotels inexpensive if booked early enough (Travelodge Seafront was our choice-Ideal location)

Negative Points

1. Parking is not cheap in Brighton and most hotels do not have car parks. The railway station is the safest/cheapest option, although a bit of a walk.
2. It was hot!
3. One small issue, although I appreciate it was the first time this race had been organised, was that I was sent the wrong number for my predicted finishing time meaning I had to start further back, although this was rectified by the staff on the day.
4. It was very hot!
5. The walk at the end to get out of the finishing area is excessive.
6. It was very, very hot!!

By Paul Page