

Delaware Marathon, Wilmington, DE. May 17th, 2009
Frederick Slapa

New course this year with two 13.1 mile loops opposed to four 6.55 mile loops in the past.

The race starts and finishes in Tubman Garrett Riverfront Park which is a small river front park. The first 2 miles run south along the river and a portion, about 1.5 miles are run on the wooden boardwalk. You then run past the start/finish line (good for spectators since they can see you at the start and then 2 miles later). Then onto mile 3 to about 3.5 which is flat. You then turn right onto Walnut Street and for the next mile it is all up hill. At the end of Walnut Street you make a left and then a right and enter Brandywine Park and Zoo. This will take you from mile 4.5 to I'd say mile 5.75. This portion is mostly flat and very scenic as you run through the park, past the zoo and over a wooden foot bridge. At mile 5.75 you make a sharp hairpin turn and head directly up a STEEP and I mean steep hill for the next mile and a half past mile markers 6 and 7. At mile 7 you make a left and head through a beautiful residential neighborhood with some of the most unbelievable houses I've ever seen. By the way, you are still going uphill until mile 8. After weaving through the residential neighborhood you head into a part of the town call little Italy. The portion is loop with a combination of more hills and some flat and even a little downhill. This will take you through mile 9 to about mile 9.5. You then head back up hill though the residential neighborhood and past mile 10 to about mile 10.5. At mile 10.5 you start to head back towards the city and past Brandywine Park, which is now on your left, and through mile markers 11 and 12. This portion is a combination of flat to downhill. I'd say from mile 11 to 12 it is mostly downhill and some portions are steep. Just after passing mile marker 12 you make a right turn on King Street and head back towards the start/finish and mile 13.1, the half way point. During this section, from mile 12 to mile 12.5 it is ALL UP HILL. Note; this will get you on your second loop as you head towards the finish. At mile 12.5 you stop climbing and head downhill hill towards the start/finish line and mile 13.1. And you then get to do it all over again.

Note; the only difference from the first loop to the second is from mile 13.1 to mile 15. Is portion is all run entirely on the boardwalk. It's one of those down and outs that will all hate as they seem to take forever. After mile 15 you past the start/finish line, again, and then head for the hills for the completion of your second loop.

Please keep in mind that this is a very small race with no more than 650 marathoners and a combination of half marathoners and relay teams. DO NOT expect the same amenities or services that you would find at major marathons. They just don't exist. My family and I stayed at the Sheraton downtown which was very nice and they have an indoor heated

pool for those who like to relax before or after a race or if you have small kids like me. The hotel is about a mile from the race start/finish. There was plenty of parking which was either free or a couple of bucks. We parked in one of the free lots about a block from the start.

Overall, in my opinion and this being my ninth marathon, I would say this was by far the most challenging marathon course I have run to date. I've run a couple Chicago Marathons, New York City, Marine Corp and four Disney World Marathons including the very first three. As for the Delaware Marathon, if you like hills then this is the course for you. If you are looking for a fast PR or BQ course then I would suggest you stay away from this one.

Please feel free to email or call me if you'd like more feedback as I'd be happy to share my experience with you.

Thanks.

Frederick-
IFLYNJ@att.net