

Marathon journey for first-timer

By [Steve Deane](#)

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Getting to the start line is at least half the battle for any first-time marathon runner. Saatchi Goldwater, a 23-year-old marketing manager who is aiming to complete her first Auckland Marathon tomorrow, knows she wouldn't have got there alone.

Four years ago Miss Goldwater read Kerre Woodham's book *Short, Fat Chick to Marathon Runner* and thought she should give it a go. While she never got around to running the gruelling 42km event then, she did mark it down on the bucket list.

After spending a year in Britain, she returned feeling ready to take on the challenge. She did some classes with coaching firm Fitness Locker before deciding to create her own training programme to save money.

"I got a knee injury and was out of running for three weeks," she said. "I think that's a big thing for people to know, it's quite good to get help."

After considering giving up she returned to the Fitness Locker and also joined a group called GetRunning, which co-ordinates group runs. The added social element provided a huge boost.

"It's very hard to wake up at five o'clock in the morning. If you are doing it yourself you can just snooze your alarm. But when you know there is 50 other people waiting for you to go for a run it gets you out of bed."

Her regular training routine consists of a banana shortly after that 5am alarm; a 10km to 32km run; home-made muesli at her desk; some carbohydrates throughout the day to maintain her energy levels and a small dinner – usually eggs on toast.

In an average week she'd spend 10 to 12 hours running, but there's more to it than just getting out and beating the feet. The coaching classes she attends focus on stride length, cadence, good form, trigger points and recovery.

She's run half marathons before – seven in fact – but the step up to the full distance is still daunting.

"It's a bit nerve racking. I've never run more than 32km before. It's that extra 10, you just don't know what is going to happen."

First held in June 1936, the Auckland Marathon has been held intermittently and over a range of courses. The race first crossed the Harbour Bridge in 1992 and that tradition will continue tomorrow. The southbound lanes of the bridge will be closed to traffic from 3am to 10.30am.

As well as the full marathon, the field of more than 16,500 runners will compete across half-marathon, quarter marathon and 5km distances. A full list of road closures can be found on Auckland Transport's



Saatchi Goldwater says the step up in distance to a marathon is 'a bit nerve racking'. Photo / Brett Phibbs

website.

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