

NORTHUMBERLAND COAST MARATHON August 19th 9.30am

ROUTE DESCRIPTION: NB PLEASE CARRY YOUR COPY WITH YOU

This is an OFF-ROAD/TRAIL Marathon. There are no mile markers or marshals. The whole idea of the event is to make your way along sections of beach and public footpaths; mainly the well-signposted Northumberland Coastal Path from Alnmouth to the race's turn at Long Nanny Bridge, south of Beadnell Bay. OS Landranger maps 75 & 81 Map show the full route.

Newcomers to the Northumberland Coast, if in doubt, all you need to do for most of the way is to follow the blue, or blue/white Coastal Path signs. Please don't get too hung-up about following the exact route. The route is largely self-evident and apart from sections of beach, follows, for the most part, one of the UK's most popular long-distance footpaths, the Northumberland Coastal Path Provided you keep the sea on your right going north and on your left on returning and avoid running on any roads, you won't go far wrong! Other than the section between Low Newton by the Sea and Newton Links car park the route is rarely more than a few metres from the sea.

The Garmin measured, shortest route that we've used for the past 2 years is as follows:-

ALNMOUTH TO BOULMER DRINKS STATION:

1) This year the race's START and FINISH in Alnmouth is by the steps to the beach at the southern end of Northumberland Street, next to the river Aln. It then continues along the beach through Marden Rocks, (take care here the rocks can be slippery) to the CONCRETE STEPS near Seaton Point. (approx 2.2 miles)

2) Ascend steps and turn immediate RIGHT at the top, past some old caravans on left, look carefully for the NCP signs to bear LEFT between the farm & the newer caravans on right & then continue straight ahead North to Boulmer. (3.45 miles approx) The footpath merges with the road at the Lifeboat Access. Stay on path here, & continue past the Fishing Boat Inn on right, then along a gravel section to the DRINKS STATION here (on both the out & back legs.)

BOULMER TO CRASTER DRINKS STATION:

3) Continue along gravel path to a footbridge across a stream. (4 miles approx) and follow path NORTH to a concrete footbridge at Howick (5.2 miles approx)

4) Cross concrete bridge & turn immediate RIGHT, do not go through gate onto farm track. Coastal Path sign has disappeared here! Go slightly uphill, below "wigwam" on left & continue on this path for approx the next 2.5 miles to Craster. The DRINKS STATION (out & back,) is next to the children's park before entering the village. (7.5miles approx)

CRASTER TO NEWTON LINKS DRINKS STATION:

5) Continue on coastal side of playground – not through housing estate, to pub garden then descend on footpath past harbour on right and North, through gate, on prominent footpath towards Dunstanburgh Castle. After the last gate before the castle take the lower path on the BOTTOM LEFT of the castle, (do not go up to Castle) to Embleton

golf course. Run on the SEAWARD side of the golf course & descend on to the beach as soon past the rocks as possible. Run along Embleton Beach to its end at Low Newton by the Sea. (11.1 miles approx) For those who don't like sand, it is possible to continue along the path here that skirts the golf course on your left.

6) On leaving the beach at Low Newton by the Sea, go uphill on path to right of road, after a few metres turning RIGHT through gate before the lone bungalow & follow signpost directions diagonally uphill in NE direction. (Do not take lower path nearer sea on this occasion) Follow the path NORTH to a pay-machine car park next to the farm at Newton Links House. (12.2 miles approx) DRINKS STATION in car park both out & back.

7) Continue on the path, heading NORTH of car park for another mile to reach the Turn at Long Nanny Bridge where numbers and times will be recorded. (Provided you keep heading NORTH with the dunes on your right, you won't miss the bridge – it's the only way over the river without getting wet!)

THE RETURN FROM LONG NANNY BRIDGE:

8) After having your number recorded you will be directed immediate right here, (EASTWARD to the beach) Run SOUTH EAST along footpath to right of barbed wire fence to stile, over stile and on to Newton Links Beach. Run SOUTH on beach. Just before its southern end leave the beach by turning RIGHT, (Marshal or sign here,) back to Newton Steads car park/DRINKS STATION. Now all you have to do is run back from here EXACTLY the way you came! Finish at far end of Alnmouth beach where you started.

REMEMBER: If you are unable to complete the course please make your way to the nearest Drinks Station if possible & inform one of the marshals there. Transport to the Finish will be arranged. Do not simply walk off the course without informing us. We will have 2 First Aid cycle response units from St. John Ambulance patrolling the course throughout the race as well as a Sweeper/Backmarker, (probably me,) to assist anyone in difficulty.

Jim Manford
July 2012

Look out for these



And these



