Over the next few weeks former international marathon runner and five times Scottish marathon champion, Fraser Clyne, will take a detailed look at the route you will be running during the Loch Ness Marathon

13-20 miles: Time To Keep Concentrating

If you’ve handled the route sensibly up to this stage you can gain a psychological lift by passing through the halfway point knowing you’re now on the way home. Try to think of it this way: from this point on, with every step you take, there’s fewer miles ahead of you than you’ve already completed. It can, however, be easy to lose a bit of concentration at this stage in any race, so focus on maintaining your pace and effort, but try to keep relaxed and in control. Stay within your limits as there’s still some serious running to do.

The sheltered stretch from 13 to 16 miles is slightly undulating and while the short rises may feel a little testing, there’s nothing major to worry about and you can recover on the easy downhills. There’s another decent flat section as you approach the head of Loch Ness and pass through the community of Dores between 16 and 17 miles. Look out here for local resident Steve Feltham, the country’s only full-time Nessie hunter who has lived in the fabulous setting of Dores beach for the past 24 years.

From around 17 miles the course heads away from the loch and into some open countryside. After passing Aldourie school there’s a stiff uphill climb which marks the beginning of one of the more challenging sections of the route. It’s predominantly uphill for the next couple of miles, until just beyond the 19 mile point when it levels off and begins to descend towards Scaniport. It’s a tough time to be facing such a challenge in a marathon, but keep your spirits high. Don’t push the climb too hard. Reduce your stride length and use your arms to help propel yourself up the inclines. Tell yourself that you are going to handle this section of the course as well as anyone and remind yourself there’s a rewarding long gradual downhill to follow. It might be an idea to break the climbs down into one minute sections, giving yourself a little breather every second minute. If you’ve included some decent hill running sessions as part of your training plan, this is where you will be rewarded for your diligence and perseverance.

Stick to whatever nutrition plan you have tested in training. Highland Spring water is available at 13.6 miles, 17.3 miles and 20 miles; Clif shot bloks or gels are available
at 13.5 miles, 19.9 miles and 23.2 miles; Nuun hydration drinks are provided at 8, 15.6 miles and 21.5 miles; and portaloos are available at 17.5 miles (Dores Inn).

You'll find more training advice on our website at: www.lochnessmarathon.com/training-zone