

## Trail Marathon Wales – 2023 Event overview

Taking place on the 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2023, the Salomon Trail Marathon Wales event will have full (26 mile / 42 km) and half (13 mile / 21 km) marathon race routes in the stunning trails and tracks of the world-renowned Coed y Brenin Forest Park in the Snowdonia National Park (POST CODE LL40 2HZ).

This iconic marathon was launched in 2012 and proclaimed a huge success by runners and organisers in its aim of being Wales' best trail marathon. The course takes in fully marked trail single track, forest roads and paths in some of the most stunning forestry and heathland in the UK.

But don't take our word for it, as here are just a couple of quotes from runners who have taken part in previous events:

*“Brutal, epic, tough, fantastic and fabulous all at the same time. This race will become a 'classic' with a cult following.”* – David Mould

*“Best Marathon I've taken part in, wish I'd discovered trail running 30 years ago. Also the toughest physical event for me. Loved it, thanks to all at TMW and all your support. Recommend to anyone.”* – Andrew Geeson

*“I won't lie, it was the toughest run I have ever done and very challenging, however the organisation was great and the scenery was amazing. Thanks again. Our club had a great day out!”* - Cath Quane

## **Salomon TMW 2023 Weekend Programme**

### **Event timetable**

#### **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2023**

- 3.00pm – Registration opens for all events
- 6.00pm – Salomon TMW Welcome Party opens
- 7.00pm – Registration closes
- 7.30pm – Salomon TMW Welcome Party ends

#### **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2023**

- 6.00am – Event arena and car parking opens
- 6.30am - Race Registration opens for all events
- 8.30am – Race briefing Marathon
- 9.00am – **Start of the 2023 Salomon Trail Marathon Wales**
- 9.30am – Race Registration closes for all events
- 9.40am – Race briefing Half Marathon
- 10.00am – **Start of the 2023 Salomon Trail Marathon Wales Half**
- 11.20am – First runners expected half marathon
- 12.00pm - First runners expected in the full marathon
- 2.30pm – Prize giving for all events takes place

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### **Registration**

Registration will take place on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> at the new Coed y Brenin VISITOR CENTRE from 3pm until 7pm. Registration will reopen from 6.30am until 9.30am on the morning of the race Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June at the same location.

At registration you will be issued with your number, a goody bag (including brochures and event info for any future visits to the area), race t-shirt and Salomon soft flask.

**Race maps will be displayed at the race registration as will your race number to help in the registration process.**

## Car Parking

**PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL REGISTRATION TAKES PLACE AT THE VISITOR CENTRE, ALLOW AT LEAST 10 MINS TO WALK FROM THE OVERFLOW CAR PARK TO THE REGISTRATION AREA ON RACE DAY. (THIS IS WILL BE SIGNPOSTED FROM THE OVERFLOW CAR PARK)**

Payment for parking at Coed y Brenin is now via ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) and a barrier system. Payment is taken as you LEAVE the venue and you should use one of the number of payment stations via card or cash, **you can also pay contactless at the barrier itself, to save on queing.**

**NOTE:** We do have provisions to open out the car parking to the lower road of Coed y Brenin, if the overflow car park fills on race day, you will be directed to this area as and when the overflow park fills.

All are within easy walking distance of registration (lower road 10 minute walk). **Please be environmentally aware and try to share transport to the race wherever possible, we would encourage local runners especially to try and car share / obtain a lift.**

## **Trail Marathon Wales - Race Routes 2023**

The **Trail Marathon Wales** event is organised by trail runners, so every detail of the route has been devised and planned with the interests of the runners at heart and with a view to the whole event being memorable as an exciting occasion, but most memorable for a classic trail running route.

Once again we are excited that the whole of the event village, start / finish areas, registration, café and conveniences will all be based out of the two fantastic visitor centres at Coed y Brenin.

This will mean that the event will have an amphitheatre feel as the races start and finish within a naturally elevated viewing area for spectators, be more weather-proof if the elements are not kind to us on the day, and provide a morale-boosting run through for the marathon runners as they pass under the centre and head out onto their next 13 mile loop.

Firstly, this is **Natural Resources Wales'** land and we had to be sympathetic to the constraints of access in getting over 1000 runners on

the day safely round the singletrack footpaths paths and forest roads of this famous forest. As with the last two years, we have a large amount of options when it comes to routes (**Coed y Brenin** spans about 9,500 acres), which sometimes can be a negative as opposed to a positive - as the choice is vast!

In 2023 the marathon event will once again be a figure of eight route, which will see the first half of the marathon following the same course of that of the half marathon, returning to the visitor centre and then heading across under the A470 and onto the eastern side of Coed y Brenin.

The race will as ever be challenging (we are in the mountains of the **Snowdonia National Park** after all), with the overall elevation approximately 1200m the event is the toughest Salomon Trail Marathon Wales we have laid out yet!

**COMPULSORY KIT:** *Note that we **do not** have a compulsory kit list. However, please be prepared that in the advent of very unseasonal weather you may be asked to carry UPPER BODY COVER e.g minimum showerproof jacket. You will be advised on this at the race briefing on race day, so ensure you travel with this in mind.*

## **HALF MARATHON ROUTE DETAIL**

The **HALF MARATHON** race will start at **10.00AM** and the route will be marked with a mixture of **RED** Trail Marathon Wales arrows and **BLACK ARROWS ON A HI VIS** background along with **WHITE TRAIL MARATHON WALES** race tape (where required).

Trail Marathon Wales has no need for navigation skills. There will be mile markers throughout (as accurately placed as possible taking terrain into account) the event and all **significant junctions** will be marshaled.

However, remember that this is a trail race in a sometimes remote, forested area and **you are expected to keep your awareness about you** especially at junctions for the clear signs directing you.

Additionally the rest of the Coed y Brenin forest park is fully open to the public as usual, and much of the route passes on public path where although the race is signed may have other users (walkers especially) on it, please respect your fellow outdoor enthusiasts.

The way-marked half marathon route at Coed y Brenin provides much

of the Salomon TMW Half Marathon race route and the first half of the Salomon TMW Full Marathon race route.

The thought process of the Half Marathon route was that we needed to have a wide and open start to enable runners to sort themselves out before we hit any singletrack, so the first 4 miles is a steady mix of short elevation and gradual downhill. But, the first 600m of this new start will mean that runners will enter the walking path (enough for 2 runners wide) after just 250m of running.

***Care must be taken to consider your fellow runners at this point, and remember you have a further 12.5 / 25.5 miles to run, so please no pushing / impeding on this section.***

Once again the 2023 route includes a short excursion onto the Goldrush route after the Aerial Bridge section at around 4 miles and back down the old Karrimor route, rejoining the lower forest road and onto the Volcano trail.

Runners then run to the top tarmac road, before turning sharp right and along to the large feed station at 6 miles. The race follows much of the Volcano trail and the sharp descent to the Afon Eden area. The race then follows the lower Afon Eden forest road with its wonderfully river valley views and the mighty Cader Idris ahead.

You are then onto the 8 mile point, the sharp, singletrack descent (lots of fun!) through Ty'n y Groes and THE trees of Coed y Brenin (the King and the Champion), the Ty'n y Groes feed station at approx. 10 miles before returning towards to Visitor Centre, the bailey bridge crossing at Pont Caen Coed and the infamous 'sting in the tail climb' that will live long in the memory!

***NOTE: The Tyn y Groes Coed y Brenin area (around mile 10 in both races) you will cross MTB trails PLEASE BE AWARE at these junctions as this is a live area for mountain bikers. It will be signed CAUTION CYCLISTS as will the MTB trail signed CAUTION RUNNERS***

To enable the runners to return to the Visitor Centre finish area runners are directed to a lovely sharp descent in the Cefn Deuddwr area and the orienteering path to the bottom Afon trail road. ***NOTE this path is a little uneven and has a few little hidden rocks and needs extra care.***

As you enter the last descent into the finish you will also have to cross the **TWO MTB** out routes, these will be marshaled and marked, however please be vigilant and listen out for any direction from those marshals.

Additionally we will have some **GOFAL / CARE** boards on display too, which indicate that extra care should be taken by runners in these areas, especially if we have witnessed wet weather before and or during the race.

The Salomon TMW Strava link is below – (**PLEASE NOTE** routes were measured with **THREE GPS** systems, those of Suunto, Garmin and Strava. The mean average was 13.4 miles with 600m of elevation, which we hope you will agree is accurate enough given some runners will choose different lines and so on)

STMW half <http://www.strava.com/activities/141371783>

## **FUEL STATIONS HALF MARATHON**

Though TMW does not require the runner to carry his / her own fuel for the event, we still recommend that runners ensure that they are happy with their own personal fuel requirements prior to the race. **Also each participant will be provided with a free of charge gel courtesy of event partner Torq, with the intention that you carry this with you on race day.**

There will be two fuel stations on the half marathon route, these will be at approximately 6 and 10 miles. *In the advent of very hot weather a water station will also be placed at round 3 miles.*

Essentially, water stations will be just that. A chance to hydrate and have a drink, refill your bottle or pack if you have one. Fuel stations will have **water, electrolyte drink, gels and bananas (mile 10 only).**

## **FULL MARATHON ROUTE DETAIL**

The **MARATHON** race will start at **9.00AM** and the route will be marked with a mixture of **RED** Trail Marathon Wales arrows and **BLACK ARROWS ON A HI VIS** background along with **WHITE TRAIL**

**MARATHON WALES** race tape. Avenues of tape may also be used in tree-lined areas to make the route even more obvious.

Salomon Trail Marathon Wales has no need for navigation skills. There will be mile markers throughout (as accurately placed as possible taking terrain into account) the event and all **significant junctions** will be marshaled.

However, remember that this is a trail race in a sometimes remote, forested area and **you are expected to keep your awareness about you** especially at junctions for the clear signs directing you.

Additionally the rest of the Coed y Brenin forest park is fully open to the public as usual, and much of the route passes on public path where although the race is signed may have other users (walkers especially) on it, please respect your fellow outdoor enthusiasts.

The way-marked half marathon route at Coed y Brenin provides much of the Salomon TMW Half Marathon race route and the **first half of the Salomon TWM Full Marathon race route.**

The thought process of the Marathon route was that we needed to have a wide and open start to enable runners to sort themselves out before we hit any narrow singletrack, so the first 4 miles is a steady mix of short elevation and gradual downhill.

NOTE: the first 600m of this new start will mean that runners will enter the walking path (enough for 2 runners wide) after just 250m of running.

***Care must be taken to consider your fellow runners at this point, and remember you have a further 12.5 / 25.5 miles to run, so please no pushing / impeding on this section.***

Once again the 2023 route includes a short excursion onto the Goldrush route after the Aerial Bridge section at around 4 miles and back down the old Karrimor route, rejoining the lower forest road and onto the Volcano trail.

Runners then run to the top tarmac road, before turning sharp right and along to the large feed station at 6 miles. The race follows much of the Volcano trail and the sharp descent to the Afon Eden area. The race then follows the lower Afon Eden forest road with its wonderfully river valley views and the mighty Cader Idris ahead.

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**NOTE:** *The Tyn y Groes Coed y Brenin area (around mile 10 in both races) you will cross MTB trails PLEASE BE AWARE at these junctions as this is a live area for mountain bikers. It will be signed CAUTION CYCLISTS as will the MTB trail signed CAUTION RUNNERS*

To enable the runners to return to the Visitor Centre finish area runners are directed to a lovely sharp descent in the Cefn Deuddwr area and the orienteering path to the bottom Afon trail road. **NOTE this path is a little uneven and has a few little hidden rocks and needs extra care.**

As you enter the last descent into the finish you will also have to cross the **TWO MTB** out routes, these will be marshaled and marked, however please be vigilant and listen out for any direction from those marshals.

Additionally we will have some **GOFAL / CARE** boards on display too, which indicate that extra care should be taken by runners in these areas, especially if we have witnessed wet weather before and or during the race.

Marathon runners will then enter the race village and at this point **YOU WILL BE SPLIT FROM THE HALF MARATHON FINISHERS AND DIRECTED ONTO THE SECOND HALF OF THE MARATHON ROUTE**, passing below the visitor centre and off onto the eastern side of Coed y Brenin.

The first part of the second half of the race follows the Tarw Du underpass then at around 14 miles you will enjoy an excursion onto the old Nature Trail at Maesgwm. This section particularly enjoyable as you run by the River Eden and zig-zag through the trees.

**NOTE: Due to severe storm damage over the winter of 2022 the race route now follows the tarmac road for 200 metres instead of the forest paths after the Maesgwm excursion, at around 14.7 miles. You will be clearly directed at this point.**

The race then climbs towards Maesgwm farm here you will past the exit of the Rocky Horror singletrack to the top forest road and feed station 4 at 16.5 miles.

Although this is a relatively long stretch of forest road, this part of the route offers a different perspective with views of Cader Idris and the Rhinogau mountain ranges (fair weather permitting!)

The route then journeys down towards the Goetre area of Coed y Brenin / Ganllwyd and feed station 5 at mile 19. At this point you will climb to begin the natural forested area of Coed Ganllwyd.

**NOTE** this part of the route has some wonderful descents and singletrack but has rocks and routes underfoot on the footpaths. Additionally we will have some **GOFAL / CARE** boards on display too, which indicate that extra care should be taken by runners in these areas, especially if we have witnessed wet weather before and or during the race.

After leaving Coed Ganllwyd the race then climbs steadily on some tricky, but enjoyable singletrack footpaths and onto the top part of the second half of the race. From here you will have around 4 miles to run, and you will encounter a mixture of forest road and singletrack, with feed station 6 at mile 22.5 and a final additional water station at around mile 24.

You will then descend back to the A470 underpass and return the ace arena, with the Animal Puzzle Trail and the final 200m up the finish!

Strava links below – (**PLEASE NOTE** routes were measured with **THREE** GPS systems, those of Suunto, Garmin and Strava. The mean average was 13.4 miles and 13.0 miles totaling 26.4 miles, which we hope you will agree is accurate enough given some runners will choose different lines and so on)

STMW first half <http://www.strava.com/activities/141371783>

STMW second half <https://www.strava.com/activities/598899437>

### **FUEL STATIONS – FULL MARATHON**

Though TMW does not require the runner to carry his / her own fuel for the event, we still recommend that runners ensure that they are happy

with their own personal fuel requirements prior to the race. **Also each participant will be provided with a free of charge gel courtesy of event partner Torq, with the intention that you carry this with you on race day.**

There will be three fuel stations on the first half marathon route, these will be at approximately 6, 10 miles and 13 miles.

*In the advent of very hot weather a water station will also be placed at round 3 miles.*

Essentially, water stations will be just that. A chance to hydrate and have a drink, refill your bottle or pack if you have one. Fuel stations will have **water, electrolyte drink, gels and bananas (mile 10 and 19 only).**

As you enter the start / finish / transition areas at approx. 13 miles there will be a large feed station. Additional Marathon feed stations will then be located at 16.5 miles (water only), 19 miles, 22.5 miles and a final water station at 24 miles.

### **Additional Race Information**

Your number must be clearly visible at all times during the race and you are reminded that failure to wear your timing chip will result in you being omitted from the results.

**Full results will be available after the race on the TDL Event Services website.**

*We are also obliged to tell you that under Welsh Athletics rules the irresponsible use of headphones whilst racing could result in disqualification, but headphones are not banned at this event.*

**Please Note:** We have a cut off time at 3 hours 35 mins for 13 miles (halfway) and 5 hours 30mins for 20 miles, runners will be advised how they are progressing in respect of this as the race progresses.

*\* This is in the interests of staff safety too as marshals could have been in place for longer than this, and if the weather is inclement we must think about their safety too.*

**Full and Half Marathon directional board**



**Additional directional board half and full marathon**



Should runners wish to **retire** from the race for medical, please **report to your nearest marshal** who will then radio in, we would also advise that you inform race control upon returning to the Race Village if possible.

**NOTE:** we do not provide a *broom wagon* service at Salomon Trail Marathon Wales so please be aware that non-medical retirees due to being tired will not be entitled to a lift back to the race village as a

medical case would be, but we will do our best to aid you with the various vehicles working on race support.

## **SOUTH SNOWDONIA MOUNTAIN RESCUE**

Once again this year we will have the expert local knowledge and safety back-up from the local South Snowdonia Mountain rescue team. Team Leader Kev Griffiths and a team of around 16 members including 4x4 vehicles and an ambulance will be dotted around the route, and at major descent areas, for your peace of mind!

### **Race presentation**

The prize giving for the Salomon Trail Marathon Wales 2023 will take place in the Race Village area (exact location to be decided taking the weather into consideration).

With prizes from Salomon, Buff, and Torq, bespoke trophies by Signs Workshop and ceramic plaques by local sculptors Ddraig Dipsy Dragon, 2023 will see a total fund of almost £2500.

Timings will be as close to 2.30pm as possible as and when results are fully available.

Category winners will presented as follows.

### **Marathon prize categories**

Open first 5 men  
Open first 5 women

1st M40  
1st M50  
1st M60  
1st M70

1st W40  
1st W50  
1st W60  
1st W70

### **Half marathon prize categories**

Open first 3 men  
Open first 3 women

1st M40  
1st M50  
1st M60  
1st M70

1st W40  
1st W50  
1st W60  
1st W70

### **Other attractions**

We are excited that the whole of the event village, start / finish areas, registration, café and conveniences will all be based out of the two fantastic visitor centres at Coed y Brenin.

This will mean that the event will have an amphitheatre feel as the races start and finish within a naturally elevated viewing area for spectators, be more weather-proof if the elements are not kind to us on the day.

The start / finish straight, will have partner brand support from **Salomon** and **Torq**, PA and commentary will be from Stephen Edwards, Sharon Leech and Mad Sound.

**South Snowdonia Mountain Rescue** are our designated charity for the 2023 Salomon Trail Marathon Wales, buckets will be around the site on race day, please give generously where you can!

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Should competitors be unclear on any of the above pre-event enquiries should be directed to Matt Ward (Race Organiser) at [matt@runcomm.co.uk](mailto:matt@runcomm.co.uk), however please be understanding in the final few days before the event replies could take a while.

Thanks for entering the 2023 Salomon Trail Marathon and Half Marathon Wales races and good luck – we hope you will be part of our race history in the future!

Pob lwc i bob un cystadleuwyr 2023 Salomon Trail Marathon Wales – da ni yn gobeithio byddwch yn rhan o hanes y ras yn yr dyfodol!

**Matt Ward**

Trefnydd / Race Organiser