

2012 BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF ALABAMA KIDS MERCEDES MARATHON FINAL RACE INSTRUCTIONS

Please read in advance of race day. It will answer many of your questions!

Arriving at the Race:

- The *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Kids Mercedes Marathon* will not be canceled for inclement or uncomfortable weather!
- Plan to be at the park at least 20 minutes before your grade's scheduled start time. There will be a lot of barricades around the park and especially the starting area, so please try to enter the park from the North end (Boutwell side) for the easiest navigation to the starting area.
- The first group will start at 10:00 a.m. Please check for your Grade start times below.
- Parking: The parking deck next to Boutwell Auditorium will be open for a fee. The best street parking will be found west of 19th Street North.
- **Wear your Official Race t-shirt as your outermost layer of clothing if possible.**
- **Make sure to bring your child's race bib.** Tear off the PARENT CLAIM TAG (which is located on the upper portion of the race bib). Parents must have this claim tag to retrieve their child out of the finish corral after the race. Pin your child's race bib (with the PARENT CLAIM TAG removed) to the front of his/her official race shirt.
- **Be sure to write your cell phone number on the back of your child's bib.**
- Wheelchair athletes please report to the corner of Park place and 20th street for race entrance.
- A map of the course is available online at www.mercedesmarathon.com .

Lining Up:

- Runners should congregate in the south end of the Park and listen for instructions.
- The starting line is on Park Place between Linn Park and the Birmingham Board of Education.
- We will begin lining up 5th graders promptly at 9:50 a.m.
- The *Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Kids Mercedes Marathon* will start at 10:00 a.m.
- Please do not approach the starting corral until it is your time. You must allow room for each grade to have access to the corral.
- Grade starts are 10 -12 minutes apart.

Grade Start Times (approximate):

- 10:00 a.m. 5th Grade
- 10:10 a.m. 4th Grade
- 10:20 a.m. 3rd Grade
- 10:30 a.m. 2nd Grade
- 10:40 a.m. 1st Grade (parents can run- must have your Parent Claim Tag to enter the starting chute. Please hold on to this tag as you will need it to exit the finish coral as well.)
- 10:50 a.m. Kindergarten (parents can run -must have your Parent Claim Tag to enter the starting chute. Please hold on to this tag as you will need it to exit the finish coral as well.)
- **NOTE** – if you are running with your child and are pushing another child in the stroller, please do not ask for a medal or Powerade for you or the second child. We only have enough for the children that are officially registered and have trained to complete the 26.2 mile distance over time.

Grade Starts:

As a safety precaution, we are splitting each grade into multiple starting groups. This is known as a wave start. Each wave will begin 10 to 15 seconds apart. Please stress to your child the importance of not pushing or shoving at the start of the race. Make certain your child knows they must wait until their wave is instructed to start. We will have plenty of police, official security and local cross-country teams on the course to protect runners during the race. Experienced runners will guide each heat along the course.

NEW THIS YEAR! This year, we will be providing official times for the kids, which will be available on our website (www.mercedsmarathon.com) by Monday, hopefully sooner. Since we believe everyone is a winner for completing the last mile of their marathon training, we will only be listing finish times by bib number with no name or place listed. The timing device will be on the back of the bib. The device needs to stay on the bib for the entire time. The clock for your child will start as he/she crosses the starting line so the wave start will not affect their actual finish time.

Race Photo:

Parents who are running with their Kindergarten or 1st Grade child should plan to step aside at the finish line if you would like the photographer to get an individual finisher's photograph of your child. Our official photographer, Brightroom Photography, will also be available in Linn Park after the run for family and group official Marathon photos. Please go to our website (www.mercedsmarathon.com) and click on the Brightroom logo to sign up to receive emailed photos of your child. These photos will be available within 5 days of the event.

Finish Area Instructions, Very Important, PLEASE READ!

The finish line will be on Short 20th Street on the City Hall side of Linn Park. Any parents not running

with children are asked to wait near the end of the finish line chute, outside one of the two finish line corrals in the northwest quadrant of the park. Located on the top section of each race bib is a removable Parent Claim Tag. Each **child's parent must bring the parent claim tag with them to the park to be matched up with their child at the secure finish line area.** Children will be directed from the finish line to one of two finish line corrals. The first corral will be for children whose race number ENDS with 0-4. The second corral will be for children whose race number ENDS with 5-9. Within each of these two corrals will be five exits which will be labeled according to the last number of the race numbers, i.e., "0", "1", "2", etc. **Only one parent or guardian** should proceed to the appropriate numbered exit to wait for the children to exit. For instance, if your child's number is 2304, you would proceed to the first corral, exit #4. If your child's number is 1929, you would proceed to the second corral, exit #9. Parents must present their parent claim tag for their child to be able to exit into the park.

Please remember that this extra measure of security is being done for the protection of the children, not to inconvenience the parents. It is imperative that we have the cooperation of all parents, beginning with familiarizing yourselves with these race instructions. Please be sure to decide which parent is picking up the child, and please patiently wait outside of the appropriate exit. We hope you appreciate our safety precautions this year and look forward to you volunteering in the future if you have any suggestions for improvement.

Post Race Fun:

- **Children will be offered a bottle of Powerade after they finish.**
- **An official Mercedes Marathon merchandise booth will be in the race expo at Boutwell Auditorium (right across the street from the finish line) where you can purchase *Official Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Kids Mercedes Marathon* merchandise.**

See yourself finish on www.myfoxal.com!

Be sure to log on to myfoxal.com after you get home to see a webcast from the finish line for each grade. Remember to smile as you run by the cameraman!

Again, great job runners! If you have any questions prior to race day, please view our *FAQ's* online www.mercedesmarathon.com or call us at (205) 870-7771 or email us at kids@mercedesmarathon.com. See you on Saturday, February 11th at Linn Park!