



FAQs

GENERAL INFORMATION

When and where is the Half Moon Bay International Marathon (HMBIM) event held?

 The Half Moon Bay International Marathon is held every year on the next-to-last Sunday in September. In 2016 the event will be Sunday, September 18, 2016. The race starts and finishes near beautiful [Pillar Point Harbor in Half Moon Bay](#), approximately 25 miles south of San Francisco along Highway 1.

Is it only a marathon distance?

 In addition to the Full Marathon distance of 26.2 miles, the HMBIM also features a Half Marathon (13.1 miles) and a FREE 5k event.

What makes the HMBIM special?

 “26.2 Miles of Running Heaven”! Cool ocean breezes; year-round moderate temperatures; the course, run entirely along the incredible beauty of the Pacific Ocean and Northern California mountainous landscape; the charming fishing harbor where the race starts and finishes; the quaint, friendly people of the [Half Moon Bay Community](#).

What does it mean when you say the HMBIM is a GREEN event?

 Since its founding in 2011, the HMBIM has been committed to creating and fostering a sustainable event which took care of the precious community which hosts it. In our very first year, we invested money, time and focus, working with to obtain certification from the [Council for Responsible Sport](#) (CRS). We were rewarded with a prestigious Gold Certification, one of only 3 events in the U.S. the CRS awarded. This guides everything we do from printing to recycling to distributing water to athletes.

Is the HMBIM a USA Track and Field (USATF) Certified Course?

 Yes, the 2016 HMBIM will once again be certified by the USATF.

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Can I qualify for the Boston Marathon on the HMBIM Course?

 Yes! As a USATF Certified Course, your performance at the HMBIM can be used as a Boston Marathon qualifier.

Is there an age limit for the events?

 Yes, following advice [published by the International Marathon Medical Directors' Association](#), you must be 18 years of age prior to September 1 of the year of the event to register for the full marathon, and 15 years of age for the half marathon. The remaining events do not have a minimum age requirement.

Where do the runners come from?

 The Half Moon Bay International Marathon was created to become one of the top featured, destination marathons in the world. In our very first year we sold out in less than 3 months, with runners from 25 states and 4 countries. In 2013 this grew to [include nearly all the states in the USA](#), with athletes coming from 44 states and 6 countries! We also have a very high concentration of athletes from California and the Bay Area who know what we offer and don't want to miss it. So our appeal is beneficial for national, area and local sponsors.

How does the HMBIM help the local community?

 In our first year in 2011, we contributed over \$200,000 of direct economic benefit to the community businesses. We sold out every hotel room, filled local restaurants, and delivered tremendous visibility to the local sponsors who wanted to be affiliated with a world-class event. We will be contributing over 700 hotel room nights to the Bay area in 2012 as measured by questions taken during registration. In 2012 we hired a professional survey company who helped us determine we contributed over \$330,000 of direct economic benefit to the Bay Area. In 2013, the [Kent State University Department of Economics did a comprehensive study](#) and determined our contribution to be over \$1.56m in direct and economic benefits. And, we motivated over 300 local volunteers from the community who made it all happen!

How can I take advantage of the opportunity to be a partner?

 We have many different levels of partnership which include both cash and in-kind donations to help as many organizations as possible get their message out. Our partnership program features very prominent marketing activities on the Web, through extensive use of social media and many other promotional activities. Full information is available at <http://halfmoonbayim.org/partnership>.

How do I volunteer to be a part of the fun and festivities in our community?

 The HMBIM relies on its volunteer force and we are incredibly rewarded by being a part of an amazing event for our community! In 2016 there are many opportunities to select what area you want to join in and even select your timeframe. Many local merchants donate prizes to be awarded at random to our volunteer pool. Just visit <http://halfmoonbayim.org/volunteer> to let us know you'd like to join the fun!

ATHLETE INFORMATION

How early should I plan to arrive at the race?

 The Race Events start promptly at 7:00 a.m. Runners should plan on encountering traffic at the parking location at the [Half Moon Bay Airport](#) and should plan accordingly. We'd recommend arriving at least 1 hour before your scheduled race time. Please see our [Event page](#) for the start times for each event.

I'm planning to stay at a local hotel; where should I stay?

 The Half Moon Bay community features an amazing array of hotels, from luxury to budget, and B&Bs, hostels and even camping facilities. Many of these are listed on our travel page at <http://halfmoonbayim.org/travel>. A more complete list can be found at <http://www.visithalfmoonbay.org/lodging>.

How do I obtain my race bib and goody bag?

 As a Green feature of the HMBIM and to assist athletes, the HMBIM invests time and effort to conduct "roving packet pickup" – a first in the large-scale running community! There will be 3 packet pickup events held on the 3 weekends prior to the race. One will be located in the Peninsula area of the Bay Area, one in downtown San Francisco and on Friday and Saturday before the race in the race location in Half Moon Bay. Full details are posted at <http://halfmoonbayim.org/packet>.

Once again in 2016, for those who selected the Mail Packet option, we will be mailing your packet out ahead of time. If you did not select this option at registration, you can **NOT** add this option subsequently.

Will there be race-day packet/bib pickup?

 As a Green event, it's important to offer this option so we will have limited facilities for bib-pickup on the morning of the event at the Start/Finish line. However, we **strongly urge** all athletes to use one of the other scheduled pickups to ensure everything goes smoothly for all concerned. No use in extra stress just minutes before your big day!

Can someone else pick up my packet and bib?

 Yes, we will accommodate someone else coming to pick up your bib. [Click here to download our Packet Pickup Authorization Form](#). Please note that the person picking up your packet **must bring a photocopy of your photo-id and this authorization form signed by you**. There will be no exceptions to this under any circumstance so please plan accordingly.

What are the race bib requirements?

 All registered athletes [will receive a bib number](#) that must be worn on race day. If you are not wearing your bib during the race, you will be considered a bandit runner and will not be allowed any aid at the aid stations, nor to cross the finish line. The bib must be visible and worn on the front, outside of all clothing during the entire race. Please do not alter the bib in any way.

How is the race timed?

 We use the Bib tag (“B-Tag”) technology to time all events. The B-tag is disposable and does not need to be returned. Awards for the overall winners for each race will be determined by **gun time**. Age categories and top Coastsider awards will be determined by chip time. There will also be team awards presented.

Is prize money available?

 Prize money will be available to the top overall male and female finishers in the Full Marathon in 2016.

Can I switch to a different event than the one I registered for?

 Yes. You can make changes yourself by logging back into your Active.com account and change the category. We also accommodate race changes at all the bib pickups (except for race day pickup). Simply come to the “Answer Desk” at the bib pickup and receive your new assigned bib. Please note that there are no refunds of the difference of fees if you choose to downgrade your race.

Will there be photographs of the event?

 Our official athlete photographer, [Captivating Sports Photos](#) will make every attempt to capture pictures of every athlete at the finish line and at other areas on the course. One of the unique benefits of partnering with Captivating Sports Photos is that their staff are on hand to provide photos from the HMBIM right on site, in the start/finish line celebration area, as well as after the event on the [Captivating Sports web site](#).

Can I cancel my entry and receive a refund, or transfer my spot to another athlete?

 We’re sorry, but the answer is no to both questions. As per the [agreement and terms and conditions](#) which are acknowledged at registration by the athlete, there are no refunds under any conditions and there are no transfers or sale of bibs allowed. Photo id matching the registered athlete is required at packet pickup and there will be no exceptions. Active.com does offer race cancellation insurance, which had to be

purchased during registration; you cannot go back and add it later. This is completely separate from the HMBIM and is handled strictly through Active.com. **Again, there are no refunds under any conditions.**

Are headphones allowed on the course?

 Yes, since nearly the entire course is on bike paths or very lightly used streets with traffic control, headphones are allowed.

Will there be a bag drop area?

 Yes, a bag drop area staffed by volunteers will be available so you can leave your clothing and other items. Please **do not leave any valuables of any kind**, e.g. cell phone, wallet etc. **The HMBIM is not responsible for any lost or missing items from the drop area.**

Is there a time limit on the course, and are walkers allowed/encouraged?

 The course is open for a total of 6 hours, so all speeds of runners/walkers are certainly allowed and encouraged, provided they can finish their registered distance within the time limit. If the course closes and an athlete remains on the course, they should report to the nearest aid station and arrange a ride back to the start/finish.

Are strollers or pets allowed on the course?

 In order to enhance the beauty of the course and to eliminate any interference with traffic on critical Highway 1, much of the HMBIM course is on a shared, public multi-use trail which at points can become congested from the runners. For that reason, pets and strollers, baby joggers, bikes, inline or roller skates or any other wheeled device are not allowed on the course.

Does the course consist of all paved surfaces?

 No, one of the most amazing parts of our *26.2 Miles of Running Heaven* involves using some packed, dirt portions. The full marathon course is approximately 70% on paved surfaces and 30% on packed dirt trails. The dirt trail portions run along some [incredibly picturesque paths along the ocean](#), providing unparalleled views. **Athletes are highly encouraged to include a portion of their training on dirt trail surfaces to feel completely prepared for race day.** For a video tour of the entire HMBIM course, [please visit our YouTube page](#).

Does everyone receive a finisher's medal?

 All athletes who cross the finish line within the time limit in the full and half marathon receive an [amazing finisher's medal](#) worthy of the HMBIM!

What will be available at the aid stations?

 Every aid station along the course will include water, electrolyte replacement fluids, and carbohydrate-nutrition gels. In 2013 our official Aid Station Replacement sponsor is Clif! We will feature [Clif-Shot gels](#) and [Clif-Shot electrolyte replacement fluids](#). As the HMBIM

is a [GREEN event](#), we strongly encourage (but do not require) **Bring Your Own Bottle** (BYOB). All aid stations will have both pitchers, to replace fluids in a bottle you carry, or optionally cups if you don't choose to carry a bottle.

Are there medical stations or facilities?

 The safety of our athletes is a paramount concern to the HMBIM. Every aid station is equipped with basic first-aid supplies and someone who can assist with minor injuries or problems. The aid stations are **not** allowed to dispense any medicine or pain relievers of any kind. The start/finish line will be [staffed with licensed medical doctors](#) as well as paramedics and an ambulance standing by for any more serious issues.

What about bathrooms/port-a-potties?

 There are bathroom facilities approximately 2 miles apart all along the course for all races. Several are at aid stations, and others are marked with special HMBIM signage.

I have other questions—where can I turn to for more information?

 Please email us at info@halfmoonbayim.org with any other questions. Please use email for any follow up questions rather than the HMBIM phone number!

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