



IMT Des Moines Marathon Van Meter Industrial Pace Team Frequently Asked Questions

The IMT Des Moines Marathon offers pacers for the Marathon and Half Marathon. Whether you're running your 1st or 100th marathon, you can benefit from the support of a Pace Team.

What is a Pace Team?

A Pace Team is a group of runners who share the same finish time goal and run together during the race. The group is led by an experienced distance runner (i.e., a Pacer) who acts as a moving coach throughout the race. The Pacer's goal is to help the members of his/her team achieve the finish time goal by creating a team atmosphere and offering encouragement and advice. Because each Pacer has the capability of finishing the event faster than their specific finish time goal, they will devote their extra energy to assisting the members of their team.

How are Pacers selected?

All of the Pacers on the Van Meter Industrial Pace Team are volunteers giving back to the sport by helping others achieve their goals. Most of the Pacers come from Iowa and other Midwestern states. Both Marathon and Half Marathon Pacers are required to have finished multiple events at a time 15 to 30 minutes faster (marathon) or 5 to 10 minutes faster (half-marathon) than the goal time they are leading.

How do I join a Pace Team? What is the cost?

Stop by the Van Meter Industrial Pace Team booth at the Wellmark Blue Cross & Blue Shield Sports & Fitness Expo on Friday, October 16 from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. or Saturday, October 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to sign-up and get information provided by the Pacers.

Although sign-up is not required, it is appreciated so that the Pacers have some idea of the number of runners to expect at the start line. There is no cost for registered runners to join a Pace Team.

What pace times will be offered?

Based on availability of volunteer Pacers, Marathon goal times will be offered every 10 minutes from 3:00 to 4:00 hours and every 15 minutes from 4:00 to 5:30 hours. Half Marathon goal times will be offered every 10 minutes from 1:30 to 2:30 hours. Additional times could be added.

Check the Pacer bios on the IMT Des Moines Marathon web site to see what times will be offered. If you would like to volunteer to be a Pacer for one of the available times, please contact the Van Meter Industrial Pace Team Coordinator, Tara Thomas at davetara1118@msn.com for more information.

Will the Pacer's goal time be based on chip time or clock time?

The Pacers will be basing their chip time finish on their IPICO Sportag finish time.

What goal time should I strive for?

One way to select the proper goal time is to consult the Race Results Predictor at www.MarathonGuide.com. Using this tool can help you can base your desired finish time on a previous shorter race you've completed this season. It is very important not to start out too fast in the marathon and to select the proper pace based on your actual previous performance.

What if the weather conditions are less than ideal?

Depending on your overall fitness, you might want to shift to a slower goal time. The Pacers have been selected to pace times that are well within their capabilities and will be sticking to their finish goal times.



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Will I be able to meet my Pacer before the event?

The Van Meter Industrial Pace Team booth will be staffed with one or more Pacers throughout the Expo. A schedule will be posted at the booth showing when the specific Pacers will be available for personal consultations. Also, Pacer bios and pictures are posted on the IMT Des Moines Marathon web site.

How do I find my Pace Team at the start?

The Pacers will be located in the starting area at Nollen Plaza about 20 minutes before the start. Each Pacer will be holding a yellow (marathon) or red (half marathon) sign that has their goal finish time on it and wearing a Pace Team singlet of the same color. Go to your group and introduce yourself to your Pacer and fellow team members. About 10 minutes before the start the Pacer will give you some last minute instructions about the course, what to do if you need a break and his/her plan for going through the aid stations.

How will I be able to keep track of my Pacer?

Your Pacer will be wearing a bright yellow (marathon) or red (half marathon) singlet that says PACE TEAM and has his/her specific goal time on the back. Also, Pacers carry the goal finish time signs during the race.

If I join a Pace Team, do I have to stay with them for the entire marathon or half marathon?

No you don't. While many runners will stay with the Pacer from the first step to the last, just as many will come and go from your team throughout the race. It is important to listen to your own body and adjust your pace and ultimate goal if you find you're having a particularly good or bad day.

Will each Pace Team have the same Pacer for the entire marathon?

Yes. Each Pace Team will have one leader for the entire 26.2 or 13.1 miles. No tag teams here!!

Will the Pacer walk through the aid stations?

This depends on the Pacer. Handouts provided by each Pacer will be available at the Pace Team booth at the Expo and will include this type of information. If you're unable to stop by the booth, your Pacer will address this question before the race begins. If you need more time to take the proper amount of hydration than your Pacer's plan allows, stay back and catch up with your team after you've fully hydrated.

What if I need to take a porta-potty break?

The Pace Team will continue holding pace. It will be your responsibility to catch up with your team.

Will every mile split be exactly the same?

Pacers will maintain a steady pace with respect to the terrain.

What happens if the Pacer has an unexpected problem and is unable to continue?

The marathon is a challenging event and anyone can have a bad day. Hopefully, someone in your group would be willing to share leadership responsibilities & continue on. Remember that the synergy of a group with a specific goal will provide the incentive to continue and achieve your goal.

Let us know how it goes!

We will appreciate receiving feedback from you. Send an e-mail with your comments and suggestions to: Tara Thomas, Pace Team Coordinator at davetara1118@msn.