

DOES MUSIC MAKE YOU RUN FASTER?

The following text has sentences removed. Read the text and the sentences. Write the letter of the sentence that fits the gap.



Runner Adharanand Finn took part in an unusual race in order to test the theory that music can make you run faster.

An expert on the effects of music on exercise, Dr Costas Karageorghis, claims that listening to music while running can boost performance by up to 15%. To put this theory to the test, I took part in a special Rock 'n' Roll half marathon, which had groups of musicians playing at various points along the route.

As I lined up at the start with almost 4,000 other runners, a singer sang an inspiring song for us. It may explain why I got off to a good start. I only came eighth in the end, though, even though I'd just spent six months training hard. (1) However, it turns out that all the training may have affected my response to the music; according to the research, the benefits of listening to music decrease with the level of intensity of the running. 'Elite athletes,' says Karageorghis, 'tend to focus inwardly when they are running.' According to him, most other runners look for stimulus and distraction from what is going on around them.

'Judging by your time,' he says, 'you are one of the former.' It is true. Apart from the song at the start, when I was standing still, I can barely remember the music played along the course. The first act I passed, a folk group, made me smile, and at one point I found myself running in time to the beat of some hard rock. (2) I can't say they helped my performance very much. But what did other runners make of the music?

Adam Bull usually runs marathons with no music and little crowd support. (3) With the upbeat bands, you find yourself running to the beat, which helps. It also brings out people to cheer you on.' Rosie Bradford was also a convert. 'As we ran past one band and they started playing These Boots Were Made

for Walking, everybody suddenly went faster.' The only person I found who was less than happy with the music was Lois Lloyd. 'There wasn't enough of it, and I found it wasn't loud enough, so I ran with an MP3 player.' she said. (4) Karageorghis is not surprised when I tell him. 'There are many advantages to using your own player, rather than relying on the music on the course,' he says. 'It gives you a constant stimulus, rather than just an occasional one, and you can tailor the playlist to your taste.'

One runner told me there was a direct correlation between the quality of the music on the course and how much it helped. But quality, of course, is subjective. I remember feeling annoyed as I ran past one band playing Keep On Running. (5) Of course, the music was not only there to help runners break their personal bests (although sadly it was unable to help me beat mine), but to provide a sense of occasion, draw out the crowds and create a carnival atmosphere. (6) As I left, people were beginning to relax after the run, listening to an excellent rock band. It was a fitting way to end the day

- A. I need my music all the time.
- B. I think they knew why I found the music here so distracting.
- C. I enjoyed that for a few moments, but both of them came and went in a flash.
- D. Along with some spring sunshine, it certainly achieved that.

- E. Someone else, though, may have found it uplifting.
- F. I was, in fact, taking my running pretty seriously at that time.
- G. The music here has been great for my performance.