



[The Runner's Bucket List: 200 Races to Run Before You Die](#) by Denise Malan (reprinted with permission of Triumph Books, www.triumphbooks.com)

Chapter 18: Study Your History (pp. 224-225)

Freedom's Run

"An event for health and heritage"

With four national parks and three Civil War towns on the course, there's so much history packed into the Freedom's Run Marathon that it's hard to know where to start.

So let's just take it from the beginning.

The marathon starts in the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, where the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers meet. It's also the site of several historic events, including John Brown's famous raid and the largest surrender of Federal troops during the Civil War. The first loop is around Murphy Farm, where John Brown's fort was moved and preserved before being moved back to its original location.

From there, the course crosses the Potomac on a footbridge and turns north along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, another

national park better known as the C&O Canal, that remains as a testament to early transportation, engineering, and westward expansion.

After about 10 miles on the canal towpath, the course jogs inland to the solemn Antietam National Battlefield, site of the bloodiest one-day battle in American history, where 23,000 soldiers were killed, wounded, or went missing after 12 hours of combat. The battle ended the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia's first push into the North.

From the battlefield and nearby Sharpsburg, the course passes back across the Potomac to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where the steamboat was built and tested, and a finish in the football stadium of Shepherd University.

The half marathon starts in Shepherdstown and runs down the canal before joining the marathon course into Antietam. The 10K and 5K are run in Historic Shepherdstown.

Besides the marathon and related races in October, Freedom's Run offers several other races through historic sites in the area. Check out the Harpers Ferry Half Marathon, Run through History, or American Odyssey Relay (see the "Get Some Friends Together" chapter).

Location: Harpers Ferry to Shepherdstown, West Virginia (with most of the race in Maryland)

Date: October 4 2014

Distance: marathon, half marathon, 10K, 5K

Field Size: 3,000

Website: www.freedomsrun.org

Race Highlights: tour four national parks; run through the solemn Antietam National Battlefield