

## London Marathon: Runner with Down's syndrome's hoping for record

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Colette Hume - BBC News

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A teenage runner with Down's syndrome is hoping to make history as the youngest person with a learning disability ever to complete a marathon.

Lloyd Martin, 19, whose family is from Cardiff, will run the London Marathon on 21 April with his mum Ceri Hooper, 54, as his guide.

Guinness World Records has created a record title for Lloyd to attempt.

He would be the youngest person to complete a marathon in the intellectual impairment category (LL2).

"I love running with my mum. She's a marathon runner. I love her, she's a legend," Lloyd said.

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Mum Ceri said Lloyd had always talked about wanting to take on the 26.2 mile (42 km) race so, when he was offered a place in November, there was only one answer.

"Anything is possible and not just for those with Down's syndrome, literally anyone can run a marathon," he said.



Lloyd has been in training for about five months [BBC]

Ceri is the perfect coach for Lloyd - she has represented Wales since she was a teenager in cross country and track races.

She has run the London Marathon four times and also completed the Boston and Chicago races.

Lloyd has cheered her on at London, along with his brother Finlay and stepdad Gordon.

But getting Lloyd marathon ready in just five months was always going to be a challenge.

Although he has more than 30 Parkruns under his belt, until Christmas the weekly 5km (3 mile) timed run was the furthest distance he had ever completed.

Ceri had to create a bespoke training plan including a weekly long run to get Lloyd used to the rigours of being on his feet for several hours.



Lloyd and his brother Finlay have previously cheered on Ceri at the London Marathon [Family photo]

But before that, the family had to ensure Lloyd was healthy enough to take on the challenge.

Like many babies born with Down's syndrome, Lloyd was diagnosed with a hole in his heart.

He has been back to see doctors and he has been given a clean bill of health.

With just 11 days to go until the race, he is ready to go, and determined to cross the finish line with a smile on his face.



Crossing the line with a smile is Lloyd's main target [BBC]

He is also not worried about how long it might take.

"It's not about the time. It's about having fun with my family and staying together," he said.

"If I get tired or sore, I'll just keep going or I'll probably take a break for a few minutes, then rethink and then get running again.

"Just go with it, embrace it."

As he prepares for the biggest challenge of his life, Lloyd wanted to share the message:

"Don't take your dreams out of you, put the dreams in you and figure out what you can do because anything is possible."