



Press Releases 2014 – 98th Four Days Marches

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Press release 2016.001, 23 October 2013

1,000 days to the start of the 100th Four Days Marches

Special committee is making preparations for memorable anniversary edition

The countdown to the 100th edition of the Four Days Marches has begun. The anniversary edition of the world's biggest multi-day walking event is to be especially festive and memorable. The idea is for the 100th edition to be a 'normal' Four Days Marches in terms of the format. What is certain is that the high hopes entertained by some of a considerably larger number of participants will not be met. Regulations for participation in the 2016 Four Days Marches will be announced in the spring of 2014.

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE has set up a special committee in the form of a foundation that is currently in the process of formation and will be called *Stichting Honderdste Vierdaagse* (One Hundredth Four Days Marches Foundation) that will be in charge of preparations for the anniversary edition. On 23 October 2013 there were 1,000 days to go to the start of the 100th Four Days Marches, according to calculations by the committee. To mark that date as the official start date of the work of the Stichting Honderdste Vierdaagse, a huge countdown banner was suspended from one of the towers of Nijmegen's De Vereeniging concert hall.

The special date of 23 October 2013 was also taken as the occasion to announce the first plans for the anniversary edition. In general terms, the 2016 edition of the walking achievement event will not differ greatly from previous editions. As always, walkers will set off on their daily 30-kilometre, 40-kilometre or 50-kilometre walk in the third week of July, largely following the same routes as ever.

No 100,000 participants

Expansion of the army of walkers is possible only to a very limited degree. In terms of ensuring the enjoyment and safety of the walkers, the routes are already nearing their maximum capacity. And access to the region and the accommodations for overnight stays are also under pressure. The organisers are therefore exploring the possibilities of raising the current limit of 46,000 entries by a few thousand.

"Any speculations to that effect that are already doing the rounds now in the world of walking are unfounded. We need time to make a careful and reasonable assessment, and that's why we're calling for patience," said the organisers of the Four Days Marches in a statement.

Over 130 ideas

Over the past period, the organisers have received over 130 highly varied ideas on how to add an extra festive and sporty touch to the 100th Four Days Marches. The approximately 30 suggestions that were selected from these ideas will over the coming period be subjected to a feasibility study. The exact plans will gradually be announced over the coming two years, although some of the plans will be kept secret up to very last moment. There will in any case be an exhibition about the history of the Four Days Marches. The topic of sustainability will also be highlighted in various initiatives, such as the Four Days Marches Forest.

Organisation

Stichting Honderdste Vierdaagse, which is taking care of preparations for the 2016 Four Days Marches, is made up of volunteers who will provide input from the various disciplines they represent. Ron Adriaans, secretary of KNBLO, the Dutch Walking Association, is the chairman. The other members of the committee



are Jeannine Liebrand, Anneke Bruisten, Martine Willemstein, Marcel Claassen, Chris Crucq and Bram Brinkman.

A Recommendations Committee will also be set up. As soon as all the seats have been assigned, an announcement will be made of who will sit on the Recommendations Committee.

History of the Four Days Marches

On 3 April 1908, the Dutch Walking Association *Nederlandse Bond voor Lichamelijke Opvoeding* was founded. One of first things this new association did was to organise a four-day walking event in 1909, which was intended primarily for servicemen and women. Participants could start from any of 15 locations across the Netherlands. 306 walkers took part in that very first edition. Starting in Utrecht, the gradually growing army of walkers was put up at the Prins Hendrik barracks in Nijmegen on the third day of the 1912 edition, which also finished on the grounds of barracks on the fourth day. It turned out to be a successful experiment, as the walkers were regularly received in Nijmegen in subsequent years. In 1925, Nijmegen became the Four Days Marches permanent start and finish location.

The Four Days Marches have meanwhile grown into a high-profile sporting phenomenon in the Netherlands, with 46,000 entries every year, approximately 1 million people lining the routes, and many more following the event through the media.



PressRelease2014.001, 31 October 2013

Four Days Marches welcomes new main sponsor

Shoe manufacturer Hi-Tec's 'entry' on Nijmegen's Waalkade

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE got the flags out to welcome Hi-Tec Sports, the new main sponsor of the world's biggest multi-day walking event, in a festive gathering on Nijmegen's Waalkade.

Frank van Wezel, owner and founder of [Hi-Tec](#), signed the sponsorship contract for 2014, 2015 and 2016 on behalf of the company earlier this week. Hi-Tec will have the option of continuing its main sponsorship for another two years after 2016. Chairman Johan Willemstein and the man in charge of the Four Days Marches' financial affairs, Ab Schreurs, signed on behalf of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE.

International promotion

The new main sponsor turned up on the Waalkade in a fine promotional van, in which Frank van Wezel was accompanied by Sales Manager Marc van Lierop and Marketing Manager Sanne van Wilderen.

Hi-Tec Sports will make a significant contribution towards additional international promotion of our event, also using its own global distribution organisation. Walkers from some 75 countries take part in the Four Days Marches and almost all of these countries have Hi-Tec dealers or distributors.

In close collaboration with the Four Days Marches, Hi-Tec is developing initiatives to give the event a more modern look & feel to complement the gradually increasing number of younger walkers. Social media will be used more often and the brand will make itself known loudly and clearly at the start and finish area. Hi-Tec will also be closely involved in the celebrations for the 100th edition of the Four Days Marches in 2016.

Active in the world of walking

The partnership with Stichting DE 4DAAGSE is expected to help Hi-Tec significantly reinforce its hold on the active army of Dutch walkers. The outdoor and sport shoe brand has already been a familiar face in the Dutch world of walking for some years now, having sponsored the KNBLO-NL, the National Walking Programme, the Red Cross Blossom Walk and the Airborne Walk. Hi-Tec will also continue to sponsor these popular walking events, organised under the banner of KNBLO-NL, over the next few years.

'Infiltration in the Benelux'

"Sponsoring the Four Days Marches is a natural continuation of our plans to infiltrate the Benelux market," explains Frank van Wezel, founder and owner of Hi-Tec. "We first shifted our global head office from the UK to the Netherlands and then created over 300 sales outlets, including the online shop. We are now working on increasing brand awareness amongst the general public. We have already done this in numerous countries across the world, but it is something I would still like to achieve in my home country too. The Four Days Marches is a highly unique event which will allow us to do this and I am extremely proud that we have landed the sponsorship deal!"



Press release 2016.002, 22 January 2014

100th Four Days Marches open to maximum of 50,000

Advantage in 2016 registration for walkers who participated persistently from 2010

The maximum number of registrations will be increased to 50,000 exclusively for the 100th Four Days Marches in 2016. Walkers who have successfully completed the Four Days Marches at least four times between 2010 and 2015 will be guaranteed a starting ticket for the 100th edition. Civilian groups will also need to have walked the Four Days Marches as a group at least four times within this period. Military participants, participants aged 12 to 15 inclusive and first-time entrants registering through the Via Vierdaagse training and support programme will also be guaranteed a starting ticket.

Based on figures for previous years, the board of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE expects to have some 12,000 starting tickets available through the draw to the remaining 'non-exempt' participants. The draw will be weighted for many of these participants, according to the number of Four Days Marches Crosses they have already achieved. Participants excluded by the draw in 2014 and 2015 will also have a weighted, i.e. increased, chance in the draw.

One-off increase

A maximum of 50,000 walkers will be able to take part in the 100th Four Days Marches in 2016, instead of the 46,000 in recent years. This is a one-off increase. Stichting DE 4DAAGSE and its organisational partners – including the 12 Four Days Marches municipalities and the Dutch Ministry of Defence – need to take a range of complex measures in order to guarantee the safety and minimum walking comfort needed on the existing routes for 50,000 participants. It is not possible to make major changes to the route and the organisers will have their hands full keeping the army of 50,000 walkers moving in 2016.

Children

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE has opted to give the youngest participants preferential treatment, since "children are the future". Participants who turn twelve years old in the year that they walk the Four Days Marches have been exempt from the draw for years now, with some 400 new young walkers taking part each year as a result.

In due course, Stichting DE 4DAAGSE will specify the rules governing registration for the 100th Four Days Marches in a protocol. The key provisions of this protocol are being published now so as to prevent further speculation about the possibilities of guaranteed participation in 2016.



Press release 2014.003, 22 January 2014

Registration 98th Marches opens Monday 3 February

Registration for the 98th International Four Days Marches Nijmegen, to be held from 15 to 18 July this year, opens on Monday 3 February. The same registration procedure as last year will apply.

The registration limit for the 98th Four Days Marches has been set at 46,000. If the registration limit is exceeded, a draw will be held amongst first-time entrants, i.e. participants registering for reward 1. The registration fee for the 98th Four Days Marches is €50, just like in 2013. Members of KNBLO-NL and NWB will benefit from a discount of €5. Registration is only complete once the registration fee due has been paid using iDEAL (online payment through Internet Banking). One-off direct debit payments are no longer possible.

Two periods

As usual, there will be two registration periods this year. Registration period 1 is from midnight at the beginning of Monday 3 February to midnight at the end of Friday 28 February inclusive. Only those who successfully completed the 97th Four Days Marches last year may register during this first period. Girls and boys who turn 12 years old in 2014 may also register during the first period.

Registration period 2 is from midnight at the beginning of Monday 3 March to midnight at the end of Friday 4 April inclusive. All others wishing to take part in the 98th Four Days Marches can register during the second period.

The time of registration has no effect whatsoever on the registration, as long as it falls within the periods specified.

Draw

If necessary, a draw will be held on Friday 11 April amongst the individual civilian participants who have not previously earned the Four Days Marches medal. Three groups will be exempt from the draw - those born in 2002, those who were excluded by the draw from taking part in the 96th and 97th Four Days Marches and those who register through Via Vierdaagse.

Website

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE is expecting 99% of walkers to register for the Four Days Marches online once again. The complete regulations applicable to the 98th Four Days Marches and registration can be consulted on the official Four Days Marches website www.4daagse.nl.

Four Days Marches sponsored walk

When registering for the 98th Four Days Marches on 3 February, participants can also take part in the Four Days Marches sponsored walk. Anyone who registers for the Four Days Marches can create a personal campaign page at www.devierdaagsesponsorloop.nl and choose a charity to raise money for through sponsorship. Creating a campaign page on this site makes it easy for walkers to find sponsors and a charity, as well as facilitating the administrative side of things. What is more, the site comes with a guarantee that every last cent of the sponsor money will go the chosen charity.



Via Vierdaagse 2014

Registration for the training and preparation programme Via Vierdaagse 2014 opens at the same time as registration for the 98th Four Days Marches. With Via Vierdaagse, the Dutch walking association KNBLO-NL and Stichting DE 4DAAGSE aim to support up to 1,500 first-time entrants in achieving their first Four Days Marches Cross.

Only walkers who have never before achieved a Four Days Marches Cross and who are not yet members of KNBLO-NL can take part in Via Vierdaagse. Participation in Via Vierdaagse costs € 179, just like in 2013, and this includes the registration fee for the 98th Four Days Marches.

The withdrawal rate amongst Via Vierdaagse participants is significantly lower than amongst other first-time entrants. Registration opens at midnight at the beginning of Monday 3 February at www.viavierdaagse.nl, where more information about the training and preparation programme can also be found.



Press Release 2014.004, 24 February 2014

Four Days Marches added to National Inventory

On Wednesday 26 February, the Nijmegen Four Days Marches will be added to the Dutch National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

To mark the event, Johan Willemstein, chairman of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE, and Ineke Strouken, director of the Nederlands Centrum voor Volkscultuur en Immaterieel Erfgoed (VIE, Dutch Centre for Popular Culture and Intangible Heritage), will officially sign the relevant certificate. VIE is responsible for the implementation in the Netherlands of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Four Days Marches was held for the first time in 1909, when the marches started from different places all over the Netherlands. Nijmegen became the permanent starting point in 1925. Participants walk thirty, forty or fifty kilometres for four consecutive days, and receive a festive welcome on Via Gladiola on the fourth day, where they are also awarded the coveted Four Days Marches Cross. The Four Days Marches is the Netherlands' biggest walking event and now has 46,000 participants from 75 different countries.

Traditions and rituals

The event is a piece of intangible cultural heritage because of its traditions and rituals and the significance they have for participants and spectators, who are keen to maintain these traditions for the future.

One of the most colourful traditions is the renaming of Nijmegen's Sint Annastraat as 'Via Gladiola' during the walkers' entry on the final day, when friends and family await walkers with a bunch of gladioli as a reward for their achievement ('death or the gladioli' as the Romans used to say).

Giving tradition a future means working on that tradition. The Four Days Marches has always moved with the times, allowing women to participate from 1913 and walkers of other nationalities from 1928.

More recent developments include the provision of the 'Via Vierdaagse' voluntary training programme, the introduction of bar code cards to make registration run more smoothly and the introduction of lace chips and cameras en route to monitor congestion.

Heritage maintenance plan

When a piece of heritage is recommended for the National Inventory, a heritage maintenance plan must always be drawn up, setting out the tradition and its history, as well as any bottlenecks that may exist and step-by-step solutions to resolve these bottlenecks.

The National Inventory for Intangible Cultural Heritage was set up when the Netherlands signed the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This convention obliges the Netherlands to identify and document its intangible cultural heritage and create a climate in which it can flourish.



Press Release 2016.003, 4 April 2014

Trees planted for 100th Four Days Marches in 2016

Four Days Marches forest makes march routes even greener

The 'Four Days Marches forest' was unveiled on Friday 4 April 2014 in Park Lingezege, along the route of the first marching day of the Nijmegen Four Days Marches. The anniversary slogan for the hundredth Four Days Marches in 2016 has also been revealed - 'Wie wandelt wordt honderd' (Those who walk will turn 100).

The 100th edition of the Four Days Marches will be held in 2016 and will be even more festive than usual. A special committee has been preparing the anniversary activities for almost two years now. Following on from the celebration on 23 October 2013 (1,000 days to go to the 100th), the presentation of the Four Days Marches forest is the second milestone on the way to 2016. The young trees will grow into a beautiful forest in Park Lingezege, Overbetuwe municipality, over the next two years. The period of growth represents the build-up to the anniversary's climax - the start of the 100th Four Days Marches on 19 July 2016.

Green route

Walking and nature go hand in hand, and it is key for Four Days Marches participants to be able to enjoy a nice green route around Nijmegen. This is why the anniversary committee got in touch with Park Lingezege, situated between Nijmegen and Arnhem. The park's organisers were full of enthusiasm for the idea of a 'Four Days Marches forest'.

A location has been selected in the park along the route of the 'Day of Elst', on the corner of Breedlersestraat and Kattenleger, and the forest's first trees were planted there on the Netherlands' version of Arbor Day, 'Nationale Boomfeestdag', in March 2014.

Ecological stepping stone

The Four Days Marches forest has an area of around 2.5 hectares and contains thousands of trees, ranging from willow, poplar, oak, sweet cherry, hornbeam and hawthorn, to dog rose, alder buckthorn and one apple tree. The designers of the Four Days Marches forest, Jan Heersche and Astrid Harsveld of the Ministry of Economic Affairs' Government Service for Land and Water Management, also see the forest as an ecological stepping stone for the poplar admiral butterfly, which they hope will eventually start to inhabit the area between the Rhine and Waal.

A bench for walkers to rest on has also been placed next to the Four Days Marches forest. Flanked by a walnut tree, the bench was a gift from Stichting DE 4DAAGSE to Park Lingezege. Walkers will be encouraged through Four Days Marches media sources to help maintain 'their' forest.

Sustainability

As part of its sustainability measures (CO₂ reduction), Stichting DE 4DAAGSE is planning to facilitate new green areas at several points along the route over the next few years. They will look for suitable sites, in consultation with the municipalities the route passes through. The 'Four Days Marches vineyard' was already planted at winery De Colonjes in Groesbeek in 2013. The two thousand vines that were planted will hopefully produce the first 'Four Days Marches wine' in the anniversary year 2016.



Anniversary slogan and Recommendations Committee

The Four Days Marches forest was opened with the unveiling of a large sign bearing the anniversary slogan 'Wie wandelt wordt honderd' (Those who walk will turn 100). All other anniversary activities will also be presented with this motto. Members of the Recommendations Committee formed to support the anniversary committee unveiled the sign.

All sectors that are important for the Four Days Marches are represented in the Recommendations Committee:

Province of Gelderland: Clemens Cornielje, King's Commissioner in Gelderland.

Nijmegen City Council: Hubert Bruls, Mayor.

Dutch Ministry of Defence: Peter van Uhm, former Commander of the Armed Forces.

Health-care sector: Cathy van Beek, member of UMC St Radboud's Executive Board.

Sponsoring: Teun Verheij, Managing Director of Albron.

Sport: Olga Commandeur, former athlete and sport presenter.

Tourism: Jurriaan de Mol, Managing Director of Regiomarketing Gelderland.



Press release 2014.006, 11 April 2014

Record number of registrations

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE unfortunately has to disappoint 7,844 first-time entrants in the draw

53,844 people from all over the world have registered for the 98th Four Days Marches. Under supervision of a notary, 7,844 first-time entrants were excluded by the draw on Friday. Interest in the Four Days Marches was greater than ever this year, beating the 2005 record by 508 registrations. The number of walkers disappointed by the draw also broke the previous record.

A maximum of 46,000 starting tickets were available for the 2014 Four Days Marches, which will be held from 15 to 18 July. Organisers of the event, Stichting DE 4DAAGSE, think there has been such a rush on starting tickets this year due to the registration protocol for the 100th Four Days Marches.

“The protocol says that you need to have completed the Four Days Marches successfully at least four times between 2010 and 2015 in order to be guaranteed a starting ticket for the anniversary edition in 2016. A lot of walkers want to make sure they reach that target of 4. We are expecting the same to happen next year. This year and 2015 will be crucial to a lot of walkers - it's all about completing the marches!” explains Johan Willemstein, chairman of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE. Incidentally, the rule that being excluded by the draw twice in previous years automatically guarantees you a starting ticket for the next year will not apply to the 100th Four Days Marches.

Limit reached

The total number of registrations for the upcoming edition of the famous walking event topped last year's tally by 3,530. The number of first-time entrants registering remained roughly the same as in 2013. Due to the record number of walkers registering for reward 2 or higher this year, fewer first-time entrants will ultimately be able to start on 15 July.

“We'll have to wait and see whether we get closer to the limit of 46,000 actual participants with this record number of registrations,” says Willemstein. “Experience shows that just under 10% ultimately don't start the marches, and we took that into account when calculating the capacity of the routes. Every year we end up with around 42,000 participants, a number that can walk the daily routes safely and comfortably. I'm sure people who don't turn up have a good reason for that. We assume that everyone who registers would actually like to take part in the Four Days Marches.”

Duplicate registrations

Before the draw under supervision of the notary took place, all duplicate and other incorrect registrations were removed from Stichting DE 4DAAGSE's registration file. The results were announced at www.4daagse.nl immediately after the draw, and all participants will be informed personally of the outcome. Only a few individuals sent in a paper registration form, so they will be informed by post.

History

A draw had to be performed for the first time in 2005, for the 89th Four Days Marches. 53,336 walkers registered in that year and the limit was 47,500. 2003 holds the record for the number of starters, when 44,812 walkers turned up for the first day of the Four Days Marches.



Figures

Year	Limit	Registrations	Collected starting tickets	Draw
2005	47,500	53,336	43,498	Yes
2006	49,000	48,630	44,015	No
2007	49,000	42,270	38,171	No
2008	45,000	43,450	39,128	No
2009	45,000	48,317	41,205	Yes
2010	45,000	48,435	40,620	Yes
2011	45,000	47,684	42,812	Yes
2012	45,000	49,896	41,472	Yes
2013	46,000	50,314	42,493	Yes
2014	46,000	53,844		Yes



Press Release 2014.013 - 3 July 2014

'Keep it down please'

Announcements regarding noise, rubbish collection and toilet facilities

Turning down the volume on loudspeakers, throwing empty bottles and banana skins into the bin and refraining from using gardens and roadsides as a public toilet. Three easy ways in which Four Days Marches walkers and spectators can make a valuable contribution towards the sustainability of our event.

These annoyances also top the list of the ten biggest pet hates during the event, a list which was put together on the basis of feedback from walkers and spectators. The organisers of the Four Days Marches are waging war on these bad habits.

People living along the route are asked to keep noise to a minimum as the walkers pass through their areas and during the entry. In some cases, audio systems have been so loud that they have been a nuisance to walkers, spectators and neighbours. Chairman Johan Willemstein of Stichting DE 4DAAGSE and Nijmegen's mayor Hubert Bruls are making a heartfelt, simple plea: Keep it down, please.

Rubbish

Walkers and spectators are also kindly asked to use the numerous rubbish bins along the route, at the medical support posts and at De Wedren. As part of our sustainability drive, rubbish will be segregated at these locations. There will be separate bins for general waste and also for plastic, which will be recycled. "Throwing your rubbish in a bin takes hardly any effort!" says Johan Willemstein. "On the rare occasions where there is no bin nearby, just keep your litter with you until you can dispose of it properly. We all want a clean environment, don't we?"

Toilet facilities

The third but by no means least important request has to do with the use of toilets and temporary toilet facilities by Four Days Marches participants. The number of complaints from residents about people relieving themselves in gardens and along roadsides has not diminished, despite the hundreds of 'Bio Box' lavatories and other facilities placed at strategic spots along the route and at rest areas on each marching day.

These facilities, which can be used free of charge, are indicated by signs along the route, and on the maps published in the Four Day March Almanac. "Additionally there will be many private residences and restaurants/cafes where walkers can use the toilet facilities, either free of charge or for a small fee. Respect the landscape and private property and NEVER use non-designated areas as toilets!"



Press release 2014.014 - 3 July 2014

Four Days Marches launches handy tool for the road

Four Days Marches app for walkers and followers

Participants and visitors can use the official Four Days Marches app during the 98th Four Days Marches. The app for participants contains route maps for each day, specifying the locations of medical support posts, toilets and water stations.

It also provides information about the average walking speed, estimated time of arrival, the weather and even lets participants track fellow walkers. The app also features a handy almanac with answers to questions or problems walkers might encounter as they walk the Four Days Marches. And then there is the Blister King, a feature that lets participants keep a tally of their blisters so far. Hopefully the blister count will never get past zero.

Start scan

On walking days, the app is activated by scanning the bar code on the wristband at the start. The app can also be started manually, but this requires 'confirmation' by a start scan. If the wristband is not scanned at the start, the app will automatically switch off, and its features can then not be used.

The GPS feature on participants' telephones allows the Four Days Marches organisers to track where participants are on the route. This information - from thousands of walkers - is highly important to the organisers in supervising what is going on along the route and taking any measures required. The information tells them, for example, which parts of the route are (too) busy, and helps them decide whether to put back the finish time, or send additional blister prickers out to a medical support post. The data obtained over the four marching days through this app will only be used during the Four Days Marches. By logging on to the app, you are consenting to Stichting DE 4DAAGSE tracking your movements on the route.

Coverage

Mobile coverage depends on the user's provider. Mobile reception may not be optimal during the Four Days Marches, which may, of course, affect the use and performance of the app.

Running this app on the smartphone will consume additional battery power. For the sake of the smartphone's battery life, it is therefore better not to run this app continuously. The smartphone's location is transmitted at regular intervals.

Free for participants

The free app for participants will be available for download on the App Store, Google Play and Windows Phone Store from early July. When the app is opened, the registration is checked against the participant's registration number. People who are not registered cannot use the app.

Anyone else who is interested can download the app (for €1.99) to be able to track walkers and send location-based messages to walkers. Aside from that, the app provides handy information for visits to the Nijmegen area during the Four Days Marches. After downloading, some features of the app can already be



used. However, the actual 'tracking' and 'forecasting' will, of course, not begin until after the start on Tuesday morning.



Press release 2014.016 - 3 July 2014

Praise to our sponsored walkers

Four Days Marches Sponsored Walk pledged amount keeps on growing...

As the 98th Four Days Marches, to be held from 15 to 18 July, draws near, the sponsored walk is becoming more popular than ever. By the end of June, the amount pledged was already tens of thousands of euros higher than at the same time last year.

Not only is the number of charities increasing, the number of sponsored walkers and sponsors is also continuing to grow. At the end of June, almost 400 walkers had registered at www.devierdaagsesponsorloop.nl. They are supported by more than 5,000 sponsors and will be walking for over 120 charities.

Points for improvement

Dozens of charities have signed up for the Four Days Marches Sponsored Walk and are actively recruiting sponsored walkers. They have also put forward several improvements, which make the Four Days Marches Sponsored Walk even more attractive. For example, the contribution required from a sponsored walker to create a profile page on the website and use the system has been lowered. In some cases, the charities have offered to pay the fee of €19.50. Stichting DE 4DAAGSE, the organisation behind the Four Days Marches Sponsored Walk, will pay the bank charge of 50 cents for each donation.

Every little helps

Visitors to devierdaagsesponsorloop.nl have also suggested improvements. "I and one of my sponsors noticed that the order in which sponsors are displayed is based on the amount of their pledge. So someone who pledges 100 euros, for instance, will be at the top of the list, whilst someone pledging 5 euros will be at the bottom," says student Sophie Venbrux (20), who will be raising money for the KWF-Radboud Oncology Fund. "Since every little helps, I would prefer sponsors to be displayed by date. It would be great if you could implement this suggestion!"

Fantastic

Sophie Venbrux concludes: "Finally, I would like to say that it doesn't matter how much you give or what you do, but that simply giving and therefore doing something is fantastic!"

Sophie's suggestion was immediately taken on board and the website has been adapted!



Press release 2014.017 - 3 July 2014

Pluryn takes a closer look at the Four Days Marches

Ambition from 2015: service partnership with 'The Walk of the World'

Just before the start of the 98th Four Days Marches, Pluryn (organisation for youth and disabled care) entered into an introductory agreement with Stichting DE 4DAAGSE. The aim is to find out whether Pluryn can act as a service partner for the Four Days Marches organisation as of 2015.

Pluryn will be taking a closer look at the Four Days Marches during the upcoming edition. "As an organisation with strong ties to Nijmegen, Pluryn is of course familiar with the Four Days Marches. But this year, in consultation with Stichting 4DAAGSE, we want to explore the possibility of deploying our services such as the print service and cleaning, multimedia and general support teams to support the work of the Four Days Marches' Executive Committee's volunteers," explains Pluryn's Marketing Director Marian Draaisma.

Manpower

Marian Draaisma sees further collaboration with the Four Days Marches as an opportunity for Pluryn "to expressly profile the service contributions our client base can provide."

Pluryn's marketing director sees several links between her organisation and the Four Days Marches. "Both organisations have a strong service-oriented character and both are actively engaged in promoting fitness. The two organisations also work in same areas (Gelderland, northern Limburg and north-eastern Brabant)," she says. "In addition, Pluryn's themes of 'Sterk', or 'Strong', and 'Helden', or 'Heroes', fit in perfectly with the character of the Four Days Marches. Both organisations can clearly demonstrate their community involvement and commitment through this collaboration."

Across the Netherlands

Pluryn looks after the most demanding target groups in disabled and youth care and supports clients with living, working, education and leisure. Pluryn has over 3,000 clients, 3,500 staff and hundreds of volunteers. The organisation is well-known amongst young people and adults in need of care across the Netherlands.



Press release 2014.019 - 3 July 2014

Meet & Greet now entirely on Oranjesingel

More space and improved flow on Friday afternoon following the Four Days Marches entry

Having the 'Meet & Greet' for walkers, families and other supporters completely on Oranjesingel will reduce overcrowding on De Wedren and improve the flow of pedestrians heading for the city centre and station.

As of the 98th Four Days Marches, the 'Meet & Greet' facility will be located entirely on Oranjesingel, on the part between Prins Bernhardstraat and Staringstraat. Facilities such as catering and sponsor shops, which were formerly located at the Meet & Greet site on Van Schevichavenstraat will be given a new spot on Oranjesingel.

The decision to move away from the former location was made in close cooperation with Nijmegen City Council and Stichting Vierdaagsefeesten, and it is a win-win situation. Moving to Oranjesingel, which is larger than the Van Schevichavenstraat location, will relieve pressure on De Wedren, which will be full of walkers heading for the finish. The flow of pedestrians towards the Four Days Marches Festivities in the city centre will also be facilitated by using Van Schevichavenstraat, and the same goes for the pedestrian routes to the railway station, a lot of which run through the city centre (e.g. Van Welderenstraat) on the Friday afternoon of the entry.

To access Oranjesingel from De Wedren, you can take the northern part of Bijleveldsingel and Staringstraat. Prins Bernhardstraat will be closed between De Wedren and the city centre, as that is the walkers' access route. What is more, there will be grandstands on Prins Bernhardstraat.



Press release 2014.020 - 3 July 2014

Mobile solar power station at medical support posts

Trial to reduce CO2 emissions and noise pollution from power generators

A mobile solar power station will be trialled in 2014 to provide energy for the medical support posts along the route of the 98th Four Days Marches.

As part of its sustainability drive, Stichting DE 4DAAGSE has agreed upon a pilot project with two specialists in this field, 100% Zonnig and BBCC Advies from Wijchen.

Electrical equipment used at medical support posts, such as refrigerators, kettles, coffee makers, lamps, heated seat cushions and fans, will not require power from a generator, thanks to the deployment of mobile solar power. As a result, noise pollution and CO2 emissions from fuel-based power generators are avoided.

Stichting DE 4DAAGSE and the specialist companies will use this trial to explore the possibilities for lowering the CO2 footprint of support posts in this area. Exact figures on the emission reductions will be announced in the evaluation phase.

Deployment of a mobile solar power station is part of efforts to power the event with up to 100% renewable locally generated energy.

The solar panels have been installed on the roof of a VW T2a camper van and an attached trailer.



Press release 2014.02315 July 2014

Main sponsor shoots 43,013 walkers on their way

Frank van Wezel, owner of Hi-Tec Sports, fires starting shot for 98th Four Days Marches

A countdown from ten to zero, a dry gunshot, thousands of cheers and the 43,013 participants in the 98th Four Days Marches were on their way. As the new main sponsor of the International Four Days Marches Nijmegen, Frank van Wezel, owner and chairman of Hi-Tec Sports, had the honour of firing the starting shot for the 98th Four Days Marches. Under the watchful eye of march leader Johan Willemstein, Van Wezel fired the starting shot for the 50 kilometre walkers and later also for those walking 40 and 30 kilometres.

Before firing the shot, Van Wezel gave a quick pep talk, emphasising that Hi-Tec Sports wants to take walking as a sport to a higher lever in the Netherlands and internationally, and that sponsoring the Four Days Marches is the perfect way of doing that.

In the dark hours before dawn, with ideal weather conditions and loud encouragement from hundreds of keen Four Days Marches fans, the 50 kilometre walkers started out on their first day of marching, the Day of Elst. This day traditionally takes all walkers along routes of 30, 40 or 50 kilometres out of Nijmegen over the bridge and into the Betuwe region.

43,013 of the 46,000 who had registered for the 98th Four Days Marches signed in on Sunday and Monday. This was 520 more than in 2013, when 42,493 of the 46,000 ultimately started the marches.



Press release 2014.025, 15 July 2014

Extra water and first aid for hot weather

Four Days Marches takes precautions for Friday's entry

Since temperatures of around thirty degrees have been forecast for Friday afternoon during the entry of the 98th Four Days Marches, the event's organisers are arranging additional water stations along the final 10 kilometres and the planned Dutch Red Cross first aid posts will also be reinforced. The necessity of further measures will be reviewed on the basis of weather forecasts later this week.

"Rising temperatures with only a slight breeze have been forecast for Friday, and this breeze will not bring any relief to our walkers as they hit Via Gladiola in Malden. It will also be rather warm as they walk the last few metres amongst the thousands of spectators," said march leader Johan Willemstein, looking back over the first marching day of the 98th Four Days Marches on Tuesday afternoon.

Withdrawals

715 walkers either withdrew on the Day of Elst during the 98th Four Days Marches, or did not start the march that day at all (2013 figure: 917). 42,298 walkers will therefore start tomorrow's Day of Wijchen and Beuningen. Tuesday morning saw 43,013 participants take up their places at the start, 520 more than last year. According to the march leader, this increase is down to the fact that many walkers are hoping to complete the Four Days Marches successfully four times by 2015 so as to secure their starting tickets for the 100th Four Days Marches, due to take place in 2016.

2014's first marching day went smoothly with no noteworthy incidents. One person was successfully resuscitated on Oosterhoutsedijk just outside Lent, whilst a few more people than usual turned out to be feeling unwell at the end of the afternoon at start and finish location De Wedren.



Press release 2014.027, 16 July 2014

Additional en-route water stations

Four Days Marches measures against the heat remain in force

Since the weather forecasts for Thursday and Friday have remained the same, the precautionary measures previously announced by the Four Days Marches organisation will remain in force.

Stocks of water at the existing water stations on Zevenheuvelenweg will be increased tomorrow, on the Day of Groesbeek, whilst additional water stations will be placed along the route on Friday. Whereas six water stations had originally been planned, another two will now be added, bringing Friday's total up to eight water stations, five of which will be along the last fifteen kilometres from Cuijk. They will be located at the medical support post near the pontoon bridge in Cuijk, in Mook, in Malden, on Scheidingsweg (Charlemagne) and at the start and finish location itself, in Julianapark.

The Dutch Ministry of Defence has been asked to move its medical support post from Overasselt to Charlemagne as soon as the last walkers have left Overasselt. Fifty first-aiders are usually stationed on Via Gladiola, but this Friday there will be 75. Tomorrow morning, the Ministry of Defence will advise the organisation on whether or not to modify the kit requirements for military servicemen and women.

Aside from that, the march leader is relying on the traditional generosity of those living along the route, who usually provide the walkers with plenty of water. Advice previously issued about covering the head and neck and continuing to eat and drink well still applies.

Disqualifications

Five walkers were disqualified on Tuesday, four of whom had failed to walk the regulation distance and one of whom was cycling on the route. Another participant was disqualified today for failing to walk the regulation distance, whilst a military participant was given a yellow card because his kit only weighed 9.6 kilos instead of the regulation 10 kilos.



Press Release 2014.28 - 17 July 2014

Earlier start for tomorrow's Four Days Marches

Organisation adapts measures, military participants to march without 10kg extra kit

Due to the high temperatures expected tomorrow, the starting times for 30km and 40km participants in the 98th Four Days Marches have been brought forward. The 30km walkers will start at 7am, whilst the 40km participants will start in two groups, at 5am and 6am. Military participants will no longer be required to march with 10kg of additional kit tomorrow.

These measures are in addition to those already announced, involving extra water to be provided for the walkers, an extra medical support post and extra Dutch Red Cross first-aiders. The measures will see the 30km and 40km walkers start 30 and 15 minutes earlier than usual respectively. Due to logistical and organisational reasons, an earlier start for the 50km walkers is not possible.

The Four Days Marches march leaders also advise walkers to wear clothing suitable for the high temperatures forecast for tomorrow. The Four Days Marches' weather team is expecting the mercury to hit 31oC around 2pm tomorrow. "This advice is primarily aimed at those wearing uniforms during the entry on Via Gladiola. Military detachments, police officers and customs officials are free to decide for themselves whether they want to walk the entry in full uniform, or whether they want to wear clothes more suited to the heat," explains Henny Sackers, deputy march leader.

The measures were adapted once the Four Days Marches weather team had established that tomorrow's maximum temperatures will end up being higher than previously expected. The forecasts for today (Thursday) proved to be accurate, but tomorrow, the day of the entry of the 98th Four Days Marches, will see 50km walkers start with temperatures of 16 to 18oC at 4am, with the mercury quickly rising to 20oC at 8am, 25oC at 10am and 31oC by 2pm. Low humidity and a wind of force 3 on the Beaufort scale are also forecast and there may even be some slight smog.

The advice to walkers to eat and drink well still applies, and participants are also advised to keep moving should any blockages on the route occur. Spectators are kindly asked to provide walkers with water, but not to spray them, as this would cause increased humidity. Together with bus company Connexxion, the Four Days Marches organisation will arrange air-conditioned buses in which grandstand spectators can cool off.



Press release 2014.029, 17 juli 2014

Four Days Marches app should be used properly

Two basic instructions in order for the app to work properly

Two basic instructions need to be followed in order to enable optimum performance of the Four Days Marches 4Walker and 4Follower apps that were launched last week. Failure to follow these instructions will result in the app not working as expected.

A limited number of users and 'experts' complained a lot about faults during the first days that the app was in use. "4Follower can only track participants properly if the participants in question have an internet connection. However, it is a misunderstanding to think that participants can be tracked in real time. In order to save the telephone's battery, the app has been programmed to send information every 20 minutes. Without an internet connection, the walker's new location cannot be resent and therefore the data needed for 4Follower cannot be refreshed," explains Ardo van Kampen, Head of Knowledge & Innovation at Stichting De 4DAAGSE. "A second requirement is answering the question "Do you wish to be tracked?", which is asked in the 4Walker app," continues Van Kampen. "The 4Walker app has already been downloaded over 20,000 times and more than half of the users specified that they do not wish to be tracked. If that option is disabled, it makes sense that nobody will be able to track the participant in question. So this is not a fault - it is a user's carefully considered decision."

In order to ensure that the app is only used by people with a genuine interest in the marches, the organisation charges a small fee for 4Follower. This also prevents traffic on the system becoming too great.

The app has been developed especially for the Four Days Marches, and is based on a complex system of data collection and sending, which has been fully adapted to suit the Four Days Marches' registration processes and data systems. It was therefore not possible to test the app at other events.

There has been a long wait for updates for the iOS version of the Four Days Marches app to be released in the App Store, but they are now also available for download. Users are advised to reset the app every day. The extra water stations and additional medical support post that will be set up along the route on Friday will be added to Friday's route maps and information.



Press release 2014.030, 18 July 2014

Four Days Marches sends condolences

"Shocked by the events surrounding the crash yesterday afternoon in Ukraine, the participants in the 98th Four Days Marches, the organizers and all their partners in this international walking event declare their deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the disaster."



Press release 2014.031

Restraint during 98th Four Days Marches

Following yesterday's plane crash, the last day of the Four Days Marches will be marked with only very modest celebrations.

The decision has been made to eliminate all music from the Four Days Marches today. There will be no music during the entry and on De Wedren. "Fanfare music would not be appropriate today," says march leader Johan Willemstein. The City of Nijmegen and Stichting DE 4DAAGSE are advising spectators along the route not to make or play music and to celebrate walkers' completion of the marches in a fitting manner. The usual mark of honour will still be paid to special walkers during the entry, including the youngest and oldest walkers.

Against tradition, flags will not be shown today and all Dutch flags at start and finish location De Wedren and along the route will fly at half-mast. All international flags will be lowered. Consultations are currently taking place with entrepreneurs who had received a music permit, but it is expected that they will also cancel the musical performances planned. The traditional mayor's reception in Cuijk has also been cancelled.

The Four Days Festivities will adapt their programme and also cease to display flags. Walter Hamers, chairman of the Four Days Festivities' board has called upon entrepreneurs to show restraint. "We have asked the oompah bands to 'leave it' for today." The festivities will stop at midnight and a city-wide minute's silence will be observed on Plein '44 at 8pm.

Mayor of Nijmegen Hubert Bruls, march leader Johan Willemsteim and Walter Hamers opened this morning's press conference by expressing their condolences for the relatives of the plane crash victims.



Press Release 2014.032, 18 July 2014

Festive Via Gladiola during modest Marches

Despite the plane crash in Ukraine and the resulting adaptations to the festivities for the 98th Four Days Marches, the atmosphere on Via Gladiola was one of elation and celebration. Not having music during the entry did not stop spectators and walkers from turning the day into a party. There was an excellent atmosphere on St. Annastraat, which is renamed Via Gladiola for this one day of the year.

Spectators compensated for the lack of music by singing, clapping and shouting words of encouragement. Walkers understood the measure and did not seem to mind the lack of enthralling sounds. Numerous bands who only heard about the measures once they had already set off for Nijmegen decided to continue their journey anyway. They walked down Via Gladiola without their instruments, but in full costume, to loud applause from the spectators. The atmosphere on De Wedren was also good, albeit slightly quieter than in previous years.

Walkers braved the heat without any major problems, partly by following the march leaders' advice, protecting their heads and necks well and eating and drinking properly. The additional water stations along the last 15km of the route were really appreciated.

The oldest anniversary walkers finished at around 3pm. Bert van der Lans of Nijmegen completed the Four Days Marches for the 67th time this year, making him the new record holder. Dick Koopman of Oudorp completed his 65th Four Days Marches and was presented with a special medal by march leader Johan Willemstein. The youngest participants, including Tim Vloet of Beuningen, Mees Hofman of Arnhem, Ysa Witte of Nijmegen and Lena Gemmink of Uift, also finished the marches at 3.30pm. Lena Gemmink announced that she had "no blisters and will definitely be back next year!".



Press release 2014.034, 19 July 2014

Danish decoration for the Four Days Marches

March leader Johan Willemstein honoured on behalf of organisation

The day after the entry of the 98th Four Days Marches, the event's organisers were decorated with the Danish Home Guard Meritorious Service Medal. March leader Johan Willemstein received the decoration on their behalf.

Colonel Peck, leader of the Danish military delegation, presented Johan Willemstein with the high military decoration for 'exceptional services provided by the Four Days Marches to Danish military servicemen and women since 1964'. 1964 was the first year in which a Danish detachment of military servicemen and women took part in the Four Days Marches.

In his speech accompanying the presentation of the Danish Home Guard Meritorious Service Medal, Colonel Peck highlighted the importance of the Four Days Marches' contribution "towards camaraderie, team spirit and fraternisation amongst both military and civilian participants".

Staff aide at Camp Heumensoord Derk de Vries also received the same decoration from the Danish detachment earlier in the Four Days Marches week.