

Comrades 2024 Robert Mtshali Program by Lindsey Parry – Official coach of the Comrades Marathon Association:

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Our goals for 2023 are 3-fold: 1) to continue to improve your consistency and capacity to do work 2) Make you a stronger and faster runner 3) to qualify with a sub 4:00 Marathon.

On the way to achieving the sub 4hr Marathon we will look to break the following times:

5km:	24:40
8km:	40:35
10km:	51:00
15km:	1:19:15
21.1km:	1:54:00
20 Miles/32km:	2:59:30

Moving the qualifier forward slightly means we can get into a better training groove early in 2024, opening the door to either improving your speed a bit more or doing another qualifier if necessary. Particularly with Comrades falling on the 9th of June in 2024.

For the 2024 Comrades, I have also considered the stats, kindly provided to me by Mark Dowdeswell and Comrades to plan the programme. The main changes will be seen in Jan to June 2024, and to plan the pacing charts.

Training for a Robert Mtshali and getting a Sub 4:00 Marathon are no Guarantee for achieving a Robert Mtshali finish. Based on my experience and discussions with runners who were not successful, this year and in past years, I have come up with a few possible reasons for this.

Your Robert Mtshali is at risk if your Sub 4hr was:

- Achieved at Sea Level (3:50)
- Achieved on a downhill course (3:50)
- Achieved in temperatures lower than 19 degrees Celsius (3:50)
- You do not follow a very strict, conservative race plan (3:50)
- It is compounded by combing 2 or more of these factors (3:44)

(In brackets, I have put down what I believe to be more appropriate times in these conditions)

Who should follow this programme?

- Comrades finishers who have run sub 10hrs30
- Comrades Novices who can run a half Marathon in sub 1hr55
- Comrades Novices who have come close to/or have broken 4hrs for a Marathon

If you do not fall into these categories, then read through the introduction to the other programme options to select the appropriate programme. **DO NOT** follow this programme thinking that the extra mileage will guarantee a finish. The biggest single threat to you finishing Comrades is getting injured, place a premium on recovery and ensuring this through following the appropriately designed programme for you.

This programme is time based so people of more experience and greater running ability will get relatively more out of the programme and progress faster. Time based programmes also prevent you from settling on a route that you need to run faster every time you do it. It is easier to maintain discipline and run easy on the easy days. I must again emphasise here that being injury free and consistent in your training is the key to a successful race, easy days are there to ensure full recovery so you can get the most out of every days training.

There are recovery weeks built into the programme every 4 weeks, do not be tempted to do more as this will only compromise you later in the programme, leading to injury, illness and under performance in goal races.

Training days are interchangeable, if your club has Time Trials (TT) on a Tuesday or Wednesday you can swap Thursday with one of these days.

If you did not run Comrades and have been training consistently for several weeks already, you can adapt this programme to focus on races in September and October.

For the dates of races in your area you can go to www.runnersguide.co.za for a full fixture list.

Training Paces:

Easy (E): 5:40-6:15/km
 Long (L): 5:45-6:30/km
 Recovery (rec): 6:20-6:45/km
 Hills: 5:06-5:13/km
 800m: 3:37-3:48 (4:30-4:45/km)
 RP: 5:41/km

These paces are a guide for someone who is training for a 4hr Marathon, aim to run at or around these paces taking note of how easily you recover.

Enjoy the training!

July 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 July						55min E running	30min E running
3 July	REST	45min E running	REST	50min E running	REST	1hr E running	40min E running
10 July	REST	50min E running	REST	55min E running	REST	1hr10 E running	50min E running
17 July	REST	55min E running	REST	1hr E running	REST	55min E running	1hr E running
24 July	REST	45min E running	REST	15min E; 5km TT; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	40min E running
31 July	REST						

August 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Aug		15min E; 4x2min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr 05 E running	REST	1hr30 LSD running	1hr10 E running
7 Aug	REST	15min E; 5x2min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr10 E running	REST	1hr40 LSD running	1hr20 E running
14 Aug	REST	15min E; 6x2min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr15 E running	REST	1hr50 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running
21 Aug	REST	45min E running	REST	15min E; 5km TT; 10min E	REST	1hr E running	45min E running
28 Aug	REST	15min E; 8x1min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running			

September 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Sep					REST	2hr LSD running	1hr40 LSD running
4 Sep	REST	15min E; 9x1min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	REST	2hr15 LSD running	1hr50 LSD running
11 Sep	REST	15min E; 10x1min Hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	REST	2hr30 LSD running	2hr LSD running
18 Sep	REST	45min E running	REST	15min E; 8km TT; 10min E	REST	1hr30 LSD running	1hr E running
25 Sep	REST	15min E; 6x3min repeats, 1min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	REST	2hr45 LSD running	

October 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Oct							2hr LSD running
2 Oct	REST	15min E; 6x3min repeats, 1min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	REST	3hrs LSD running	2hrs LSD running
9 Oct	REST	15min E; 6x3min repeats, 1min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E running	REST	2hrs30 LSD running	1hr30 LSD running
16 Oct	REST	45min E running	REST	15min E; 8km TT; 10min E	REST	1hr30 E running	1hr20 E running
23 Oct	REST	15min E; 12x90sec repeats, 1min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr E running	REST	1hr E run	1hr E run
30 Oct	REST	10min E; 10x30sec marathon pace, 30sec rec; 5min E					

November 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Nov			REST	15min E running	15min E running with 5x30sec pick ups OR REST	Marathon	REST
6 Nov	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST	REST
13 Nov	REST	20min rec run	REST	30min rec run	REST	40min rec run	1hr E running
20 Nov	REST	45min E run	REST	1hr E run	REST	1hr15 E run	1hr E run
27 Nov	REST	1hr E run	REST	1hr E run			

December 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Dec					REST	1hr30 E run	1hr E run
4 Dec	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	1hr45 E run	1hr E run
11 Dec	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	2hr E run	1hr E run
18 Dec	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	1hr15 E run	REST	2hr E run	1hr E run
25 Dec	Merry Christmas	1hr E run	REST	1hr E run	REST	1hr E run	45min E run