Comrades 2023 Finishers Programme by Lindsey Parry – Official coach of the Comrades Marathon Association:

The finishers programme is a unique programme and offering for runners who have literally taken up running so that they can finish the Comrades in 2023. For that reason, the programme starts at a very basic level and builds up to a later qualifier than the other plans in 2023.

Our goals for 2023 are 3-fold: 1) to build you up, injury free and health work 2) Make you confident that you too can be a runner 3) to finish a half marathon or 2 in 2022.

In building this plan I have considered the finisher stats kindly provided to me by The Comrades Marathon Association to plan the programmes as follows:

66.9% of **H** Batch starters (sub 4hr50 Marathon) finish under the official 12hr finish time, while 84.4% of **G** Batch (Sub 4:40 Marathon) starters receive a Finishers Medal. The degree of difficulty increases because G Batchers take on average 5:15 to cross the start line and H batchers take 5:35 – these are to date the highest finisher % from these 2 groups.

From these stats, a sub 4:50 qualifier does not guarantee a finish. Meticulous preparation and pacing on race day are key. What is of great importance is that the majority did finish and so it IS POSSIBLE.

You are at greater risk of not finishing if qualifying was:
- Achieved at Sea Level (4:45)
- Achieved on a downhill course (4:45)
- Achieved in temperatures lower than 19 degrees Celsius (4:45)
- You do not follow a very strict, conservative race plan (4:45)
- It is compounded by combing 2 or more of these factors (4:40)

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

The programme for the rest of 2022 will be based around developing consistency as this will be the most crucial factor in determining your 2023 Comrades race day success. Secondly, it is very important to take note of how hard the down run is on your legs. The eccentric load (pounding) on your legs is extremely high, to help prepare for this, strength training is highly recommended for the down run.

The earlier you start with your strength programme, the sooner you will be used to the added work and the lower the impact will be on your programme. My suggestion is to do your strength training on 2 of your 3 rest days in the week, leaving at least 1 full day between each gym session.

Who should follow this programme?

- Anyone who wants to start running

If you are an experienced runner, but your Half Marathon time is slower than 2:15 or you have completed Comrades, you can follow the Bronze programme. It is however important to follow the pacing guidelines in this programme. 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.

Time based programs 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.

The aim is to be *capable* of running a sub 4:50 marathon before Comrades. However, we will not look to finish a Marathon this year and attempt to qualify in early 2023 once you have a little more training in the bag.

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.

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):	6:56-7:25/km
Long (L):	7:00-7:41/km
Recovery (rec):	7:30-8:05/km

These paces area guide for someone who is training for a 4hr30 Marathon, aim to run at or around these paces taking note of how easily you recover.

Contact me:
Coach.parry@gmail.com
@LindseyParryZA
@AskCoachParry
www.facebook/ComradesCoach

Enjoy the training!

October 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26 Sep	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 1min, walk 4min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 1min, walk 4min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 1min, walk 4min x 4	Walk 5min E; Jog 2min, walk 3min x 5
3	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 2min, walk 3min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 2min, walk 3min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 2min, walk 3min x 4	Walk 5min E; Jog 3min, walk 2min x 5
10	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 3min, walk 2min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 3min, walk 2min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 3min, walk 2min x 4	Walk 5min E; Jog 4min, walk 1min x 5
17	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 4	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min, walk 1min x 5
24	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min, walk 1min x 6
31	REST						

November 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1		Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 3
7	REST	Walk 5min E; 30min E, walk as needed	REST	10min rec; 5km TT, walk as needed, 5min cool down	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 7	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 4
14	REST	Walk 5min E; 35min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 35min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 8	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 5
21	REST	Walk 5min E; 40min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 40min E, walk as needed		Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 9	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 6
28	REST	Walk 5min E; 45min E, walk as needed	REST				

December 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1				Walk 5min E; 45min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min; 50min E, walk as needed	1hr10 E, walk as needed
5	REST	Walk 5min E; 35min E, walk as needed	REST	10min rec; 5km TT, 5min cool down	REST	Walk 5min; 1hr E, walk as needed	1hr20 E, walk as needed
12	REST	Walk 5min E; 50min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 50min E, walk as needed	REST	1hr10 E, walk as needed	1hr30 E, walk as needed
19	REST	Walk 5min E; 55min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 55min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 15min E	**Christmas Day**
26	Boxing Day	Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	1hr20 E, walk as needed	**New Year's Day**