

Comrades 2023 Robert Mtshali Program by Lindsey Parry – Official coach of the Comrades Marathon Association:

This year we will be doing things just a little bit differently, the changes in the programme are due to us having 8 months to prep for 2023. The major change will be doing our Qualifier in late Feb/early March to allow for full recovery from 2022 and preparing well for 2023.

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 3:30 Marathon.

On the way to achieving the sub 4:00 Marathon we will look to break the following times:

5km:	25:15
8km:	41:20
10km:	52:25
15km:	1:20:45
21.1km:	1:56:00

In putting this plan together, I have also considered the 2022 stats, kindly provided to me by The Comrades Marathon Association as follows:

32.5% of **D** (sub 4hrs) Batch Starters finish the race under 10:00 hours. The degree of difficulty increases because D Batchers take on average 2:26.

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

Your Bill Rowan is at risk if your Sub 4:00 is borderline and:

- Achieved at Sea Level (3:53)
- Achieved on a downhill course (3:55)
- Achieved in temperatures lower than 19 degrees Celsius (3:57)
- You do not follow a strict, conservative race plan (3:53)
- It is compounded by combining two or more of these factors (3:50)

(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 10hr30
- Comrades Novices who can run a half Marathon in sub 2hr
- Comrades Novices who have come close to/or have broken 4hr10 for a Marathon

If you do not fall into these categories, then read 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 more out of the programme and progress faster. 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 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 October and November.

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

In closing, the down run offers a unique challenge in terms of the eccentric load (Pounding). It is therefore highly recommended that you start following a strength programme now to ensure your legs are strong come June 20123.

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: 4:30-4:45/km
 400m: 4:15-4:30/km
 RP: 5:41/km

These paces are a guide for someone who is training for a 3hr30 Marathon, aim to run at or around these paces taking note of how easily you recover.

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Enjoy the training!

October 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26 Sep	REST	30min E	REST	40min E	REST	45min E	30min E
3	REST	45min E	REST	40min E	REST	1hr E	45min E
10	REST	50min E	REST	40min E	REST	1hr15 E	50min E
17	REST	1hr E	REST	50min E	REST	1hr30 L	1hr E
24	REST	45min E	REST	30min E	REST	1hr E	45min E
31	REST						

November 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1		45min E	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr30 L	1hr E
7	REST	1hr E run	REST	1hr15 E	REST	1hr45 L	1hr15 E
14	REST	15min E; 4x2min hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr15 E	REST	2hr L	1hr15 E
21	REST	15min E; 5x2min hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr15 E	REST	2hr L	1hr15 E
28	REST	1hr E run	REST				

December 2022:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1				15min E run; 8km TT; 10min E run	REST	90min L run	45min e run
5	REST	15min E; 6x2min hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr30 L	REST	2hr L run	1hr15 E run
12	REST	15min E; 7x2min hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr30 L	REST	2hr L run	1hr15 E run
19	REST	15min E; 8x2min hill repeats; 10min E	REST	1hr30 L	REST	2hr L	Christmas Day
26	Boxing Day	40min E	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr E (old years 10km if there is one)	New Year's Day