

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

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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 2024. For that reason, the programme starts at a very basic level and unlike all the other programmes on the site the aim will be to Qualify in February 2024.

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

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.

The following are some stats, the intention is not to scare or discourage you, but it is critical that you do understand that this is a tough race, and it will consume much of you from March next year until 17:30 pm on 9 June 2024.

45% of **H** Batch starters (sub 4hr50 Marathon) finish under the official 12hr finish time, while 71% of **G** Batch (Sub 4:40 Marathon) starters receive a Finishers Medal. The degree of difficulty increases because G Batchers take on average 6min48sec to cross the start line and H batchers take 7min21sec. (taken from Comrades 2019)

From these stats, a sub 5 qualifier does not guarantee a finish. Meticulous preparation and pacing on race day are key. What is of great importance is that 45% do 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 (4:40)
- Achieved in temperatures lower than 19 degrees Celsius (4:45)
- You do not follow a very strict, conservative race plan (4:40)
- It is compounded by combing 2 or more of these factors (4:35)

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

The programme for the rest of 2023 will be based around developing consistency as this will be the most crucial factor in determining your 2024 Comrades race day success.

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 2024 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.

If you feel you would like to train more, I encourage you to add cross training or strength rather than more running.

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 are a guide for someone who is training for a 4hr50 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						Walk 5min easy; Jog 9min walk 1min x 5	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5
3 July	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 3min walk 2min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 9min walk 1min x 6	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6
10 July	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 3min walk 2min x 6	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 9min walk 1min x 7	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 7
17 July	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 3min walk 2min x 7	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 9min walk 1min x 5	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6
24 July	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 3min walk 2min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 10min walk 1min x 6	Walk 5min easy; Jog 6min walk 1min x 4
31 July	REST						

August 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Aug		Walk 5min easy; Jog 6min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 5min walk 2min x 7	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 12min walk 1min x 6	Walk 5min easy; Jog 7min walk 1min x 5
7 Aug	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 7min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 6min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 15min walk 1min x 4	Walk 5min easy; Jog 8min walk 1min x 6
14 Aug	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 8min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 7min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 15min walk 1min x 3	Walk 5min easy; Jog 7min walk 1min x 5
21 Aug	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 7min walk 1min x 6	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 6min walk 1min x 6	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 4	Walk 5min easy; Jog 10min walk 1min x 5
28 Aug	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 10min walk 1min x 3	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 8min walk 1min x 5			

September 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Sep					REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 25min walk 1min x 4	Walk 5min easy; Jog 12min walk 1min x 4
4 Sep	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 12min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 10min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 30min walk 1min x 2	Walk 5min easy; Jog 15min walk 1min x 3
11 Sep	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 14min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 12min walk 1min x 4	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min, walk 1min x 3	Walk 5min easy; Jog 15min walk 1min x 2
18 Sep	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 12min walk 1min x 3	REST	5km Time trial, do this to the best of your ability, walk if you need to. DO NOT go 100% effort	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 40min, walk 1min x 3	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 3
25 Sep	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 2; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 15min walk 1min x 2; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 50min, walk 1min x 3	

October 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Oct							Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 2
2 Oct	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 50min E; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 1hr walk 1min x 3	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 3
9 Oct	REST	Walk 5min easy; 45 E run; Walk 5min	REST	5km Time trial, do this to the best of your ability, walk if you need to.	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 60min walk 1min x 2	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 4
16 Oct	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr10 E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 55min E; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 2hrs LSD walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 4
23 Oct	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr15 E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 2hrs15 LSD walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 4
30 Oct	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr20 E run; Walk 5min					

***continue to walk as needed every 15-30min during your runs**

November 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Nov			REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 2hrs30 LSD walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 3
6 Nov	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr10 E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 55min E; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 2hrs LSD walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 4
13 Nov	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E run; Walk 5min	REST	5km Time trial, do this to the best of your ability, walk if you need to.	REST	Walk 5min; 1hr E running walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min walk 1min x 2
20 Nov	REST	Walk 5min easy; 45min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; Jog 20min; Walk 5min	REST	21km Race Or REST	21km Race Or REST
27 Nov	REST	REST	REST	REST			

***continue to walk as needed every 15-30min during your runs**

December 2023:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Dec					REST	REST	REST
4 Dec	REST	Walk 5min easy; 20min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 20min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 30min E, walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; 20min E, walk as needed
11 Dec	REST	Walk 5min easy; 30min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 30min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 45min E, walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; 40min E, walk as needed
12 Dec	REST	Walk 5min easy; 45min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 45min E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr30 L, walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E, walk as needed
25 Dec	Merry Christmas	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 1hr E run; Walk 5min	REST	Walk 5min easy; 2hr L, walk as needed	Walk 5min easy; 1hr15 E, walk as needed

***continue to walk as needed every 15-30min during your runs**