

Comrades 2025 Finishers Programme by Lindsey Parry – Official coach of the Comrades Marathon Association:

This year we will be doing things just a little bit differently, the plans will take us into October and the rest of the plans will be uploaded towards the end of Oct.

Our goals for 2024 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 2024.

For the 2025 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 2025, 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 8 June 2025.

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.

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 (4:46)
- 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 (4:40)
- 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 2024 will be based around developing consistency as this will be the most crucial factor in determining your 2025 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 ensure this through following the appropriately designed programmes 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 2025 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.

Training Paces:

Easy (E): 7:00-7:36/km
 Long (L): 7:10-7:55/km
 Recovery (rec): 7:36-8:13/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.

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Enjoy the training!

August 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Aug				Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 5	REST	Walk 5min E; Jog 5min walk 1min x 6	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 3
5 Aug	REST	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 7	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 4
12 Aug	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 8	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 5
19 Aug	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 9	Walk 5min E; Jog 9min walk 1min x 6
26 Aug	REST	Walk 5min E; 40min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 40min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min; 50min E, walk as needed	

September 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Sep							1hr10 E, walk as needed
2 Sep	REST	Walk 5min E; 45min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 45min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min; 1hr E, walk as needed	1hr20 E, walk as needed
9 Sep	REST	Walk 5min E; 35min E, walk as needed	REST	10min rec; 5km TT, 5min cool down	REST	1hr10 E, walk as needed	1hr30 E, walk as needed
16 Sep	REST	Walk 5min E; 50min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 50min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 15min E	*10km race
23 Sep	REST	Walk 5min E; 55min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 55min E, walk as needed	REST	1hr20 E, walk as needed	1hr45 L, walk 1min every 3km
30 Sep	REST						

October 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Oct		Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr E walk as needed	REST	1hr30 L, walk as needed	2hr L, walk 1min every 3km
7 Oct	REST	Walk 5min E; 45min E, walk as needed	REST	10min rec; 5km TT, walk as needed, 5min cool down	REST	1hr15 E, walk as needed	1hr30 L walk 1min every 3km
14 Oct	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr10 E walk as needed	REST	1hr30 L, walk as needed	2hr15 L, walk 1min every 3km
21 Oct	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 1hr E, walk as needed	REST	1hr30 L, walk as needed	2hr30 L, walk 1min every 3km
28 Oct	REST	Walk 5min E; 30min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 30min E, walk as needed	REST	Walk 5min E; 15min E	*Half Marathon