

Comrades 2025 Robert Mtshali 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 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 2025, opening the door to either improving your speed a bit more or doing another qualifier if necessary. Particularly with Comrades falling on 8 June in 2025.

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.

Training for a Robert Mtshali and getting a Sub 4:00 Marathon are no Guarantee for achieving a sub 10hr 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 appropriately. 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 day's 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.

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 very strong come 8 June 2025.

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.

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Enjoy the training!

August 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Aug				45min E	REST	1hr10 E run	1hr30 L, walk 1min every 6km
5 Aug	REST	10min E; 5x2min hills; 10min E	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr20 E run	1hr45 L, walk 1min every 6km
12 Aug	REST	10min E; 6x2min hills; 10min E	REST	1hr10 E	REST	1hr30 L run	2hr L, walk 1min every 6km
19 Aug	REST	40min E run	REST	45min E	REST	5min E; 5x30sec RP, 30sec E; 5min E	*10km race
26 Aug	REST	10min E; 10x1min hills; 10min E	REST	1hr 20 E	REST	1hr30 L run	

September 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Sep							2hr20 L, walk 1min every 6km
2 Sep	REST	10min E; 10x1min hills; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E	REST	1hr30 L	2hr40, walk 1min every 6km
9 Sep	REST	10min E; 10x1min hills; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E	REST	1hr30 L	3hr L, walk 1min every 6km
16 Sep	REST	45min rec	REST	45min rec	REST	5min E; 5x30sec RP, 30sec E; 5min E	*10/15km race
23 Sep	REST	10min E; 6x3min intervals, 3min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr05 E	REST	1hr30 L	3hr L, walk 1min every 6km
30 Sep	REST						

October 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Oct		10min E; 6x3min intervals, 3min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E	REST	1hr30 L	3hr30 L, , walk 1min every 6km
7 Oct	REST	10min E; 6x3min intervals, 3min rec; 10min E	REST	1hr20 E	REST	1hr30 L	*21.1km at Planned Marathon Pace
14 Oct	REST	45min rec	REST	40min E; 5km TT – Flat out; 10min E	REST	1hr15 E	2hr30 L, , walk 1min every 6km
21 Oct	REST	10min E; 10x400m, 1min rest; 10min E	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr E	1hr E
28 Oct	REST	10min E; 10x1min RP, 1min E; 5min E	REST	30min E			

November 2024:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1					REST	5min E; 5x30sec RP, 30sec E; 5min E	Qualifier
4	REST	30min E	REST	45min E	REST	1hr15 E	45min E
11	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr15 E	REST	2hr L	1hr15 E
18	REST	1hr E	REST	1hr15 E	REST	2hr L	1hr15 E
25	REST	1hr E run	REST	15min E run; 8km TT; 10min E run	REST	90min L	

December 2024:

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