

ATHLETICS CLUB EERSTERUST



Comrades is upon us, trust that your training has gone well and that you're ready to tackle the challenging road from cold Pietermaritzburg to Durbs, by the sea!

If plan B doesn't work, remember there are 24 other letters in the alphabet- just keep moving, you will get there! If I could get there with my pathetic training, I believe anybody can. (easier with proper training).

Mantra of Comrades is to 'keep moving'

I can still hear the late Don Oliver's calming words delivered in his charming cockney accent.

"Don't you worry Comrades novices you're going to be alright. You've got Don Oliver's pacing chart and his wise words to guide you home."

How I miss him. For nearly 40 years Don, and fellow Rocky Road Runners coach Dennis "Tombsstones" Tabakin advised novices at monthly training panel discussions.

I was often an invited guest speaker at these evening talks, and I was privileged to watch these two experts help hundreds of novices take their first tentative steps on their Comrades journeys.

Then months later Don and Dennis would help them complete those journeys.

The Rocky Novice panel talks were so popular that every talk was jam-packed, and even experienced runners and Comrades veterans attended.

Don introduced every meeting with the same words. "And where are we now

novices?" If it was November, "nine months before Comrades", he would calmly reply to his own question.

"We're slowly building our training base and we're about to run our first half-marathon, our journey has begun."

But nine months later you could hear a pin drop in the lecture hall as he uttered the same words. "And where are we now?"

"We're about to run the Comrades Marathon. The great day is upon us."

But Don knew that his novices were ready and excellently prepared. Armed with his pacing chart, which was cleverly calculated to factor in the sharp descents and climbs of Comrades, and with the wise words of the two coaches ringing in their ears, they did indeed have nothing to worry about.

Before wishing his novices well on race day, Don shared these last pearls of wisdom with them, and his words still echo in my mind.

"Keep moving forward novices, on race day don't ever stop moving forward."

"Remember the race is gun to



Bruce Fordyce

gun. Once you hear the starting gun the clock will be running and unfortunately those of you in the rear of the field, in batches E, F, G and H will not be running. In fact, for a few frustrating minutes you won't even be moving.

"You will probably lose up to 15 minutes at the start of the race. Once you get started, I want you to promise yourselves that everything you do on race day will be a step in the direction of the finish line."

"Never stop moving forward. If you make that solemn promise to yourselves, you will succeed."

"There is no problem with walking," he would continue. "You can walk long stretches of the Comrades Marathon without losing too much time."

You can even walk quite slowly. Most of the major hills in the sec-

ond half are so steep that they are almost considered compulsory walks.

There is no disgrace in walking up Inchanga, Cowie's Hill, 45th Cutting or Tollgate Hill. Occasionally gold medallists walk on those monster hills.

There will, however, be many temptations to delay you along the way.

Old friends standing at the side of the road will call out to you and you'll be tempted to have a catch-up chat and exchange phone numbers. Enjoy that chat, exchange phone numbers but do it on the move. Make those friends walk with you.

Keep moving forward. Spectators will generously offer you boerie rolls, drinks, even ice-cold beers.

Take whatever you fancy but don't stop moving forward. De-fine fast food, eat on the move.

Somewhere in shady Kloof a tall, leafy Natal Mahogany tree will offer tempting cool shade to sit under. Shift your eyes, walk on.

And then there are the dreaded massage stations. Positioned cru-

elly to tempt every tired runner to linger awhile and get some attention for aching, cramping legs.

"I know why you will want that massage," Don would tease. "You won't really need a massage, you will just want someone to love you, someone to offer you a little tenderness as you struggle through the last kilometres of the race."

Think about it carefully. You will probably have to stand in a queue and await your turn. You will lose much precious time at that massage station.

And those masseurs and physiotherapists - don't really want to massage your sweat stained, Vaseline, oily, Coca-Cola sticky legs. Do yourselves and the physiotherapists massive favours and move on, keep going.

"And finally Don would tease: "We are all Don and Denis' Rocky novices, we finish with heads held high, in complete control as we will have been all day."

"We don't collapse with relief into our father's arms like Fordyce. We will have had nothing to worry about all day. We finish with dignity."

Seconding

There will be two fixed seconding spots. The 1st at 30km (Michael) and 60km (Manko). Family and friends are welcome to join us!

The 30km spot will be marked with red, white & yellow balloons and be on the look out for the ACE gazebo at the 60km spot.

We have bags for runners to put in their race supplements and these will be handed out at the church service. I would suggest that you prepare what you'll need and bring it along to the service. All bags will be in Michael's safe keeping until race day. If you are unable to make it to the service, please make alternative arrangements to get the bag to Michael.

Fast runners, please prepare a 2nd bag (your own) and give it to Manko for safe keeping. We will wait at the 1st point until the last runner is through, or cut-off time has passed (whichever comes first) and thereafter join Manko at 60km.



CUT-OFF POINT	RUNNING TIME	TIME	KM TO GO	KM DONE
Cato Ridge	04:30	10:00	57.40km	30.30km
Drummond	06:10	11:40	43.33km	44.37km
Winston Park	08:10	13:40	30 km	57.70km
Pinetown	09:20	14:50	18.84km	68.86km
Sherwood	11:00	16:30	6.39km	81.31km

Cut offs: Make sure you know where they are!

Church service

Will take place on 7 June at Kingdom Christian Church in Equestria. A "poll" will be sent on our member group within the next few days, kindly indicate whether you will attend to ensure our catering is sufficient.





Happy Birthday

1 May: Faizel Leyds & Joseph Makitla

2 May: Michael Williams & Charl Davids

4 May: John Noble

5 May: Glanger Noble

18: Eugene Eiman & Ashley Roux

23 May: Malishia Swarts

24 May: Tsholo Sentsho

31 May: Ricardo Johnson

What's coming up?

Members are encouraged to submit items for inclusion in the newsletter. In the next edition we kick off with a section titled: **Getting to know you!**

Who are you?

What made you run?

Your experiences in running races

What is your favorite race?

League Races

22 July: Fara Winter Challenge @ Rietondale Park

19 August: Phobians 15 @ Pretoria Boys High School

30 September: Ford 3-in-1 road race, Spring Race @ Ford Motor Company

14 October: Agape road race @ Oos Moot High School, Waverley

25 November: Voortrekker Monument @ The Voortrekker Monument

2 December: Black Diamonds Enjoya Race @ WonderPark Shopping Mall

Till next time -- Angi