

Gold Rush Marathon – 12 week ‘Pointy Ender’ Plan

Straight up – a disclaimer! Printing this training plan and whacking it on your fridge will not in itself get you any closer to your 2014 Gold Rush Marathon Goals. It is a good plan – it’s been developed with the expert advice of experienced and very successful Gold Rushers (2011 Champion, alternative course record holder and highly regarded endurance coach Mike LeRoux, 2012 Runner Up and two time AURA Rising Star Award recipient Oliver Zambon and 2010 Winner and Event Co-director Chris White) – but the achievement of your goals will be determined by **your commitment** to the training plan and the **quality** with which **you** perform the individual sessions within it rather than the content alone.

The 12 weeks of this plan can be broken down into 3 x 4 week ‘blocks’. **Block One** (28th April to the 25th May) mainly focuses on **expanding aerobic capacity** and getting seriously run fit. **Block Two** (26th May to the 22nd June) ramps up the high intensity sessions to build **leg strength, anaerobic endurance and cardiorespiratory fitness while increasing the specificity** of the sessions to prepare for the specific demands of the Gold Rush Trail Marathon. **Block 3** (23rd June to the 20th July) continues to **increase in intensity and specificity**, deliberately focussing on the exact technical, nutritional and physiological demands of the Gold Rush Trail Marathon before a taper and comprehensive race preparation.

Each block can be broken down into four weeks with the first three weeks building in overall intensity and total distance before an easier ‘recovery and growth’ week. The program climaxes with the successful completion of the Gold Rush Trail Marathon and all the celebration, satisfaction, achievement, joy, glory, fame, confidence, improved employability and exciting offers from desirable members of the desired gender which that entails....

Participants would be well advised to **run regularly through early April** and to **start out on the program somewhat modestly**. As Oliver warns beginning over zealously and hammering out the first few weeks might find Gold Rushers injured or burnt out by the time the real work is supposed to begin. Starting conservatively in Block One will give participants a reasonable idea of how hard they can push themselves without breaking through Blocks Two and Three (and also have the strength and fitness to really work hard). If you do find fatigue, exhaustion or a serious lack of mojo is affecting your training and enjoyment of life, try personalising the program. Play around with the number of sessions/week to give extra rest days, or the volume so that runs are shorter or possibly drop the intensity until the legs and lungs have the ability to handle the ambition! If this doesn’t bring about the changes desired then you may need to tinker with diet and / or sleep. Have a chat with fellow runners at events or spend some time online to figure out a diet that may better suit your increased energy, nutrition and health demands.

At the start of each week, plan how to arrange the described sessions around existing commitments, weather constraints, required recovery times, other events etc. Mike Le Roux advises **a gap of 2 days between high intensity sessions** (Tempos, Time Trials, Races, longer S.H.i.T.S - see glossary) to maintain the quality of these sessions and so that “when it’s time to go fast, it’s time to tear the balls off it!”. A training log will prove a very useful tool - pay particular attention to the distances and / or time of each session and the total distance and / or time run each week, logging any injuries or niggles and recovery times / general well-being / fatigue as intensity and training volume increases. A glossary and session description / explanation can be found under the Tables.

And lastly if you need further advice or have any questions about preparing for the Gold Rush, send the Dirty Northern Trail Crew a mud and sweat splattered email at chris@adventuresportnq.info

Now Hook In! Enjoy! And see you digging deep at the Gold Rush!

Block One – The focus is on expanding aerobic capacity and getting seriously run fit – The three ‘building’ weeks have 3 to 5 run sessions and at least one higher intensity anaerobic session (S.H.i.T.S). Most of your runs should be on dirt and the more comfortable and ‘fast’ you can feel on technical single trail the better – not only is it infinitely and incomparably **funner** than bashing the bitumen, it’ll much better physically prepare you for the rigours of the Goldfields Trail. This is also the prime time to focus on your running ‘form’ and creating good habits which become automatic on higher intensity runs when your focus is distracted by other factors such as blinding fatigue and flooding sweat – Be aware of foot strike, both where it is relative to your hips (should be under them) and where on your foot strikes the ground first (shouldn’t be your heels), check for unnecessary torso movement – excessive rotating or lateral movement, arm movement should help balance lower body without being excessive and creating additional energy demand, there should be a slight lean forward from your ankles – not your hips and try nasal breathing – both to inhale and exhale when possible. Most importantly – **Relax and enjoy running!**

Week	Block Stage	Runs / Sessions (minutes in brackets)
<p>28th April - Entries Open – enter early, tell your mates, update your fb status, there’s no better way to add a bit of motivation then to commit and make it publicly known.</p>	<p>Block One, Week One. Building.....</p>	<p>Three moderate runs (One x 45, Two x 60),(or two moderate runs and give Redlynch Valley MSR a whirl), One Short High Intensity Training Session (S.H.i.T.S).</p>
<p>5th May - Build on the distances and / or intensities run last week</p>	<p>Block One, Week Two. Ramping Up.....</p>	<p>Two Moderates (1x50, 1x60), One S.H.i.T.S, 90 minute Long Run.</p>
<p>12th May - The peak of Block One! Throw in a second S.H.i.T.S., crank out a quality 2 hour long run and enjoy some ripping runs through the week.</p>	<p>Block One, Week Three. Peaking Out....</p>	<p>One Moderate (60), 10k Time Trial, 2 x S.H.i.T.S. and one quality 2hr Long Run.</p>
<p>19th May - Enjoy the week and the runs involved. Maintain the quality of your long run and ensure adequate recovery is allowed beforehand.</p>	<p>Block One, Week Four. Loving Life – Recovery and growth.</p>	<p>Two or three Easy Runs (30 - 60), Long Run (90)</p>

Block Two – A critical time in Gold Rush Trail Marathon preparation! From eight to four weeks out you can make significant steps forward in anaerobic endurance, cardiorespiratory fitness and your ability to handle increased running intensity while increasing the specificity of the sessions to prepare for the unique demands of the Gold Rush Trail Marathon. Embrace the idea of running hills by including them wherever possible. Start to prepare an individual plan for race day by trialling nutrition and gear (footwear and hydration equipment) on your Long Runs. Prepare to increase the intensity of each session and the number of Short High Intensity Training Sessions.

Best of all prepare to see and feel the benefits of committing to a couple of months of high quality running!

Week	Block Stage	Runs / Sessions (minutes in brackets)
<p>26th May – Start Block Two with run sessions faster / longer / tougher / funner than where you got to in Block One.</p>	<p>Block Two, Week One. Building.....</p>	<p>One moderate runs (60), Two Tempo Runs (60), Two S.H.i.T.S., 2hr Long Run.</p>
<p>2nd June – Another challenging week. Focus on the quality of each session. Consider making your 90 minute moderate run and 2 & ½ hr long run over trail as similar to the Goldfields Trail as possible.</p>	<p>Block Two, Week Two. Ramping Up.....</p>	<p>One Moderate (90), One Time Trial (15k), Two S.H.i.T.S., One Long Run (2 & ½hr).</p>
<p>9th June – Sessions are very similar to previous week but focus on increasing intensity to cover a greater distance in the same time or the same distance in a shorter time. Step up to a 3hr long run and trial race nutrition.</p>	<p>Block Two, Week Three. Peaking Out....</p>	<p>One Moderate (90), One Tempo (60), Two or three S.H.i.T.S., One Long Run (3hr). Do squeeze in the Rogaine.</p>
<p>16th June – A lighter week with a great opportunity to race 4 weeks out by toeing the Speewah Legend Footrace start line. The next three weeks will be massive so ensure recovery is as complete as possible before striding into Block Three.</p>	<p>Block Two, Week Four. Loving Life – Recovery and growth.</p>	<p>Two or three Easy Runs (Around 60), Long Run (90 – 2hr) or Race Speewah on Sunday.</p>

Block Three – Specificity and intensity. Staying healthy and injury free. Finalising plans for nutrition and equipment. Running on or familiarising yourself with the Goldfields Trail or the next best thing. Celebrating completion of one of the most scenic and challenging marathon events around.

Week	Block Stage	Runs / Sessions (minutes in brackets)
<p>23rd June – Again Start Block Three where you finished Block Two. Bigger ks, bigger hills, bigger satisfaction when you cruise over climbs, runs and through sessions that would have nailed you a couple of months ago. Your Long Run should be as close as possible to the intensity planned for race day.</p>	<p>Block Three, Week One. Building.....</p>	<p>One Moderate (90), One Tempo (60), Three S.H.i.T.S., 3 & ½hr Long Run.</p>
<p>30th June – Quite likely to be the biggest run week of all 12 weeks. The Long Run should be as close as possible to the intensity of race day while your Short High Intensity Sessions should be as quick or quicker than any you’ve cranked out yet.</p>	<p>Block Three, Week Two. Ramping Up.....</p>	<p>One Moderate (60), Two Tempo Runs (60, 90), Three S.H.i.T.S., One Long Run (4hr).</p>
<p>7th July – Less run sessions this week to allow the beginning of a taper and to focus on recovering from some massive weeks. Retain the quality of previous and strive for improvement where suited but start to focus on having body ready to go come the 14th of July.</p>	<p>Block Three, Week Three. Peaking Out then Winding Down....</p>	<p>One Moderate (90) or One Tempo (60), Three S.H.i.T.S., One Long Run (90 - 2hr).</p>
<p>14th July – Race Week! Roll the legs over but keep in mind the hard work has been done – keep it steady, run in race footwear and carry your race hydration equipment.</p>	<p>Block Two, Week Four. Preparing, competing and completing.</p>	<p>Two or three Easy Runs (Around 30 - 60) and what you’ve been no doubt drooling in anticipation of The Gold Rush Trail Marathon!</p>