

## **2008 Old Mutual Two Oceans Half Marathon Silver (3)**

### **PLEASE READ OUR DISCLAIMER BELOW THE LINKS TO THE PROGRAMMES**

Welcome to the Old Mutual World of Endurance Virtual Coach Training Programme

The advanced programme is aimed at a sub-1 hour 30 min (38 min 10 km runner). Your weekly mileage at the start of the programme should be 25-35 km.

Of all the distance running events, the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon presents one of the greatest challenges both physically and mentally. Even after completing all the required training and making it to the race site rested and healthy, arriving at the starting line in less than the ideal state of mind can have a devastating effect on your performance. I would like to discuss a variety of mental strategies that will enable you to set realistic goals, complete the necessary training (in particular, the long runs), and be optimally prepared mentally for the challenges that await you in completing the race. Please be familiar with the following terminology (described with positive outcomes), as each will be mentioned later in this section:

1. Mental Rehearsal/Visualization - The process of creating pictures or images in your mind.
2. Imagery - Playing out or imagining in your mind the way you wish for an event to occur.
3. Self-Talk - The "voice" in your head that can be trained to provide positive affirmations during adversity and tough times.

There are certain "prerequisites" or internal characteristics that a runner must possess in order to complete the necessary training that Oceans requires. These include motivation, self-discipline, and effective time-management, all of which are inter-related characteristics.

I as a Virtual Coach can be enthusiastic about the training program that I have designed/presented and show interest in the runner's development; however, motivation and self-discipline must be developed primarily from within. The best training program in the world will not enable a runner to make it to the finish line of a race if he or she isn't internally motivated to undergo and complete the training and then finish the race.

Similarly, it requires a great deal of self-discipline to complete the long training runs while at the same time, cope with other daily distractions and manage all the personal responsibilities daily living provides. This is why it is crucial that the runner who wishes to train for Two Oceans be an effective manager of time. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss in detail strategies to enhance one's motivation, self-discipline, and time management strategies. There is a wealth of resources available featuring information relating to both these topics and sports psychology.

For most first time Oceans runners, goal setting is simple... To finish the race! Nevertheless, regardless of your experience level and race aspirations, it is best to be as specific as possible when setting goals. Be sure to write the goals down or perhaps tell others about your goals. These strategies will enhance the possibility of achieving both your short-term objectives as well as your big goal.

There are two basic types of goals: Process goals and outcome goals. It is

important to set short-term objectives (process goals) on your way to achieving the big goal (outcome goal). The definitions and examples of process and outcome goals are listed below:

**Process Goals** - These types of goals involve activities that focus on mastering the task and increasing one's skill level (e.g., the knowledge and training needed to complete a race like Oceans). Examples of process goals include: Following the training schedule as closely as possible; Improving your nutrition; Reading as much as you can about the marathon; Getting more sleep to be as rested as possible, etc.

**Outcome Goals** - These goals relate to the finished product or stated differently, goals you hope to accomplish in the marathon. Examples include: Breaking 6 hours in the 56 km or 2 hour 15 min in the Half Marathon; Beating a rival; Running a personal best on race day.

### Race Goal Setting Considerations

In the weeks prior to the race, think about three (outcome) goals you'd be interested in accomplishing for yourself: (1) an easily obtainable goal, (2) a realistic yet moderately challenging goal, and (3) an ultimate goal. Determine a strategy to achieve the ultimate goal, but build into your plan flexibility to aim for less ambitious goals if things don't pan out the way you had planned. Above all, be realistic. For example, if you don't possess the genetic predisposition (natural ability) to run a sub-37 minute 10K, there's very little chance you can break 4 hours in the 56 km, no matter how positive an attitude you possess!

### Strategies for Completing the Training

Listen to your Virtual Coach. These traits can help inspire and motivate you.

Join a group or team whose members share your same goals. These individuals can provide you with the needed emotional support to succeed. Groups or a training partner can help make completing the long runs easier than doing these alone. It is essential to find training partners who run your approximate pace so that your workouts do not turn into races.

When doing your long runs, break the course into sections mentally. That is, mentally run from one landmark to the next instead of thinking of completing the entire training course. When you reach the first landmark, then mentally think of running to the next and so forth.

Realize that the training will not always be easy. If running Two Oceans was simple, there would be no challenge as everyone would be able to do it. To enable you to cope with the physical and mental demands of completing the long training runs and the actual race when the going gets tough, there are several mental strategies you can utilize.

### Self-Talk Thoughts

Think and say to yourself...

"If this was easy, then everybody could complete a Two Oceans Marathon."

"Keep running . . . Maybe I'll feel better when I have some energy drink."

"If I quit now, I'll be very disappointed in myself later this afternoon."

"I'm not really physically tired; I'm more fatigued mentally."

"Completing this important training run will give me confidence and enable me to finish Oceans comfortably."

"In just one more hour this run will be finished and I'll be in at home...showering, relaxing, eating, etc."

Imagery

Imagine...

Imagine that you are a world-class runner and are in the lead of the Two Oceans or Olympic Marathon.

Imagine that your running form is smooth and graceful.

Imagine that you are a runner effortlessly and very relaxed.

Visualization/Mental Rehearsal Strategies

Visualize...

Picture yourself running every km of the Two Oceans Marathon.

Visualize what the finish line area will look like (e.g., with the clock displaying the time you're aiming for).

See in your "mind's-eye" the spectators who will be cheering for you.

Think of all your friends back at home who will be thinking about you and pulling for you while you'll be running.

If you believe in your goal you will achieve your goal.

Sub- 90 min

Your easy run training pace is: 5.02 min/km

Your tempo run training pace is: 4.11 min/km

Your long run training pace is: 5.02-5.41 min/km

Best 10 km time required: 38 min

H = Hills: To be explained later

T = Tempo Run Pace: 6 min 10 sec/km

P = Oceans Race Pace: 4 min 14 sec/km

F= Fartlek

w/u and w/d = warm up, warm down

## **12 February 2008 – 22 March 2008 Weeks 13 – 18**

Week 13

MONDAY: rest

TUESDAY: 40 min H

WEDNESDAY: 45 min E

THURSDAY: 2 km w/u 5 x 800m 2 km w/d

FRIDAY: rest

SATURDAY: 15 km P or 15 km race

SUNDAY: 5 km E

Week 14

MONDAY: rest

TUESDAY: 40 min H

WEDNESDAY: 45 min E

THURSDAY: 2 km w/u 6 x 800m 2 km w/d

FRIDAY: rest

SATURDAY: 5 km E

SUNDAY: 26 km L choose an undulating route

Week 15

MONDAY: rest

TUESDAY: 40 min H

WEDNESDAY: 30 min E  
THURSDAY: 2 km w/u 7 x 800m 2 km w/d  
FRIDAY: rest  
SATURDAY: 10 km P  
SUNDAY: 25 km L

#### Week 16

MONDAY: rest  
TUESDAY: 40 min H  
WEDNESDAY: 30 min E  
THURSDAY: 2 km w/u 8 x 800m 2 km w/d  
FRIDAY: rest  
SATURDAY: 10 km race  
SUNDAY: 15 km L

#### Week 17

MONDAY: rest  
TUESDAY: 2 km w/u 6 x 800m 2 km w/d  
WEDNESDAY: 30 min E  
THURSDAY: 5 km time trial  
FRIDAY: rest  
SATURDAY: 10 km P  
SUNDAY: 60 min L

#### Week 18

In this final week your training should emphasize rest. Don't ruin your race by running too much or too fast. Relax. Think confident thoughts. If you feel a little lethargic, that's okay. It simply means your body is conserving resources for the big day.

Monday: Emphasis – rest. Have a complete rest day.

Tuesday: Emphasis – pace. Though you don't want to run any very hard efforts, it's a good idea to do a workout which takes you up to Two Oceans pace or slightly quicker – run 15min at pace with 2km warm up and warm down.

Wednesday: Emphasis confidence - 30 min easy jog thinking positive thoughts.

Thursday: Emphasis – loose muscles. Jog for 20min and have a good stretching session.

Friday: Emphasis – relaxation. Do a few easy kms simply to stretch your legs and loosen your muscles. Otherwise stay off your feet, go some place by yourself and just try to relax. Rent Chariots of Fire or Running Brave for the 20th time. Read a great novel. The final day before the race is "rubber room time", put your feet somewhere you can't hurt yourself.

Race day: Warm up – less is more than it comes to the pre-race warm up. Jog for a few minutes to get the blood flowing and stretch lightly. A warm/hot bath before the race is a good way to warm up.

#### DIET

From Wednesday to Friday carbohydrates are your main source of energy.

#### Mental preparation

From Sunday – Thursday:

Focus on positive mental imagery, see yourself running well and feeling strong, look back on the months of solid training and racing, and know that you've done

everything to prepare for your Two Oceans. Do no mental preparation for Friday, just relax.  
I wish you all great running for Race Day and may all your goals be realised.