



Comrades 2026

THULA CEBEKHULU'S STORY

MY COMRADES JOURNEY

My name is Thula Cebekhulu, fondly referred to as “Bra T” in the club.

In life, we are driven by dreams we wish to achieve. Not all dreams are within reach, and some seem difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. When I joined the Johannesburg Harriers Athletics Club, I was a casual or moderate runner (if there is something like a moderate runner). I say this because I had no focus, no plan, no strategy, and possibly no dream of running the “Ultimate Human Race.”

Being part of the club slowly changed my perception of what running is all about and what it can do for me. The inculcation of discipline, consistency, hard work, and sacrifice transformed me and my attitude towards running. I began to see myself as part of a family of conquerors, ready to take on the challenge and succeed. The consistent feedback from the captain and the rest of the club members encouraged me to take that ultimate decision — to run the race one day.

The preparations went well; I gave myself a period of one to two years for training and preparation. This was confirmed by achieving at least three qualifying races before tackling the monster, and it felt great. As the race drew closer, and on the morning of the race, I had mixed feelings of anxiety and excitement. It was a sleepless night before the race, with a little shake-off on the morning before. It was now or never.



The race came, and it started. A few kilometers into it, I was joined by Rakgadi (Freedom Sethlare), and we ran together until the finish. The race was a full package; there were moments of excitement and moments of serious introspection (😬😬😬). But overall, taking part in the Comrades was ultimately a game changer.

Having run alongside my club member was a learning experience on its own, and I highly appreciate the support and direction I received from her. At moments of disorientation, she never left me. Even when I was okay and starting to run faster, she would remind me that we are in this together — let's take it one step at a time. I will never forget the route between water points 45km to 75km; that's where I nearly saw my maker through a curtain. 😬😬



With all I have achieved thus far at Johannesburg Harriers Athletics Club, I regard our training as “second to none.” Allow me to thank our Captain, Ndivhuwo Tshipala, and the fellow club members as a collective. To my fellow novices, as long as you have taken the decision to run the Ultimate Race — whether you’ve finished or not — you are a “Conqueror.” As the saying goes, “Ska Fela Moya.” We will ultimately reach this milestone. Let's believe in ourselves.

Before you ask me that question, it's a “Yes.” Next year, God willing, I will be going back 😬😬



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