

**My Leadville 100-Mile
Ultramarathon Training Plan
Philip Turk, philip.turk@gmail.com
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Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
17	weights, swim	9.5 hills	weights, swim	rest	rest	52 Grand Canyon	rest
16	weights, swim	9.5 hills	weights, swim	10	8	12	20
15	weights, swim	9.5 hills	weights, swim	10	10 tempo	20	10
14	rest	9.5 hills	weights, swim	10	weights, swim	8 tempo	20
13	rest	10 tempo	weights, swim	10 hills	weights, swim	16	5, swim
12	4	weights	rest	2, weights	2, swim	rest	56 Comrades
11	rest	rest	10	10	weights, swim	18	22
10	rest	10 hills	6, weights, swim	13 tempo	weights, swim	24	12
9	rest	10 hills	weights, swim	13 tempo	8, weights	21	17
8	weights, swim	7, swim	weights	8	6	26	13
7	16	rest	weights, swim	9 tempo	weights	28	21
6	rest	weights, swim	10	weights, swim	30	14	16
5	rest	15	9 tempo, weights	6, swim	33	weights, swim	12
4	rest	10, weights	10, swim	9 tempo, weights	10, swim	30	11, swim
3	10, weights	15, swim	10, weights	10	10	10	rest
2	5, weights	9, swim	6, swim	weights	36	3 walk	3 walk
1	12	3 walk, weights	10 run, 2 walk	3 walk, swim	8	rest	rest
0	5	4	3	3 walk	rest	rest	race!

1. I only give the last 18 weeks prior to Leadville since I had a good base headed into training (50 miles/week). You might have to extend this to 24 weeks if you don't have a sufficient base.
2. Tempo runs are crucial; do not skip them. You can find lots of resources on the web and learn about how to do them. Typically, the way I ran them would be something like this (using 9 miles as an example). Do a 2 mile warmup at 20% above marathon pace, then 5 miles at lactate threshold, then a 2 mile cool down also at 20% above marathon pace. To dial-in your tempo runs and establish your training zones, it is well worth the time to establish your VO2_max and VO2_LT. I did a treadmill test at a sports performance lab.
3. Hill repeats are crucial since they serve both as speed work and implicit strength training. I did mine on a couple big hills in town and a local ski resort.
4. The heart and soul of this program are the long runs at Zone 2 effort. I did most of my long runs on the toughest trail I could reasonably drive to from Morgantown, WV; specifically, the Laurel Highlands Trail. Long runs in the 20's and 30's are plenty. I would not exceed 50 miles for a long run as there is no real fitness gain but there is plenty of wear-and-tear on the body and a longer recovery time. Simply put, it is the quality in the miles, not the quantity of the miles.
5. Most of my training was during the hot, muggy West Virginia summer with temperature and humidity above 80.
6. I also ran most of the Leadville course itself a couple months prior to the race (31 of the 50 miles) and would have run more of it were it not for the snow conditions. If you are not a fan of scouting out a course like this prior to race day, then I hope you reconsider. Doing this will help you get the initial shell-shock of the aggressive terrain of the course out of your mind and give you valuable insight for race day strategy. Totally worth the time and expense.
7. I am a big believer in cross training; specifically, weight training and swimming. Beth Byron, strength and conditioning coach at West Virginia University, did a magnificent job teaching me how to do these properly. If you have a few extra dollars to invest, you might consider hiring a trainer. You will need to be as strong and fit as possible to run in the Rocky Mountains.
8. The weight lifting sessions were specifically designed for running and where I was at in my training plan. The swims were easy Zone 2 efforts of about 1,000-to-1,500 meters.

9. I don't believe one has to do huge weekly mileage to successfully run a 100-mile ultra. In my opinion, topping out at 70 would be plenty, particularly if you want to retain your day job! Beyond this, I believe you start to assume increased risk of injury for appreciably smaller gains in fitness. I peaked at 80 miles at Week 4.
10. I had a longer, more aggressive taper than would be the case for a marathon (3 weeks, knocking off 25% mileage each week).
11. For high-altitude acclimation, Weeks 0 and 1 were spent "sleeping high, training low" at Flagstaff, Arizona (over 7,000 feet in elevation).
12. Do no cross training during Week 0.
13. If I had to do it all over again, I would likely use the second edition of "Advanced Marathonning" by Pete Pfitzinger and Scott Douglas and slightly modify their 18 week 55 to 70 miles per week plan. This book is a wonderful resource to have!
14. Take care to pay close attention to proper sports nutrition throughout the 18 weeks.
15. I strongly advise *not* to run Leadville in trail running shoes as it is not a highly technical course and you should try to save some weight. I used two pairs of Brooks Launches, a lightweight trainer. Change into the second pair along with fresh socks at the Twin Lakes aid station *after* you have crossed Lake Creek for the second time.
16. I had the best crew member ever who flew out to the race with me (Sarah Quesen). I cannot stress enough how vital a role she played. We scouted the course by car the day before and went over race strategy. During the race, she had my nutrition and hydration down cold, and while I did not want to overburden her with big gear drops, she did have a few critical pieces of gear and aid at the ready. The mental shot of energy and adrenaline she provided every time I rolled into an aid station was invaluable. Do yourself a favor and purchase an airline ticket for your buddy and bring them with you to crew you!
17. You will have to weigh in the day before the race. I would do it as early as possible in the day before you eat and after you have gone to the bathroom. The reason is you want to make sure you weigh as light as possible so that you minimize your cutoff weight used during the race.
18. Temperatures were chilly at the start of the race (around 50?). I started the run in SmartWool socks, nylon running shorts, a nylon singlet, a Patagonia Nine Trails jacket, a Headsweats visor, a Garmin 310XT watch, and a Black Diamond headlamp. At the first aid station (May Queen), I removed the headlamp and donned polarized Smith sunglasses. After leaving Twin Lakes the first time, the temperature had climbed considerably and it was sunny out. I took the jacket off and wrapped it around my waist. I'd say the temperature peaked in the mid-70's. When I arrived at the Winfield aid station (the turn-around), I ditched the jacket and the watch. I had a second, fully-charged Garmin 310XT watch ready to go but in the heat of battle I forgot it and I am not sure I really missed its presence. As nighttime came, the temperature again dropped down to around 50. However, by then, I was working hard enough that I finished the race wearing the singlet.
19. My fueling strategy during the race was simple. I carried two Nathan handheld bottles and I drank one bottle of water every hour. Also, I took an S Cap and ate no more than 200 calories an hour. I did not eat food from the aid stations. Much of the calories came from GU gels but I also mostly mixed in squares of peanut butter and agave nectar sandwiches made from Ezekiel bread, pretzels, and bits of Amy's beans and rice burritos. At the later stages of the race, I drank some throwback Mountain Dew. There were no GI issues whatsoever.
20. As for a pacing strategy, my crew member and I did have an idea of times and splits I wanted to meet throughout the race but when it became apparent that I was feeling good and easily meeting those goals, I threw the strategy out the window. My advice would be to pick a pace you feel you can comfortably and reasonably hold for 100-miles and stick to that. If your heart rate starts to take off on you because of the high-altitude, then simply slow down a little.
21. I did not run with a pacer at any time in the race and was happy with that decision.
22. Do not waste precious time at aid stations. Take a minute or two (max) to get your nutrition straight and keep moving. This is one reason why I did not use a CamelBak.

23. I receive about 20 to 30 Internet hits each week for this training plan and regularly field questions via email. One question I am often asked is “How did you do?” 625 people started the 2011 race and 346 finished (about 55%). At the age of 47, and running what would end up being the one and only 100-miler I ever did (due to a career-ending hip injury shortly afterward), I came in 24th with a time of 21:36. That said, I constructed my entire life that year preparing for this race. This approach, of course, won't work for everybody but it does speak to the overall effectiveness of this training plan.
24. One last thing . . . I do have one minor regret. When I came back through Twin Lakes the second time, had I known I was doing well in the race, I would have pressed harder and tried for a sub-21 and a ‘show’ in my age group. The point of me saying this is that you will hear all sorts of horror stories warning you of bonking and to run as slow as a glacier in a 100-mile race. While there is a some truth to this strategy, I will say that you are far more capable of what you can do than you think. If you feel good late in the race and are properly fueled and trained, then pick it up and go for it, I say. For all runners, there is never a guarantee that you will have the opportunity for another race. Do not let your moment pass you by. GOOD LUCK!