

# Endurance Athletes from all over South Africa will participate in the Quarter century Challenge to do FIVE daring events IN ONE YEAR!



*Midmar, Dusi,*

## “Millennium Big 5 Challenge 2025”



*Cape Town Cycle Tour, Comrades, Mt. Kilimanjaro*

### Millennium Big 5 Challenge 2025 - 5 Endurance Events in One year!

The beginning of the new Millennium commenced with Graeme Fraser canoeing the Dusi, swimming the Midmar mile, cycling the Cape Argus, running the Comrades and climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro - all in one year, the year 2000!

The Dusi Canoe Marathon - classic canoeists sometimes disdainfully refer to the “Dusi” as a tri-athlon - canoeing, swimming (depending on water levels and skills there can be quite a lot of this - and even the top athletes are not totally exempt from the odd unscheduled acquaintance with water outside of the canoe!) and running (or if you prefer walking) through really tough terrain having regard to both the vegetation and gradient of the slopes encountered in sweltering heat or if it has rained, in slippery conditions. The total distance covered in the three days is somewhere over 120kms.

The Midmar Mile Swim - for many of the Challengers, is by far the easiest event and is most often underestimated. A swim of about 1600 metres becomes wider and deeper if the Dam level fills up. The event has grown from a small beginning to 2023 where it celebrated a 50<sup>th</sup> staging.

The Cape Argus Cycle Tour (now known as “The Cape Town Cycle Tour”) - is a cycle ride of around 109kms which starts in the centre of Cape Town and heads out to Simons Town before rounding the peninsula at Cape Point and then heading back to the centre of Cape Town via Chapman’s Peak and through Constantia. The race has increased in popularity since 1978 and attracts the largest number of cyclists (of all shapes and sizes) in any timed event around the world. A potentially interesting race added to the list.

The Comrades Marathon - an annual “foot-slog”, described by the organisers over the years as the “ultimate human race”, between Pietermaritzburg and Durban measuring around 90kms which is much revered in South Africa as a “significant achievement” for any athlete to achieve. Apart from the challenging terrain over which the Comrades is run (with 5 massive hills and numerous others along the way) perhaps the biggest difference between the Comrades and some of the other renowned marathons of 42,1 kms is the length and cut off time which is now 12 hours. Interestingly about 60% of the athletes who finish in time each year do so in the final hour. In excess of 20000 athletes each year attempt the Comrades.

The curved ball is to summit Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, the highest point in Africa (at 5985 metres above sea-level) and the highest free-standing mountain in the world. Though not a “technical” climb in the sense that one does not need rope skills, or sophisticated equipment (other than protection against the cold once you’ve advanced beyond day 2!) Kilimanjaro remains a significant test of endurance as is evidenced by the statistic that only around one in ten persons who attempt the ascent actually reach the summit.