

Intro to Training Plans

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As there has been a large growth in the cycling team this year and many are new to the sport, I have decided to write up some optional training plans for people to follow. I am using the methods outlined in Joe Friel's, The Cyclist's Training Bible to write the plans. This book is a good reference for anyone who is interested in learning more. While following a training plan isn't required to race with the team, hopefully these plans will be valuable for individuals who want structured workouts. Following these plans should help prepare individuals to compete when the collegiate season starts in February and will hopefully enable riders to better coordinate workouts so that the team can gain experience riding together. I am writing the plans so that individuals who follow them will peak for the regional races on the last weekend in April (where we can hopefully clinch the conference title). To do this the first base period will begin on the week of November 19, 2007, just one week from now! The rest of this document contains a discussion of how to choose the right training plan for your needs, how to read the training plans, and what you need to do to get started.

1 Picking the Correct Plan

I will be writing up two different training plans. The first plan will be a plan that is based on training 350 hours per year. This plan is appropriate for those new to the sport of cycling and who are going to start following a consistent workout schedule for the first time. It is appropriate for those wishing to race in Men's C and D Categories as well as Women's B. The second training plan is based on doing 500 annual hours. This plan is appropriate for those with at least a year of cycling background or extensive training in other sports. It should be appropriate for those wishing to be competitive in Men's B and Women's A. These guidelines should help you get started with picking the appropriate plan. The rest of this section discusses the nuances in picking a plan.

The first guideline is to lean towards the plan with the least hours that is appropriate for your level and time schedule. The biggest gains from training are from being able to train consistently and completing the workouts as scheduled. If you are new to cycling, you will be amazed at how much you will improve by training on a consistent basis for 5 months. Also be careful to pick the plan appropriate to your past training history– doing too much too fast can cause injury.

Now, with only two plans, maybe the right allocation of hours isn't there for everyone. Luckily, the plans are written in a flexible enough manner such that it is easy to add or subtract a few hours per week from each of the plans to better fit your training desires. The basic features of the training plans that have been created are that they have an amount of exercise each day and a description of what to do. There is extra flexibility in the training routine in a number of ways. First, there are 1-2 off days per week. On these days, there is a choice between taking the day completely off or riding for up to an hour at a recovery pace. Second, the plans both have 2 days of 45 minute to an hour sessions of weight lifting built into the program. Weight lifting is optional. The weight workouts can be skipped, reducing the weekly time. They can also be replaced with biking thus keeping total training time the same, but increasing time on the bike. Finally, 45 minutes of time on the bike can be added to days where lifting is done to increase total training time for the week.

Finally, a brief note on deciding to lift or not. If you are in doubt, don't lift. Just choose an appropriate amount of time to be working out and spend the time on the bike. This is especially true for those new to the sport. The biggest thing that you can do to improve is to ride consistently. Weights would be helpful to those who are experienced riders and want to build some extra power or they are useful as a good means of cross training during the base period since it gets cold outside.

2 Reading the Training Plan

The training plans are pretty self explanatory. Each day there is a time for how many hours to spend exercising. On the second row is a code that describes what the workout is for a given day. The third line indicates a second workout for the day, which will only be for the optional weight workouts. Workouts can be broken into two shorter sessions if desired. This is especially the case for the early part of the season where there are options to do cross training. The exception to this is the one long ride workout a week. Doing this workout in one session is important as it is the largest component to building endurance. Finally, there is a brief description of the training period and a key for the workout codes found at the bottom of the page for each period the plan. For

each code, there will be a description of the workout including target training zones.

3 Getting Started

To get started with the training plan, it is best to calculate your training zones. This only needs to be done if you are going to train with heart rate or power. Workouts will be broken into training zones: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5a, 5b, 5c. Without any measure the zones can be roughly gaged by perceived exertion. The zones correspond to: 1 - very light, 2 - fairly light, 3 - somewhat hard, 4 - hard, 5a - very hard, 5b - very, very hard, 5c - all out. As you can see, these are not always clear. Using heart rate or power tries to put on objective measure on this.

To use heart rate or power, a test has to be done to determine power or heart rate at lactate threshold. To do a test, a heart rate monitor that provides the average heart rate over a workout is needed. The test is to do a 20 minute all out effort. To calculate your lactate threshold heart rate divide your average 20 minute heart rate by 1.04. The training bible then has a table that determines training zones based on threshold heart rate. If you complete the test, email me with your threshold or average heart rate for the test and I can send your heart rate training zones back to you. Try to get the test done within the next week as the plans will start the week after (though using heart rate will be less critical in the early stages as most all of the riding will be at easy efforts).

Good luck and let me know if you have any questions!