

Training Program Part Deux - Building Miles and Base

March is here and it's time to begin phasing biking into our program whether we can or not, it should be making up 70-80 % of your regime by now, unless you are completely snow bound and then you will adjust your program accordingly (more XC ski and indoor cycle training to compliment).

Miles are still high we are in a building miles and base, building mitochondria (energy cells in muscles) and capillaries (very small blood vessels that feed muscles). All of these are what make racing at your best possible. It's the long slow miles that develop the miles and miles of small road-like capillaries that service our hard working muscles.

We should also be working on some specific sub-threshold intensities - efforts that begin at 3 x 10 minutes and develop to 3 x 20 minutes - but without lactate accumulation whenever possible. As well consider a fast-paced spin once a week to keep your muscles firing at a fast pace.

Build phases should include a 3-week build (based usually in hours, but can be miles) with intensities also building progressively in length. The build is then followed by a 1 week rest. This should run us through the next micro-cycle of 6 weeks. So, for each week, the hours would be 13- 15- 17, rest 10 (that includes all exercise) then 15- 17-19 rest 12.

Usual training at this time of year for a pro rider:

As before we begin with rest.

Monday easy spin (recovery ride) maybe some light stretching in the pm

Tuesday spin class or speed work, 1-1.5 hours quality

Wednesday something long and aerobic 3- 4 hours easy, if time is short a tempo ride - not too hard...maybe 75%

Thursday can still be doing weights or try some hills, in easy gears, just passing time 2-3 hours

Friday off or easy, prep for weekend except maybe in third week of build add ride for mileage without structure

Saturday is a key day after rest day. Time should be 3-5 hours with ITT (individual Time Trial) or TTT (Team Time Trial) done with a group. These should be done after 1 hour of riding. The idea is to add effort. It should progress over the 3 weeks from 2 @ 10 min w/ 20 off between, to 3 @ 10, to 3 @ 15 etc. Weeks 1-3 will grow mileage at the same rate 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, rest 4 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, etc.

Sunday should be a tough-ish day and go fartlek (this means without structure). Just have fun and follow your wheels; or, push when you feel good and dog it when you feel slow. It will be part of your progression so try to get as much out of

Sunday as you can, but have fun. 3-5 hours. Now you are tired so look forward to Monday.

Things to try:

1. In the last hour of your long ride, lift your cadence fairly high for some periods (1-3 minutes x 2-3 times). Remind your legs that they are doing circles and don't let them slow down at the end of every ride.
2. Fuel your body throughout and after the ride, this is not the time of year to make any moves to be lean, if anything over-eat and let your body know that there is always food coming.
3. This is the mix phase of the season, when we blend cross training with cycling and add higher intensities and even racing to the schedule. It is a painful period, but many gains are made here. Try not to destroy yourself, but recognize that rest, food and sleep are the only ways your body can deal with volume and intensity.

Think about where you have come from and where you are going. We started with a rest phase, slowly added sports for fun, brought in strength and mileage that was easy, now we add intensity to the whole mix. This is close to the hardest phase of the year, when the load is building and your body must adjust.

Following this we will unload, reduce volume and adjust our weekly cycles to the race schedule we have set. Looking ahead we see that we have 18 weekends to go, minus the next 7 that will put us into our 12 week phase for final tune up.

Please if you have any questions please ask them and take care of your body, there's no spare in the trunk.

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PS- Theories of training are many, if your season is different or your work schedule is different try to understand the principles and apply those. Nothing is exact, the science is you.