



November 2009 Bulletin

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Prez Sez

As the days grow colder, and shorter, and the opportunities to ride diminish, let's remember that Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and I'm certainly not immune to making a list of things I am thankful for; so here goes:

- The club membership, for making my two years as president more fun than I ever imagined (and more work too!).
- All the volunteers; the ride leaders, the ENY committee, the folks who helped collect dinner money at the monthly meetings, the SIG captains, etc. Without you folks, the club can do nothing!
- The 2008 and 2009 NYCC Board of Directors. Any successes I had over the last two years were a direct result of their hard work.
- A fabulous year of riding, and a new personal record for mileage.
- The patience of those who rode with me during the year. One day I will lead a ride that will NOT make any wrong turns! (though I wouldn't count on it anytime soon).
- All the people who e-mailed me with ideas and suggestions -- nearly all of them were great -- I wish we could have implemented all of them!

I would be remiss if I did not extend my very deep appreciation to Ellen Jaffe, who put the NYCC on everyone's radar with two spectacular ENY events.

And last, to my wife Theresa, who let me put off finishing the bathroom in the basement, who covered the grocery shopping, who painted the living room and hallway this summer, thereby allowing me to ride every weekend (weather permitting). Personally, I think she was glad to have me out of the house; I can be SUCH a pain in the neck!

Happy Thanksgiving to ALL!

Be safe, be well, and I'll see you on the road,

George Arcarola
President, NYCC

Shaping up in the Off Season

Part One in a Two-Part Series

By Carol Krol

With shorter days, dropping temperatures, and winter right around the corner, some cyclists simply hang up the bike and wait for spring. There are other cyclists who -- for competitive reasons or for fitness goals -- choose to maintain fitness levels and continue to ride through the colder months whether braving the elements or cruising indoors on a trainer. And then there are some cyclists, especially those relatively new to the sport, who aren't sure what to do come winter. No matter where you fall in that continuum, motivation can be a challenge in the off-season.

Submit!

Have you a hankering to express yourself in prose? Do you have a wealth of information to share with the NYCC membership? Have you just returned from some far-flung spot and wish to tell everyone about it? Submit! Submit!

Cycling coaches suggest you can use the off-season to get your bike and your body in shape for the new year.

"You can actually use the off-season to improve your fitness and start out your 2010 season in better shape with a comprehensive training program, and some changes to your bike and gear," says Ann Marie Miller, an NYCC member and a USA Cycling Level 3 Licensed Coach.

We asked eight top cycling coaches, including Miller, for their best advice for cyclists in the off-season to enable riders to come back in top form once the daffodils sprout next spring. Seven of the eight coaches are NY-based. Four sets of coach's tips follow. Stay tuned for the other four in our December issue.

Featured coaches in the two-part series are: Felix Calderon; Jonathan Cane; Chris Carmichael; Ann Marie Miller; Deirdre Murphy; Michael Sherry; Zoltan Tisza; and Greg Waggoner.

Chris Carmichael is personal coach to Lance Armstrong and CEO of Carmichael Training Systems. He can be reached at www.trainright.com.



Chris Carmichael

Keep training. It's hard to move forward next year if you spend three months going backward this year. The old "pro-mentality" method of training was to take 2-3 months off or nearly off after the end of the season. With the volume and intensity of their schedules,

extended recuperation time may be warranted. But even pros aren't taking that kind of time off anymore. For amateur racers and enthusiasts, it's important to minimize the amount of lactate threshold power you lose through the fall and winter. Your high-end fitness -- sprinting, explosive climbing, etc. -- will go away, but aim to keep at least 87-90% of your threshold power and you'll be well on your way to making even greater progress next season.

Forget LSD. Go for Intensity. There's nothing wrong with intensity in the winter. Most of us are everyday cyclists with full-time jobs, families, and mortgages. That means your training time is very limited (6-8 hours a week, especially during the dark months of winter). Training workload is the product of time and intensity, and in the absence of time, intensity must increase in order to deliver a workload high enough to lead to positive adaptations. That doesn't mean kill yourself every single day, but it does mean that it's time to drop the antiquated belief that winter is a time for just long, slow distance training.

Cycling-specific strength training may not be necessary.

Cycling-specific strength training may not be useful for time-crunched athletes. If you have only 6-8 hours a week to train, you don't really have enough time to devote to both a cycling program and a strength-training program. I think all athletes should be doing a functional strength training program featuring dynamic movements, but that's because it's good for your overall health and longevity. But I'm not convinced that a cycling-specific strength training program -- especially one being incorporated into a time-crunched athlete's lifestyle -- is going to improve performance on the bike any more than spending that time riding.

Sports nutrition is a must. Sports nutrition is still important, even if you're just doing 60-minute indoor trainer workouts! Dehydration is a major concern for training indoors, and even if you consume only water during the workout (sports drinks and gels can be difficult to stomach during intense indoor sessions), it's important to consume sports drinks before the workout and/or a recovery drink after the workout. Some athletes will burn more than 800 calories during an indoor session and lose more than 1.5 liters of fluid. If you want to have a good workout tomorrow or even the next day, it behooves you to replenish that.

Zoltan Tisza is founder of Zoltan Coaching. He can be reached at zoltancoaching@gmail.com.



Zoltan Tisza

Be ready physically and mentally. After a long season, everyone is a little bit tired mentally and physically. Don't underestimate the importance of being ready physically and mentally in order to push you through the next couple of off-season months, which are going to be a steady state and a bit monotonous. You do that with breaks. To enjoy cycling for the rest of your life, you need breaks to feel "hungry" to ride again; don't turn cycling into a job!

The off-season is about building endurance, power, and aerobic capacity for the next season. Unfortunately, some amateur riders can go overboard despite their best intentions by preparing for the next season with too much time and intensity.

Cross-training and gym/lifting. Incorporate other sports during the off season. Cross training does help you to rebuild all the relationships between muscle groups. You can do hiking, skating, cross country skiing, downhill skiing, stairs, running, mountain biking. Basically, anything you like and enjoy. Athletes who work other sports into their overall program will improve their coordination and balance. Do other sports and have more fun during the off season.

Many coaches don't believe in lifting, but I do. I think lifting does

help you to rebuild your muscular groups, what you lost during the cycling season, and does help you to improve your speed, endurance and power.

Go for more HIT!!! One of the most common things I see and experience with recreational riders is that their endurance capacity is pretty good, but they can't go faster than the tempo that they are used to. They often cannot accelerate past a certain point.

The reason is they always do the same endurance and tempo pace. Because cycling is an endurance sport, most of your ride should be in that zone, but you need to target some of your training in higher intensity zones and do some high intensity training. If you have been riding for many years, your endurance should be on a pretty good level already. To maintain it, you don't need to put in that many hours, like you did in the first 3-4 years. Work on higher intensities at least once per week during the off season.

Stretching. A common mistake older riders make is that they don't stretch enough. Many older super active athletes are in great shape, but because they don't stretch enough, they develop long-term knee and hip problems. One great tool to add to your stretching regimen is a foam roller to massage your legs in various places for myofascial release. However, with or without a foam roller or other props, you absolutely need to stretch in order to avoid short and long-term injuries.

Periodization. Build up your off season training. Increase the hours, weights, month by month, and make sure you are having a recovery period every month as well. When you start to do higher intensity, give more recovery time to yourself as well, training and resting have to be well connected and balanced. Find a period when you would like to be in the best shape during the cycling season, and work your training periodization, base it on the target month, and separate the periods very well from each other: Base/Build /Peak/Taper. Be sure to rest in general; you can go faster only if you rest enough.

Ann Marie Miller is a USA Cycling Level 3 licensed coach and holds an MA in Applied Physiology. She is currently a coach for CRCA. She graduated from NYCC's A SIG and was an A SIG leader for 3 years. Ann Marie can be reached at ammhotwheels@me.com.



Ann Marie Miller

Strength and cross-training: Replace some of your ride time with strength training. Strength training helps build stronger muscles to increase your overall power output, improve posture and overall muscle balance, increase lean muscle mass, and especially important for women, protect against bone loss. Cyclists are especially vulnerable to osteoporosis because cycling is a low-impact, non-weight bearing activity. Studies have shown that even former professional male cyclists experience greater bone loss than non-cyclists, so men aren't immune.

You may want to enlist a qualified cycling coach (see www.usacycling.org for a list of licensed cycling coaches in your area) to help with a strength training program, or a fitness professional who has experience with sport-specific training. (look for ACSM, NASM, ACE or NSCA certified trainers). Look for a routine that emphasizes functional strength for cycling; not just muscle-building. A well-rounded routine should include exercises for all major muscle groups, as well as core exercises. The routine should include functional exercises that require balance and body awareness, such as lunges, squats and step-ups. Focus should be on multi-joint exercises to simulate the demands of cycling. Strength training doesn't have to be time-consuming; just 2-3 sessions/week with exercises for all major muscle groups, 2-3 sets of 12-15 reps/exercise on non-consecutive days will do.

Ride indoors: There is no physiological benefit to training in adverse conditions. You don't get fitness "bonus points" by riding when the temperature or wind chill is unpleasant. For riders who suffer asthma or other pulmonary conditions, riding in extremely cold conditions may exacerbate symptoms and lower performance. To maintain your fitness, set up a trainer or take a spin class.

Spin classes can be an effective way to maintain your fitness, but many instructors incorporate moves with no relevance to road cycling (have you ever really done "push-ups" on your road bike?) Stick to the techniques you would perform on your road bike, or find a Spin class led by a road cyclist. Since indoor riding is more continuous & doesn't allow you to "coast" or draft, you don't have to ride for as long as you would outdoors to get similar benefits; for longer rides, substituting an indoor ride that is about 2/3 as long as your outdoor ride will suffice.

Get a bike makeover: If you just started cycling seriously last year, or stepped up your cycling with a program like the SIG, you are not the same cyclist today as you were at the beginning of the season. You've improved your fitness and your skills, and you may have different needs in your bike position or even the bike you are riding. If you are changing equipment, such as adding aerobars for triathlons or a investing in a Time Trial bike, take the time for a proper bike fit. After you've identified some goals for next year, make an appointment for a bike fitting with a qualified coach or fit specialist. A good fit can improve your comfort & performance on the bike. Discuss your goals with the fitter, as well as any discomfort on the bike, or injuries that affect riding.

Get tested: How fit are you? How do you know your correct training zones? If you are interested in learning more about your own fitness and performance, you may want to explore fitness testing in the off-season. There are many protocols for fitness testing, but the most common for cycling are field tests and lactate threshold tests. An outdoor or indoor field test is relatively simple and can help identify your "lactate threshold" or the highest intensity you can hold for an extended period of time. Your LT is the real measure of your performance capacity on the bike, and this can change dramatically

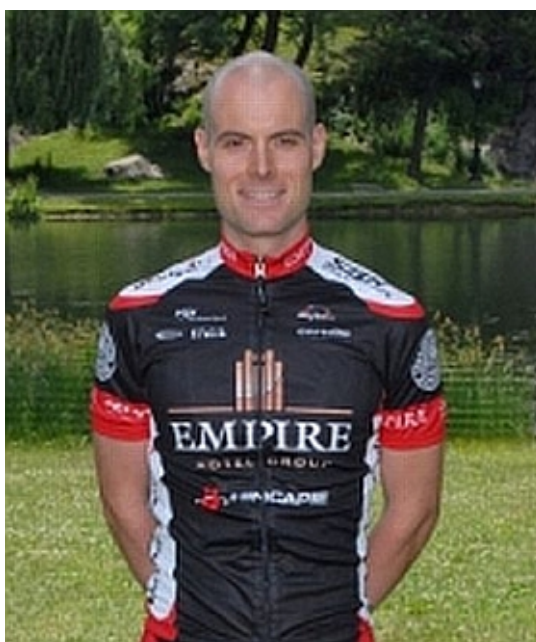
with training. At the very least, [it] will help you establish your relative LT heart rate so you can determine the optimal training zones for your workouts. It also serves as a baseline for future testing. LT power is an objective measurement of how hard you are capable of working and is a more reliable measure of performance than relying on heart rate alone.

Incorporate intervals: Indoor training can be boring, so mix it up & make your training more effective by adding a variety of techniques & intervals. Include higher intensity intervals to maintain your fitness. The type, duration & intensity of intervals will vary with your goals, initial fitness level and the period of training.

However, even a basic program of working harder for periods of time will help maintain your fitness. For aerobic fitness, add efforts of 8 – 20 minutes just below your Lactate threshold with at least 5 minutes recovery between. Build up the intensity gradually to your LT heart rate, or slightly above, for efforts of 5-10 minutes.

During endurance workouts, include some fast cadence drills, 1-3 minutes at a faster cadence, 110- 130 RPMs, low intensity with 1 minute recovery between effort.

Michael Sherry is the NY Director of Performance Labs. He can be reached at mjsherry@gmail.com.



Michael Sherry

Base training. For most weekend warriors, the winter can be cold and uninviting. Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts to base training. Endurance takes a long time to build, and long rides are the most efficient way to do that. The milder winter months should be spent trying to get these rides in. While it takes a long time to build it, it also takes a long time to disappear. That way you get a little base already under your belt when the deep freezes of January and February come, and you can focus on some shorter efforts indoors or switch to some strength work.

Indoor trainers. Building fitness for cycling can be tough in the winter, especially when the weather and daylight don't cooperate. The best way to improve cycling fitness is to simply ride. Indoor trainers make this possible. It can be a real grind, but it is also a

very efficient training method since you're pedaling the entire time. How do you beat the boredom? I set up the trainer in front of the TV, and then come up with a strict goal for the ride whether that is a certain amount of time, to improve cadence, work on tempo, etc. I'll throw some high cadence drills and single leg drills in as well to mix things up. It can be drudgery, but also the most efficient training you'll do all year.

Strength training. Strength training is important. Training the core can be extremely beneficial. I don't recommend going heavy on the weights. Do light-weight high reps if at all, and mainly focus on floor exercises. Take a yoga or Pilates class as a good alternative. Despite all the bike fitting technology and ergonomic design available, our bodies were not built to sit on a bike for hours. Rebalancing the body can be important after a long season and help keep you healthy and happy next season.

Nutrition. Eat less when you ride less. Seems simple, but it is always a challenge -- especially through the holidays. My general rule is to stay away from processed foods, and eat a lot of salads, greens and veggies for dinner instead of heavy foods. And always eat a good breakfast regardless of what time of year it is.

*Stay tuned! **Part two** of *Shaping Up in the Off Season* will be published in December. You'll hear from top coaches, including Jonathan Cane, Greg Waggoner, Deirdre Murphy and Felix Calderon.*

November Rides

To see this month's rides listed by the week or month, [click here](#). (password required)

November Events

For a list and description of this month's events, [click here](#).

Bike Shop Discounts

To access your discount card and a list of bike shops offering discounts to NYCC members, [click here](#) (password required)

Bulletin submissions

Members may submit (and are heartily encouraged to do so) contributions to the bulletin editor at [NYCC Bulletin Editor](#). The deadline for submissions is the second Tuesday of the month preceding the next issue.

Ride submissions

For further information click [here](#).

Road Dirt

Observe any dirt? Any social news to impart to the club? Send your scoops to [NYCC Road Dirt](#)

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