

Coaching Corner

Social Riders

Enjoy riding your bike, mostly in HR zone 2, but don't get stuck doing "long slow duration" rides the whole time. You'll become a "diesel" with no turn of speed or ability to go up hills at a decent pace. It is important to include some threshold efforts (say 5-10 mins), Vo2max (2-4 mins), and sprints in your rides. Do these at the end of your rides, so as not to undo all the good work from your steady riding (there proven reasons for this.) It is especially beneficial for those aged 40+ to ensure that they do at least a small amount of high intensity work, if medically fit to do so, to stave off muscular atrophy (muscle mass reduction) and do some form of strength training to reduce the effects of osteoporosis (bone density reduction) which is especially prevalent in cyclists anyway and even more pronounced as we age.

Summer Racers (TT, Crits, Road Racing, Triathlons, etc.)

When not racing, work on your "limiters". Limiters are your weaknesses for your specific type of racing, not general weaknesses. Work on general weaknesses in the "off season", though you shouldn't neglect your long rides for keeping your aerobic base from falling off. Whilst racing is good for specific race fitness, it can help you to get faster quicker by instead of racing all the time, doing a targeted training session instead. For example – you may be out the back of the bunch after the second attack, which equates to 2xVo2 max efforts. You can do 5+ of these in an interval session or work on improving your endurance and repeatability, which is going to be far more beneficial for your racing performance. Do not do more than 2 races or high intensity training sessions per week. It is especially important to allow yourself adequate recovery between races and training sessions. It is also a good idea to have a "rest week" every month, where you race less, or not at all, and lower the volume of your training, to avoid becoming fatigued. Fatigue can creep up on you and ruin your season. Remember to taper properly for an important race. You'll want to be as fresh as possible for these races.

Winter Racers (CX, MTB, Hill-Climb, etc.)

You should be in your "Pre-season" phase of training with the autumn/winter racing season only a month or two away. This should involve making your training efforts as close to what your racing would involve as possible, which is likely going to mean more of a focus on high-intensity training. Your aerobic base should be well established to build upon by now. The bigger the base, the higher the peak performance you'll obtain. Don't forget to work on your bike handling skills during this phase, which are big part of much winter racing events. Because, at this stage, your training will be quite a high volume and intensity, be sure to recover well. Don't forget to allow yourself a good taper before the season starts so you don't start the season carrying fatigue from your training efforts.

Want to know more?

There is limited space here to go into details, so if you would like to discuss anything mentioned above in more detail, or if you would like to discuss your specific training, perhaps for a special event, please get in touch with Club Coach, Mark McGee at coaching@madcc.org.uk. This is a free service available as a benefit for all club members.