



EnduranceAthlete

Ben Popp Designed Athletes

4.1.10

Training Intensity and Effort

I'll admit I preach to many athletes that most folks train too hard, too often, but there is a problem brewing....poor quality training that equals quantity, but not quality. While it is true that many have limited time to work out so that once out the door they think if they go harder, they are somehow maximizing their time. While there is some merit in this thinking, in the long run it can lead to a real plateau in performance and results. We begin to always train in this "No Mans Land" as I like to call it and our body gets really good at going, "sort of fast". So, knowing that 80-85% of our training needs to be base training and low intensity strength, many often hear me telling people to back off, build base and specific strength and look at the long term goal versus the short term satisfaction of a perceived "good workout"....enter, the "problem".



Workouts need to fit into one of 5 categories, each of which must be present in every training week of the year in some way, shape or form – base/volume, strength, speed, intensity or recovery. If it doesn't fit into one of these categories defined by your personal training intensity levels and plan, what is it...wasted time (see chart below).

I'm a firm believer that every workout should have a purpose – speed, intensity, strength, base building and volume or recovery. It isn't too hard to plan, and each workout should have one of these components as a focus for some part of it. Each of these categories has many ways to define it, and many workouts within it, but your ride/workout should be one of them.....so unless it is a recovery day, when done, you should be tired and fatigued from in some way – either sore from strength or muscle memory speed work, wiped from an intensity workout, or totally drained from a long glycogen sapping, fat burning base ride. Do you find yourself going out easy all the time then rationalizing it to yourself by calling it "base training" – but it was only 45 minutes? Do you do a strength workout and

find the steepest hill you can, or just a slight hill because it is early in the season? When you go hard, is it at threshold, or just a tad below? Is level 4 truly level 4, or more like threshold? Training is hard work, and in return you get positive results. So the bottom line is when you are finished working out – “something should be tired” as that is why we workout. While figuring out how tired, and what should be tired, takes time and experience, it will come. Ask questions, read books, learn...otherwise the effort you’re putting into “working out” may be adding up to a bunch of inefficient time out in the elements!

Smart training with proper intensity (hard when it should be, easy when it should be), periodization, focus and purpose (more isn’t always better) will result in quality training, yielding a faster, more efficient rider that will continue to improve and reach goals, both long and short term. Keep it rolling, smarter and faster. Coach Ben

Basic Endurance/ Strength 1	Basic Endurance/ Strength 2	Pre-competition Training Week	Competition Training Week
Recovery as needed/planned	Recovery as needed/planned	Recovery as needed/planned	Recovery as needed/planned
1 Intensity *L3	1-2 Intensity *L3-4	2 Intensity *L3-4	1-2 Intensity *L3-4
1 Speed *15-30sec	1-2 Speed *15-30sec	2 Speed *15-30sec	2 Speed *15-30sec
2-3 Strength *General	2-3 Strength *General/Specific	2 Strength *General/Specific	1-2 Strength *Specific
1 OD	1 OD	1 OD	*0 -1 OD
High Volume	Medium-High Volume	Medium Volume	Low Volume