



Training advice #1

The race is still a long way off, but the start of the year is the best time to get back on the bike after a short winter break and work off some of the holiday excess!

Six months before the event is the perfect time to get the ball rolling. Nothing too strenuous in terms of intensity just yet, but the wonderful machine that is the human body will need some help if it is to be ready for a full week of the Alps Epic.

A gradual start is essential. Forget five big rides a week for now. Even if this is what you'll have to ride in July, this time of year the body is simply not ready for that kind of effort. If you go out too hard now, you'll just be worn out when the time comes to really drop the hammer!

So as I said, start slowly. By this I mean 3 cardio sessions a week, which is plenty for now. Three sessions that will help you get back in the rhythm of training, ready for the next steps. As for which sport should constitute these sessions, that's entirely up to you. The most important thing is that you have fun and are motivated to train. Try mixing it up between running, swimming and cycling. Now is the perfect time to try a new sport. Just remember not to go too hard at first. A new sport needs a decent period of adaptation to new movements. Be careful to avoid injuries. If you hit the weekend without any sessions planned, take advantage of the opportunity to just get outside and breathe some fresh air. Maybe take a chilled out stroll in the hills with the family or some friends. All activity is good activity at this point.

Once you're back into the stride of things, you can start to integrate one more intense session in to your routine. The work rate will be elevated but still remember the 'start gently to finish stronger' ethos. This session should consist of some cardio work and some exercises to target each muscle group. For the cardio, you can either work on the bike or with running, which is often more practical in the depths of winter. Work in a few intervals, which will become gradually harder throughout the program. Start with 30 seconds on/1 minute rest x 10 reps. This will get your body used to these sorts of efforts. Once you are comfortable with these sessions, gradually reduce the rests between efforts until you reach 30 on/30 rest x



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10 reps. Intervals might not be everyone's favourite, but they are an awesomely effective means of training. On your bike, even during longer events, there are always changes of rhythm (think of steep climbs, sprints etc). During these moments, you'll be glad for the work you put in over the winter. In addition to the cardio work, think about incorporating some core strength exercises into these sessions. Planks, push-ups, squats, lunges, hip raises etc are all great ways to build stability and flexibility in your joints and core muscle groups. If you find motivation for this work slightly lacking, try persuading some friends to join in with the sessions for some mutual encouragement.

Needless to say, this advice must be adapted to your own needs and personal objectives. Follow the advice and come July, you'll hit the start line at your best, ready to have the most fun of your life. Because for us at the Alps Epic, that's the real objective!

And finally remember, every drop of sweat you spill now will be one that you save in the future!

Guillaume
Alps Epic Racers Relation



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