

Already March

By: Michael Godfrey

Here we are in March, all of a sudden. It just doesn't seem that long ago we were first getting back on our trainers. We were thinking, long winter coming, time to get the seemingly endless hours indoors done... it will be a long time until we are outdoors again.

The winter or more precisely, lack of winter of 2014 – 2015 has been quite amazing. And we find ourselves ever so close to getting back outside riding again.

With that in mind I wanted to touch on 4 interrelated ideas of concepts. Riding low & tight, core stability, keeping the intensity up & not all intervals are created equal.

Low & Tight

With apologies to those who have ever been in one of my classes, stop me if you have heard this one... "Practice riding low and tight, the spring winds will force you there".

Please watch this video from Global Cycling Network (these guys are great and have lots of great stuff)
http://velonews.competitor.com/2014/01/training-center/skills/video-how-to-ride-in-strong-winds_315221

Take note of the riders' position at around 27 seconds in. THAT is low and tight. Even in the absence of a specific head wind, this is super aerodynamic and will gain you "free watts" by reducing your drag. Over 30kph the wind or more accurately wind resistance is your biggest enemy to going faster.

It is not fun to sit in that position (won't lie to you). But the more time you spend there, the better you get and it gives you free speed.

Core Stability

You know this is something we talk about all the time. This quick piece from [Bicycling.com](http://www.bicycling.com) illustrates both the simplicity and the complexity of the concept.

Any of you who swim know this intimately, you can be really floppy (think Geko-like) or you can be a streamlined, balanced missile, it is the same thing on the bike.

The article suggests that you work on "The Plank" not just for the core building benefits, but to learn how to "engage" or turn on you core to support you in driving maximum power into your pedals.

<http://www.bicycling.com/training-nutrition/training-fitness/4-secrets-perfect-plank>

Keep up the Intensity

In scanning around the web I noticed some outdoor rides being posted, awesome! However, in each instance the ride description was just this side of "we are taking a walk on our bikes".

Please don't misunderstand me here, there is nothing wrong with a social ride for fun and camaraderie, but if we are talking training we need intensity. Plus you having been doing lots of "base" work and are already doing a fair bit of intensity, make sure you stay sharp. On a related but different note also don't be "that guy" who turns every group ride into an "unmitigated hammerfest".

In addition for us, how shall I say this, more experienced (older) riders we need to get the work in. It is both a function of what our bodies need to stay strong, but also a function of how much time we have. Pros are in the mid 20s to mid 30s, are genetic freaks and their ENTIRE life is riding a bike. They can (and do) go on 6-hour rides on a regular basis. Few of us can 1) afford the time and 2) handle that workload. Therefore we must embrace intensity.

Don't believe me? Read this interview with Ned Overend a 59-year-old cycling legend. The story is an excerpt from Joe Friel's new book "Fast over 50"

http://velonews.competitor.com/2015/03/training-center/book-excerpt-ned-overend-high-intensity-training-masters_362176

Not all intervals are created equal

You may have noticed that we do everything from all out 10 second efforts (our beloved "Stomps") right up to today's 30 minutes sub-threshold efforts.

These different efforts affect you different ways and fatigue you in different ways. As a result they also require a different approach to recovery.

This is an excellent article by Stephen Cheung. Stephen is a Canadian cyclist and scientist who contributes a regular section called "Toolbox" on Pez Cycling. Pez is a Canadian based website that has a very unique perspective on cycling in general and the Toolbox is a terrific resource, highly recommend it.

<http://www.pezcyclingnews.com/toolbox/toolbox-muscle-fatigue#.VP0HIL2ibqA>