

Walter's Training Guide

This training program is based largely on the teachings of Adam Hodges Myerson (who coached me several years ago) who in turn based his training philosophy on that of Paul Koechli—the famed coach of Greg Lemond and the La Vie Claire team of the '80s. It also features some adjustments based on the lessons learned and things that have worked for me since I first worked with Adam (limited training time, need for recovery, etc.).

Overall, the goal is to maximize quality over quantity and targeting your efforts with the end-goal (i.e., TOSRV and other centuries) in mind. Over the course of the training plan, you'll see steadily increasing training volume for individual workouts and weekly totals. These gradual increases occur over 3-4 weeks and are intended to overload the body and encourage increases in your capacity and efficiency. You'll also see periodic phases of dramatically reduced volume (i.e., taper weeks), which allow the body to recover from the overload and re-build to higher levels of performance. In the beginning, the workouts will seem trivial. Rest assured that as the volume increases, you will definitely feel it and the taper weeks will be a most welcome change!

There are 3 main energy production systems that we need to train: aerobic, anaerobic, and ATP. As such, there are 3 targeted heart-rate training zones corresponding to each of these systems: Light, Middle, and Max.

Aerobic = Light Zone = 150-165 heart-rate

Aerobic refers to the oxygen-based energy system we rely upon to do the bulk of the work. This is what gets us to Portsmouth and back without dying on the side of the road! We need to maximize the capacity and efficiency of our aerobic energy production system to get the job done while minimizing discomfort over the long haul. As a result, most of our training time is spent here.

In this zone you should experience minimal discomfort, but you should feel like you're working. Cadence should always be 100 and higher—never lower than that. The perceived exertion should be what you can maintain for 1-2 hours of continuous riding. You should be able to maintain a conversation and breathing should be controlled, like when we're chilling in a pace-line keeping a steady tempo. **You should never, Never, NEVER feel a burn!** As the duration of each Light workout extends, feel free to break up the effort into 15-30 minute blocks, as it helps make the workouts mentally tolerable.

Keep in mind that being able to maintain a high cadence (100 and higher) is not easy and for most cyclists is not second nature—it is something that must be trained and developed. Developing this supple high-cadence spin requires dedication, patience and concentration. As the weeks and months pass by, you'll find that you'll be able to push a bigger gear at the same cadence and heart-rate—the net result of greater aerobic capacity and efficiency is more power output for the same effort!

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Anaerobic = Middle Zone = 170-175 heart-rate

Anaerobic refers to the energy system we rely upon to respond to attacks and sudden changes in pace—did I hear a “baggage check”?! In this zone, the body produces energy without oxygen and an unfortunate by-product of this process is lactic acid—that’s why you feel the burn. The body can only tolerate so much lactic acid before it needs to slow down and return to an aerobic state to start flushing these harmful by-products. Training in this zone is very damaging to the body and requires that the body be ready for the effort and sufficiently developed to recover and reap maximum benefit from the work done.

Since anaerobic efforts are so demanding, the total time spent in Middle is appreciably smaller than what is done in Light. The effort should feel like a serious surge in pace, but not a killer effort. You should be able to speak, but continuous conversation is difficult—this is no time for idle chit-chat! Middle efforts should be broken up into 2-3 minute blocks, with periods of Light interspersed between the efforts to allow for recovery. Cadence for Middle should always be 90 or higher—never lower than that. The volume of Middle doesn’t start to really build until you’ve established a solid aerobic base.

Over time you’ll see that you’ll be able to push a bigger gear at the same cadence and heart-rate—the result of greater capacity and efficiency in your anaerobic energy production system. In addition, you’ll find that you’ll be able to cross back and forth between aerobic and anaerobic more gracefully without “blowing up” catastrophically!

ATP = Max Zone = 20 pedal-strokes @ maximum output

ATP corresponds to the energy system we rely upon to produce maximum efforts of very short duration—is that the Portsmouth city-limit sign I see ahead?! The ATP system has tiny reserves, which are quickly depleted, so training efforts must be correspondingly brief.

Max efforts should be limited to 20 pedal-strokes (10 with each leg) at a cadence of 125 or higher. If you begin to feel a burn, then the effort is too long! If the effort goes too long, then you start to tap the anaerobic system, which is trained elsewhere, and you lose the training specificity we’re shooting for. The Max effort should take about 10 seconds, after which you should soft-pedal in the smallest gear you have for another couple minutes to let your heart-rate settle. You should feel completely recovered from an effort before beginning the next. If you have trouble completing an effort, stop doing Max efforts for the current workout and proceed with the remaining Light you have scheduled.

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Max efforts can be very taxing on the ligaments and tendons in the legs, so they do not appear until well into the training program. In fact, I have screwed up my knees many times doing Max efforts on the trainer, so I don't do them at all—so proceed at your own risk! If you do choose to include Max in your training, I suggest for the first 2-3 workouts that include Max, the efforts should be restricted to the small chain-ring. If your legs respond well to the efforts and recovery is no problem (i.e., no excessive or unusual soreness the 2 days after the workout), then feel free to move up to the big chain-ring.

Interpreting the workouts

The workouts are composed of 3 numbers in sequence, each number referring to the training volume for Light, Middle, and Max (respectively). The Light and Middle numbers refer to the number of minutes spent in each heart-rate zone for that workout. The Max number simply refers to the number of efforts for that workout.

Example #1: 16/2/0

This workout prescribes 16 minutes of Light and 2 minutes of Middle. The best way to conduct this workout is as follows:

1. Light, 8 minutes
2. Middle, 2 minutes
3. Light, 8 minutes

This breaks up the workout nicely.

Example #2: 28/10/0

This workout prescribes 28 minutes of Light and 10 minutes of Middle. A nice way to conduct this workout is as follows:

1. Light, 12 minutes
2. Middle, 2 minutes
3. Light, 2 minutes
4. Middle, 3 minutes
5. Light, 2 minutes
6. Middle, 3 minutes
7. Light, 2 minutes
8. Middle, 2 minutes
9. Light, 10 minutes

Again, the intent is to break up the workout into manageable chunks.

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Example #3: 56/0/0

This workout prescribes 56 minutes of Light. A nice way to conduct this workout is as follows:

1. Light, 15 minutes
2. Light, 15 minutes
3. Light, 15 minutes
4. Light, 11 minutes

Or

1. Light, 30 minutes
2. Light, 26 minutes

Example #4: 60/0/5

This workout prescribes 56 minutes of Light and 5 Max efforts. A nice way to conduct this workout is as follows:

1. Light, 30 minutes
2. Max, 5 efforts—each takes 2-3 minutes (10 seconds for effort, remainder for full recovery)
3. Light, 30 minutes

Adjusting the program

As you would expect, we can't go about our training in a vacuum—we all have families, jobs, we get sick, we get tired, we get injured.whatever—we have our lives to live!

- If the planned days-of-the-week do not work for you, then shift them forward or backwards as needed (but maintain the sequence of workouts in each weekly cycle).
- If you're starting the 3rd or 4th week of a cycle and you're feeling knackered and having a tough time doing the first weekly workout, then you're at risk of overtraining. In these instances, you should immediately convert that week into a taper-week and use the appropriate taper week workouts. After you've completed the taper week, then start the next training cycle on the following week.
- The heart-rate ranges for Light and Middle are for me, but there's a good chance they'll work for you. However, every individual is different so feel free to make adjustments to the ranges you use:

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- If you're doing Light and feeling a burn at the high end of 150-165, then adjust the top-end of the Light range down to 160 or whatever level needed to avoid any burn in the legs.
- If you're doing Middle and the effort required when using 170-175 is more like a sprint, then adjust down to 165-170.
- If you'd rather do a workout outside, then you should double the volume of Light to account for the vagaries of riding on the road. Middle efforts are usually very easy to control, even when outside, so conduct those parts of the workouts using the numbers as prescribed.

JAN 2005

Monthly Calendar

January 1 - 31, 2005

Untitled

December 2004						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday						
27	28	29	30	31	1	2						
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> SET-UP BIKE & TRAINER! </div>												
						BI.1	16/2/0		30/0/0		16/2/0	30/0/0
						BI.2	22/4/0		42/0/0		22/4/0	43/0/0
						BI.3	28/10/0		56/0/0		28/10/0	59/0/0
						BI.6-TAPER	18/2/0		35/0/0		18/2/0	35/0/0
BI.2	X											

CYCLE#1

FEB 2005

Monthly Calendar

February 1 - 28, 2005

Untitled

January 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
31 B1.2	1 22/4/0	2	3 42/0/0	4	5 22/4/0	6 43/0/0
7 B1.3	8 28/10/0	9	10 56/0/0	11	12 28/10/0	13 59/0/0
14 B1.4	15 30/15/0	16	17 60/0/5	18	19 30/15/0	20 60/0/0
21 B1.6-TAPER	22 18/2/0	23	24 35/0/0	25	26 18/2/0	27 35/0/0
28 B1.3	1	2	3	4	5	6

CYCLE #2

MAR 2005

Monthly Calendar

March 1 - 31, 2005

Untitled

February 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28 B1.3	28/10/0	2	3 56/0/0	4	5 28/10/0	6 59/0/0
7 B1.4	8 30/15/0	9	10 60/0/5	11	12 30/15/0	13 60/0/0
14 B1.5	15 30/20/0	16	17 60/0/10	18	19 30/20/0	20 60/0/0
21 B2.4	22 30/25/0	23	24 60/0/15	25	26 30/25/0	27 60/0/0
28 B1.6 - TAPER	29 18/2/0	30	31 35/0/0	1	2	3

Cycle # 3

APR 2005

Monthly Calendar April 1 - 30, 2005 Untitled

March 2005	April 2005	May 2005
M T W T F S S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	M T W T F S S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	M T W T F S S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28 B1.6	29	30	31	1	2 18/2/0	3 35/0/0
4 B1.4	5 30/15/0	6	7 60/0/5	8	9 30/15/0	10 60/0/0
11 B1.5	12 30/20/0	13	14 60/0/10	15	16 30/20/0	17 60/0/0
18 B2.4	19 30/25/0	20	21 60/0/15	22	23 30/25/0	24 60/0/0
WORK IN A 3-4 HOUR RIDE						
25 B2.5	26 30/30/0	27	28 60/0/20	29	30 30/30/0	1
WORK IN A 3-4 HOUR RIDE						

Handwritten note: B1.6-17, B2.4-5

MAY 2005

Monthly Calendar

May 1 - 31, 2005

Untitled

April 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2005						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Calendar

Monday 25	Tuesday 26	Wednesday 27	Thursday 28	Friday 29	Saturday 30	Sunday 31
B2.5						60/0/0
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
B1.6-TAPER	18/2/0		35/0/0		TOSRV!	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5