

WINTER II or TOO

If you are relatively young you watched Saturday morning TV & cartoons. With the passing of the Saturday movies was the passing of the Saturday Serial such as Buck Rogers. Always there was a short section to tell you what had happened on the prior installments. Well now! on our last installment You (our Hero or Heroine) read this great article about how to embark on a solid Winter Preparation. You the Hero or Heroine began by doing rollers on a fixed gear & went on to weights. In this Serial there are always VILLAINS. This is a real epic serial with you the hero triumphing over all tragic flaws.

One of the big VILLAINS is habit. Habit sez "if I've got a plan & I execute the plan then I must be all right". This easily translates to what I call using a "recipe". Its very easy to pick out workouts from a book (recipes), or a mentor & fall into the habit of just repeating a routine. A true tragic hero has a fatal flaw which does him in. Lurking around the corner of habit is the repetitious habit which leads to a loss of intensity. Because of habit--goals get moved up only a little as time progresses. Habit has a buddy called COMPLACENCY.

Another lurking VILLAIN of perfection is perception. Yes fellow heroes our newest VILLAIN is the anti hero who says "I couldn't do that". This is part of the "perception of effort" or a perception of self which places self imposed limits on the use of talent. The question to be asked is am I really not able to lift the weight or have I fooled myself into not thinking I can lift the weight. In bike racing the winner is often the person who is best at managing the pain. Rarely is a debilitating cramp seen in an upper level bike race. I have seen it once in 20 years when Erik Heiden cramped & fell off his bike during a stage of the Cascade Classic. This Olympic Skater & National level bike racer has a high self perception & developed a high threshold of pain. He finished the stage.

Its time for the Angel to assist us heroes in banishing some of our training villains & get on the track to Spring. The Angel (of success) said: "Use Task & Test" & as all good Angels do she then vanished. To us heroes this was the gold key to finding a method to train & race at a higher level. Putting the Angels' advice of "Use Task & Test" is quite easy but it does require some thought & some record keeping. One of the training themes heard often at the 1996 Coaching Symposium in Colorado Springs was "Live high, train low". Why were top coaches advocating living at "altitude" & training at lower altitude? A major part of the answer is that athletes could train harder & benefit from the training by following that procedure. Using the phrase "Task & Test" should assist in leading to higher training efforts which are repeatable & verified. This should not mean obsessive endurance training e.g. 4-6 hour grinder training rides in the cold. This means being able to do higher force training.

Building speed is the issue for this period for most athletes. Speed is built largely by increasing strength. This is simple stuff-- a Task example is a series of slow (50 RPM or less) 1 minute intervals at increasing pressure on an ergometer or exerciser. I like the late model Schwinn fixed gear models even if they have no resistance indicator, & of course the real ergometers. The escalating pressure & time between rest periods builds strength & the ability to do work. That is a Task & of course the Test is to measure improvement with a Power Test or short time trial. The Power Test is to be done at above 90 RPM to failure to maintain 90 RPM. An Olympic Protocol Power Test performs the same function as your personal time trial tests or your setting of new lifting & strength standards. Mostly these are YOUR RESULTS and not to be compared with other athletes. These tests show your personal improvement & you should keep track of them & how you got there. Not all athletes perform well in the test situation. Leonard Harvey Nitz tested poorly on the Power Test but was a World Medalist in the Points Race on the Track. Leonard and the coaches wisely used a different standard for his tests of training.

OK Bunkie so you want to be a 51 min. 40k time trial person or better. Fifty one minute 40 K's equal 76.5KPH which is about 30.12 MPH. Speeds of this level take muscle to propel the

bike even for a short distance. In general terms training for this level begins after the seasons rest and makes heavy use of strength building events. In addition, bike position & the mechanics of pedaling need to be examined. Training events which build strength include frequently include weights, plyometrics, calisthenics & regular stretching. This preparation must pay attention to the development of opposing muscles to balance the strength improvements of the cycling specific muscles. This latter portion of preparation should show you great improvements if the focus has been on strength. Conditioning volume is added to the training mix as this initial preparation period begins. Your weekly tasks should be becoming more specific as February & March roll on. A recipe of tasks could be as follows: Mon. Rollers to weights upper body, Wed., rollers to weights legs, Friday rollers to ergometer power & strength intervals. The balance of the weeks to be mixed with easy conditioning events in other disciplines.

There you have it lots of words on banishing training villains & few words on recipes.

Questions will be answered.

Phil Sanders
philipsanders@compuserve.com
503-649-4632