

Structured Training

by Adam Fivehouse

Riding and riding and riding but not getting faster?

Have you considered training instead of riding? Bear with me, as this may sound like a simple exercise in semantics but, once you understand the difference between the two you will be on your way to your best season yet. Riding is simply that, riding. It lacks focus, lacks structure, just two legs turning the pedals. Training, however, has a specific goal and purpose for each workout, each week, each month.

Goal Setting: You've heard it time and time again but, goal setting is a crucial first step in training. What events would you like to be at your best for? What facets of your riding would you like to improve upon? Goals help form the foundation of your training and give you something to keep your mind on during all of those hours on the bike.

Testing: Through a road based effort or a lab based lactate threshold test, like we do at Optimize Endurance, you establish a baseline for the season to come. You can get an idea of where your performance is currently at as well as what areas you will need to improve upon and be able to compare this to future data to know if your training is effective or if things need to be tweaked. Another important facet of testing is being able to set training zones specific to you based upon the data.

Planning: Based upon your target events for the season and the areas in which you are seeking improvement, we can begin to map out your training for the year. We use the idea of periodization, or the varying of training stimulus over discrete periods of time, to structure the workouts in a manner that will elicit the increases in performance that we are seeking. This is done through changes in the duration and intensity of your specific workouts as well as focusing on different riding skill sets.

Training: People who are riding, and not training, tend to do the same thing week in and week out and wonder why they aren't getting faster. Remember that commonly used definition for insanity? Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. This definitely holds true when it comes to training. The human body is an incredible machine that adapts to the stress that we put it under. If we're always doing the same thing it's going to get used to it after a while. Through structured training we progressively increase the stress on the body, allow it to rest and adapt, then stress it again. Through this process we are able to increase our performance...but only if we stick with it!

Success: If we plan properly and follow through with our training, we are rewarded with a fun and enjoyable day in the saddle come event day.

Adam Fivehouse, USA Cycling LIII Certified Coach, provides testing and coaching through Optimize Endurance Services. Contact him at 720-270-6876 or adam@optimizeendurance.com with training, coaching or testing questions. Or feel free to join us on one of our weekly OES Training Rides. Ride details can be found on our [Training Calendar](#). Rides alternate Sat/Sun and are a mix of road or mountain bike.