

Spring training, Triple Bypass on your mind?

Looking outside at the snow makes it hard to believe that as of March 1st the Triple Bypass is less than 20 weeks away. Time to get moving ahead on the spring training that brings hours of enjoyment on the bike during the summer months. Several things should be happening at this time of year to prepare us for the long hours in the saddle doing centuries, tours and even races. Think about your core/body strength, your training structure and ways to bring improvement into this 2008 season of cycling.

Winter is an opportune time to spend in your local exercise facility performing strength training and participating in group classes. These are some suggestions to follow for strength and core workouts:

1. Look for a strength training plan that focuses on cycling's specific movements.
 - a. These movements will help improve your hip motions and well as upper and lower leg strength.
2. Become a better pedaler through pedaling drills like single leg and high spin.
 - a. This will help you apply more power to the pedals for climbing, cruising at higher speeds and improving lactate threshold.
3. Don't forget about your core and upper body as well.
 - a. Core strength gives you the ability to push the pedals from a solid base and keep our lower back healthy.
4. Find a Pilates class that you can participate in once a week.
 - a. Pilates is well suited for cyclists because of the structured isometric contractions in each movement to increase strength.
5. You can also add some balance into the equation with use of an exercise ball as part of the workout.
 - a. Some Pilates classes incorporate weights and the exercise ball into the workouts.
 - b. You can also sit on an exercise ball while working at your desk, promoting better posture.

Once you're on your bike, have a purpose to each workout. Training with a structure based in periodization will help bring about the needed adaptations for improvement. Periodization is a principal that helps push the body to adapt to change in a positive manner. It incorporates proper rest intervals along with active recovery, endurance work and above threshold work. Without this structure a cyclist commonly rides in the same area of exertion for most of the training and this creates a plateau over time. Failing to polarize the needed adaptations for improvement leaves the cyclist stale and not improving. Training like you always have will give you the results you've always gotten; maybe it's time to change how you do things. Another suggestion that can help you move towards a positive season is having a lactate threshold test performed on yourself. This individual data can help dial in proper training zones for you, which will show the proper polarizing effect desired for improvement.

Optimize Endurance Services would be glad to help with any of the items talked about in this article. We offer training plans written specifically for the Triple Bypass which include strength training, periodized workouts, organized 'practice rides' and a coupon for a lactate threshold test. Spring is in the air and soon your trainer will be collecting dust in the corner as you abandon it for the open roads. Get a jump on this season and be safe out there.