

Transitions: A Time for Recovery

By Rob Lockey, CSCS

Transition is a topic usually left for the few minutes at the end of a long discussion about periodization. By definition the word means passage from one condition to another. For an athlete the shift from training to racing can be one transition and another can be racing to training. As the seasons come and go, whether talking about actual spring to summer, mountain bike to cyclocross or build phase to peak phase, a transition is involved. From a training standpoint the transition needs recovery built in for future improvement.

Recovery is another topic usually left as assumed to be understood. By definition recovery means to regain health. Training is supposed to be a healthy way to live, right? So, why would there be a need to regain that health? Well, training in its own right is designed to push the body to the edge in hopes of a shift or adaptation in the body's ability to cope with that training. If the body is pushed beyond the capability to regain a new balance point too often for too long then the health aspect is compromised. A need to recover becomes even more important at this point so as to not affect the long term goals.

To create the continued improvement, from season to season, year to year, a transition that includes recovery will bring about the low points in the undulation of periodization. These low points are a necessary evil in the process of training. This down time helps balance out the workload, because workouts follow a law of diminishing returns. The high points are where the body rides the razors edge between healthy and sick. Look to these examples below to ensure your transition has a healthy dose of recovery.

Recovery can come in many different forms:

- Sleep
 - Getting more than the usual amount of sleep over the course of a month
 - No early morning workouts before dropping the kids off at school
- Nutrition
 - Dialing in the food aspect is good to do while in recovery
 - a food journal and Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR) testing are the tools to use
 - There can be a tendency to overeat or maybe find out that under feeding has been in play all season
 - This is a great time to find a balance with food that will be beneficial in the coming season
- Cross-Training
 - Taking on a different type of training from the normal bike/run/swim focus
 - Pilates/yoga, strength training, skiing-downhill/x-country, etc
- Mental
 - Reduce the stress of daily scheduling
 - Training is a stress, can't argue with that fact
 - No big event looming over your head
 - The 'A' race can be a great motivator and also the biggest stress
 - Carefree movement back into a social calendar
 - Get reacquainted with friends and family that will be happy to see you

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