

TRAINING TIPS from Carmichael Training Systems (Week 6 of 12)



Rest to get stronger!

By Carmichael Training Systems

Last week we talked about the importance of incorporating some intensity into your riding, this week we're going to talk about rest! Seems counter intuitive, right? Wrong. When you rest your body has a chance to recover, adapt to your training, and get stronger. When you're riding, whether it's doing your Endurance Miles or Interval workouts, you are applying stress to your muscles and body and creating an overload. That's good. That's what you want to do. But in order to get stronger you need to let your body rest and recover so that overload stimulates adaptation.

Now that you have some understanding of why you need to recover, let's talk about how to recover. First, you need to take days off the bike. They not only help you physically recharge, but also they help you stay mentally focused and ready for your next ride. For beginner and intermediate riders, we recommend taking 1-2 days off the bike every week. For more advanced riders, we sometimes stretch this to one complete rest day every 7-10 days.

Next let's talk about Recovery Rides. This is the workout that athletes most frequently mess up! The goal of a Recovery Ride is active recovery, you want to go slow and just spin your legs. You should barely be breaking a sweat when you do this type of ride. Think of it as going out for a leisurely ride to the store or around the neighborhood.

If you think you're going to have a hard time "keeping it in check" or your ego isn't going to let that guy just ride by without giving chase, you can do the recovery spin on the trainer (where there will be no temptations). Or don't suit up in your full cycling kit, or you could even ride a different bike. For some of our athletes who really struggle to keep their Recovery Rides as easy as they should be, we have them ride 20-30 minutes in street clothes on a beach cruiser. Anything to keep you in a more relaxed mindset. I know it may sound like a wasted ride, but your body needs these easy spin days to recover and get stronger, trust me, after incorporating a few recovery days a week into your schedule you'll notice a big difference in your other rides!

There are a lot of products and services out there that say they help and promote recovery. Before you get too wrapped up in potions and promises, focus on quality sleep, good nutrition, staying hydrated and taking care of your body. If you've done a hard ride make sure you refuel and rehydrate properly after the ride with a recovery drink and a meal within about an hour of getting off the bike. After that, continue consuming fluids throughout the day and evening and eat as you normally would. If you take care of your post-workout nutrition properly, you probably won't need to substantially increase the size of your meals during the rest of the day.

Carmichael Training Systems Founder and Head Coach Chris Carmichael is the 2012 National Spokesperson for the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure. This article is part of a series of articles prepared by Chris and the coaches at CTS to help you prepare for your Tour de Cure event. For more information on CTS and to sign up for our free newsletter and a chance to win a signed copy of "The Time-Crunched Cyclist" book, visit www.trainright.com/register.