

The Drake MTB Training Process

Our Training Program is based on both the process used in Joe Friel's book "The Mountain Bikers Training Bible" and the latest training techniques supported by USA Cycling. These processes take into consideration the body's ability to develop in a natural progression to a peak fitness level and then instituting a recovery period.

The Training Process assumes that the student athlete has been in a recovery period and is starting at the beginning of the fitness cycle. The human body is not designed to maintain a high race or peak level continuously but responds better to cyclic build and recovery regimine.

Using the date of State Champs as the target race or peak level of fitness, we plan the seasons training backwards from this date which puts us at the beginning of Base training and proceeds through three Build sessions to the final goal of race or peak level fitness.

Base Level Training

This is the most crucial of the sessions. I found that during my riding career that I was always pushing hard all of the time and couldn't understand why I never improved my fitness level. Base training involves building your body's aerobic capabilities.

Maintaining an elevated heart rate for an extended amount of time does this. During this phase, your heart rate should be kept at a Zone 2 or Zone 3 rate. What does this mean? Typically a Max Heart Rate for a teenager in reasonable shape should be around 200bpm. Below that rate are 5 Zones. Given that a typical Resting Heart Rate is around 70 to 80bpm, the following would look like this:

Zone 1 70 to 100

Zone 2 100 to 120

Zone 3 120 to 150

Zone 4 150 to 170

Zone 5 170 to 200

These rates are given only as an example of the theory involved, every person has their own unique physiology and exact determination of each individuals Max Heart Rate would require specialized coaching and a heart rate monitor. So we will let it be that Base Level riding should be slow and easy. It does not take much to reach a Zone 2 or 3 level. The key is maintaining it for as long as you can. As we proceed through this phase of training you will find that your Resting Heart Rate will drop and your ability to maintain a steady pace without stopping will increase.

Build Level Training

Now that your body has developed a strong aerobic fitness level, it is time to start using it to build strength and speed. Without the Base, your body would be too busy reacting to the anaerobic conditions placed on it during the Build sessions. These rides will involve a lot of repetitive all out hammering, typically reaching Zone 4 and 5 for short durations with Zone 3 recoveries in between. Hill climbs and sprint intervals will be a part of these rides as well as more vigorous spin sessions. During the Race season, the two days after a race will be recovery days. You will also notice that in between each Training Phase there is a Recovery Week where we will be backing off to Base Training levels to allow the body to recover before cranking up to the next level of Build Training.

Remember that the key is consistency and learning to listen to and feel your body. Know when enough is enough and/or when you feel like you can do more. The Hourly guide

line at the top of the Training Log again is only a typical guide and your individual abilities will vary.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or are in need of suggestions.