

Heart-to-Heart



6 WEIRD THINGS YOU SHOULD CARRY ON YOUR RIDES

You have your basic tool kit, fuel and spare tubes, but do you plan for emergency situations or carry extra things to make your ride or post-ride more enjoyable? It's fascinating to see what cyclists bring with them on rides, such as unusual tools, gadgets and food. The following ideas will help prepare you for anything so you can enjoy your cycling experience more:

1. The ready-for-anything pump

My ride accessory oddity is a presta adaptor on one valve. These can make life easier if you get a flat near a gas station that has an air compressor. When traveling for mountain biking, the adaptor can also help make use of old floor pumps, or it can be used with gas station compressors to seat tubeless tires. A final bonus: The presta adaptor also functions as a valve cover.

2. Multipurpose bag

Mitch Bailey of Trek Canada makes use of a cheap shoe or helmet bag, ideally one with two straps or a shoulder strap. Having one in your back pocket gives you something to strap to the front of your chest to help block chilly wind. If you're doing a point to point, commuting or end up stranded and in need of a pickup, the satchel can hold your extra clothes and gear so you don't have stuffed pockets or a messy assortment of clothes and gear.

3 & 4. Tire plugs and fun food

Evan Guthrie of Norco Factory Team is a gifted technical rider. He stuffs his pockets and packs to the brim on both cross-country and enduro training rides. For enduro rides, he carries tire plugs so that tubeless tires can be repaired and reinflated to provide maximum performance during high-speed enduro stages. He also recommends carrying unique food on long rides. Evan has done mini burgers, pizza, hard-boiled eggs and even sardines in the tin to keep things interesting.

5. Electrical tape

Sandra Walter is the consummate professional cross-country racer. "I always have electrical tape wrapped around the barrel of my mini pump so I have it on hand in case I need to make a quick roadside/trailside repair," she says. "It can work for anything from temporarily securing a loose fender to splinting an injured finger!" Somewhat related to holding things together, Sandra has also used her spare tube to get out of odd equipment fails: "I once broke my shoe cleat on a long ride and used a spare inner tube to tie my foot to my pedal. It worked really well!"

6. Empty nutrition bar wrappers

Andrew Watson is another talented cyclist and coach who carries a few extra items on his rides to avoid getting stranded. "I always have an empty bar wrapper in my saddle roll to patch up a torn sidewall," he says. Indeed, having that perfect material available when you end up with a large puncture is very helpful and does not require much extra space in your pack. These ideas should get you thinking about how to optimize your cycling routine, prepare for odd mechanicals and even fit errands into your rides. While the basic ride tools and accessories will get you out of most mechanical issues, it's good practice to refine your repertoire of emergency fixes and solutions. From bringing favorite foods to stopping at the grocery store at the end of rides and using old pumps, these "weird" things cyclists carry just might save you when you're out on the road.

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Note from the Board

Sneak Preview of 2017 Jersey



Front View



Back View

The tour souvenir for 2017 will be a jersey by Primal. They will be made in both women's and men's sizes. **If you register for a tour for 2017, please be sure the size in your profile record is correct.** Jerseys will be ordered based on the profile information. **Size chart is shown on page 3.**

2017 HeartCycle Tour Souvenir Jersey Fit Guide

Men's

Size	Waist	Chest	Weight	Height
X Small	26"	33-35"	100-120	Up to 64"
Small	29"	36-38"	120-145	64"-68"
Medium	32"	39-41"	145-165	66"-70"
Large	35"	42-43"	165-180	68"-72"
X Large	38"	44-46"	180-210	70"-76"
XX Large	42"	47-49"	210-240	74" and over
XXX Large	46"	50-52"	240+	74" and over

Women's

Size	Waist	Hips	Weight	Height	Chest
X Small	24"	34-35"	90-110	Up to 62"	32-33"
Small	25"	35-37"	105-120	61-65"	33-35"
Medium	27"	37-39"	120-145	64-68"	35-37"
Large	29"	39-42"	140-165	67-71"	37-40"
X Large	32"	42-45"	160-185	70-74"	40-43"
XX Large	35"	45-47"	185-205	74" and over	43-45"
XXX Large	37"	47-49"	200+	74" and over	46-47"

Eight steps to create your perfect winter training plan

by James Spragg

Want to make this your best winter yet? Here's how...

1) Goal setting

The first step on the route to a successful winter starts before you even throw a leg over a bike. Before you even think about training again you need to know what you are going to be training for. This really helps focus the mind and provide a goal on which to base your training. It's a process I go through with every rider I coach.

Start by identifying your main goal events for next season, whether it's the Etape du Tour or a local road race – make a note of when they are and what they involve. Then try and decide on what your goal is for each event – this could be a time, a podium place, a power output or even just to gain experience. The important thing is to have a fixed idea of what you want to achieve next season.

The second step is to assess last season. What went well? What went badly? What mistakes did you make? The idea here is to identify what works well for you as an athlete and ensure you don't repeat past mistakes.

The third step is to identify limiting factors on your performance. For example, were you getting to the finish of every race relatively fresh but getting beaten in the sprint (your weakness there is sprint power) or were you going brilliantly until the last climb (the weakness is your endurance). Identify the areas you need to work on based on last year's performance.

My advice would be to put all this on paper. This makes it definite and acts as a guideline for your entire winter. Every time motivation is lacking you have something to look at and remember why you are putting in all the hard work.

2) Progression

Once you've got your target in writing, start with your goal event and work your way backwards from there to the first day of winter training.

Calculate how many weeks you have to get your from now to until your goal event. The ideal training program includes a steady progression in training load (the amount of training you are doing – a combination of both intensity and duration of rides) between now and your goal. A steady progression ensures that everything is always moving in the right direction but you are also never going to become too tired. When planning, keep your goals in mind and keep in mind the areas you need to work on (the weaknesses you've already outlined based on the season just past). For example, if your sprint is your weakness then it's best to include some sprint work in your training plan from an early date.

There are three main ways you can build progression into your training plan: volume, intensity and frequency – or, in other words, you can train for longer, train harder or train more often. Increasing any one of these elements will ensure you are training harder.

Try and balance these elements to ensure a steady progression. So if, for example, between Christmas and New Year you have the week off and are thinking on getting lots of long rides in, then by doing that you're increasing the volume and you need to keep the intensity the same (or even reduce it) to ensure that you don't become too tired and over-train.

Don't forget that as you become fitter you will be able to handle more training with less recovery. Therefore, you might only need a recovery week every three weeks instead of every two weeks, or one rest day a week might suffice instead of your usual two. That said, no matter how fit you are you will need to build in adequate recovery into your plan. Without this you'll never give your body the chance to process all the training you are doing and you'll never see any real improvements.

3) Base miles vs. intensity

This is the age-old question of winter training.

The old school approach is to get in as many steady hours (base training) on the bike as possible. This is all fine and well if you are a pro cyclist with nothing else to do every day other than ride your bike and come spring are going to be racing for 200km+ on a regular basis.

However, for most of us we have to balance work, family, social life and our training, not to mention the short days and weather that come with winter. Chances are you have a limited amount of time to train each week and, therefore, in order to accelerate your training you are going to need to increase the intensity or frequency of your sessions.

That isn't to say that long hours on the bike aren't important but if you want to make the most of those one-hour mid-week turbo sessions or your ride to work then you are going to have to gradually increase the intensity over time to ensure your training is progressing.

Something I have found that works well with my coaching clients is to combine both intensity and base work. Do your longer rides over the weekend and then during the week, when time is more limited, concentrate on more specific and intense sessions.

4) How to deal with Christmas

Christmas is always a difficult time but my advice is to plan ahead. Be realistic in what you can achieve each day on the bike and try your best to stick to that. For example, are you really going to do that 4hr ride the day after your work's Christmas party?

Plan your training for the Christmas break early on. Compare how much training you are going to be able to complete compared with normal and then adjust your training pre and post the Christmas period to adjust. If Christmas is going to be a bit of a write-off training-wise then you can use it as a recovery week. That means the week before Christmas needs to be a harder week on the bike. However, if you are off work, don't have too many other commitments, and the weather is looking ok then the Christmas period might be the perfect point to get in some longer rides – but remember to be realistic and honest with yourself when planning. This means an increase in training load and therefore you might want to take it easy in the week leading up to Christmas or in the week after. One thing that's difficult to avoid at Christmas is all the food that's so readily on-hand. We all know that our diets around Christmas aren't exactly what a nutritionist would recommend but, again, the key is to be realistic. We all know that we're probably going to have a few mince pies here and there – and why not – so again simply plan around it. On the days where you don't have anything planned try and eat well. That means that you can treat parties, drinks with friends and other social occasions that come with Christmas as a treat for being good the day before when you ate and trained well.

5) Dealing with bad weather

Sadly bad weather is just part and parcel of winter training. The key is to be prepared – but also be flexible.

In terms of preparation, there are a lot of things you can do to make winter training a little easier. First things first, you need to get your kit sorted. Remember that old adage, 'there's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing'? That extends to equipment, too, and mudguards are essential if you plan on riding through winter in any sort of comfort, and are a particularly good idea if you train in a group, helping to keep your ride buddies dry as well as you.

As for kit, invest in good quality clothing to see you winter, particularly when it comes to overshoes, gloves and a waterproof jacket. Remember, if you can stay dry that will go a long way to staying warm.

Having flexibility in your training plan actually requires a little bit of planning. Have a look at the long-term forecast – and I know your playing with the Gods here – to see what the weather is looking like. If it's forecast to be terrible for the last weekend of this training block why not re-jig and finish the block a couple of days early? Over the course of the month you'll still get the same amount of training in but might avoid a crash on ice or the chance of getting sick after a long ride in the rain.

There are, however, a few rules to follow. Never go out if the risk of crashing is high – if there's like to be ice on the road then it's best to jump on the trainer. One silly crash can put your training back months so it simply isn't worth taking the risk. The same goes for riding in very high winds.

I personally am not adverse the training in the rain but I also understand that five hours in a torrential downpour isn't that pleasant, so why not shorten the ride to three hours but include some intensity? The training load for the day will be roughly the same.

6) Off the bike

As a coach, this is something that I get asked a lot? What can I do off the bike to improve my performance on the bike? There are a number of things you can do:

Core stability

This is a must for cyclists. Having a strong core will improve your efficiency on the bike and reduce the likelihood of injury. There are lots of exercises you can do but my advice would be to follow these tutorials (roadcyclinguk.com/tag/conditioning-for-cyclists) or look them up on YouTube. This way you can see if you are doing the exercises correctly.

Gym work

This is a little bit more complicated. Gym work can be very beneficial for cyclists, however, there are a few pitfalls. Your work in the gym should complement your training on the bike – not affect it. Therefore, if you can't train the day after a gym session because your legs are too sore then it wasn't a good idea to go to the gym in the first place. The key here is to introduce gym work very slowly and progress the training load in the same way as you are progressing your training load on the bike.

If you are going to include gym work then focus on lower body workouts but combine it with core stability work to improve all-round fitness. My advice would be to do 3-5 sets of 5-8 reps on each muscle group (calves, hamstrings, quads, and glutes). Start off very gently and gradually increase the number of sets and the weight as you get stronger. Remember the golden rule – if it's affecting your training on the bike then you are doing too much.

7) Approaching spring

Most of us will know someone who comes out of winter absolutely flying but then doesn't really progress at all for the rest of the season. Needless to say, this is something we all want to avoid.

As you approach spring, the weather will improve (that's the idea, anyway) and there's more and more daylight available to train. This is the time to really up your training and get ready for the first events of the year – but to do this you still need to be fresh both mentally and physically. The trick is in striking a balance so you're not doing too much over winter.

During your winter training you should have been working on individual aspects of fitness: endurance, strength, cadence etc. You should also have been working on the areas you identified as weaknesses. The run-up to the season is where you start putting all these elements together and when your form comes together as a result. If you've done this well then your weaknesses before you even started your winter training will no longer be holding you back.

As you approach, your first event of the year, your training needs to become more event-specific. For example, if you're a criterium rider, as you get close to the season you need to include more sprint work and short intervals into your training. However, if you are targeting hilly tours then you want to increase the amount of climbing and the intensity of your climbing efforts.

Again, the key is specificity. Specify your training to your goals and put all the pieces together that you have been working on during the winter and you should be in a great place to attack your first event of the season.

8) Coaches advice – five final tips I've picked up along the way

Finally, here are five tips I've picked up along the way during my time both as a professional bike rider and coach.

Put your goals somewhere you can see them

Take the piece of paper you used to write down your season goals and put it somewhere you can see it. This might be in front of where you ride on the turbo or on your desk at work. This helps you stay focused on your goals and helps you get you on the bike even when your motivation might have gone missing.

Dentist

This is something you might not otherwise think about but go to the dentist as soon as possible after starting your winter training and get a check up. needless to say, the sugary drinks and energy bars you'll have consumed over the summer aren't the healthiest thing for your teeth, so go and get checked out before you start training and you should get through the winter without any problems. Trying to train with tooth ache on a cold and rainy December morning isn't any fun.

Illness

Listen to your body. If you're not feeling 100 per cent then it could be that you are coming down with something. Learn to identify the signs that a cold is on its way and if you feel these coming on then cut back your training load for a few days. Hopefully this will be enough to stop you becoming ill. If, however, you do come down with something then don't stress about missed training. The winter is long and there is plenty of time to make up what you have missed.

Again, the key is to be flexible. If you've missed this week due to illness then change the plan around and treat this as a recovery week. Don't, however, jump straight back into full training as soon as you feel ok. Give yourself a couple more days than you feel you need and ensure you are 100 per cent before returning to full training, rather than coming back too soon and relapsing.

Get a bike fit

It's a good idea to get your bike position checked early on in your training plan. This means that you reduce the risk of injury while also improving efficiency and power on the bike, plus over winter it gives you time to adapt to your new position, rather than having to go through that process when your focusing on an upcoming event. A good bike fitter will also be able to identify any imbalances that you can then address in your training.

Get a coach

This might sound like a hard sell coming from a coaching, but, as I've experienced through my career, a good coach can not only guide you through your winter training but can also help motivate you, as well as holding you back from doing too much when needed. Having someone else set, analyze and give feedback on your training should ensure your training is progressive and targeted to work on your weaknesses, as well helping you to get around any potential problems should they occur.

Colorado HeartCycle 2017 Tours

Discover San Diego

San Diego, CA

March 18 - 25 Status: Open
 7 days, Intermediate \$1,060.00
 Ken Condray, condray3@gmail.com
 Becky Bottino, bbottino7@gmail.com
 Sue Matthews, scmatt2@gmail.com

The Carolina Blue Ridge Mountains and Parkway

Greensville, SC

June 17 - 25 Status: Wait List
 8 days, Adv./Exp. \$1800.00
 John Aslanian, 22flatrock@gmail.com
 Bob Rowe, browe49@comcast.net

Bay Area Summits

San Francisco, CA

April 21 - 28 Status: Open
 7 days, Adv./Exp. \$1,825.00
 Bob McIntyre, dcx12@aol.com
 Bill Buckley, williambuckley87@gmail.com

South Central Alaska

Anchorage, AK

June 25 - July 2 Status Open
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,950.00
 Rod Nibbe, aktour@knebbe.com

Springtime in CA: Sonoma and Napa Wine Country

Santa Rosa, CA

May 19 - 28 Status: Wait List
 9 days, Adv.+/Exp. \$2,050.00
 Janet Slate, j slate@ultrasys.net
 Alan Scott, ascott@comcast.net

Le Monastere - SESSION I

Limoux, France

July 1 - 8 Status: Open
 7 days, Int.+/Exp. \$2,350.00
 Phil Stoffel, ptstoffel@gmail.com

Le Monastere SESSION II

Limoux, France

July 8 - 15 Status: Open
 7 days, Int.+/Exp. \$2,350.00
 Phil Stoffel, ptstoffel@gmail.com

Normandy-Calvados, Camembert

Western France

June 3 - 13 Status: Wait List
 10 days, Int./Adv. \$2,500.00
 Fred Yu, frederickyu@comcast.net
 Graham Hollis, gramhollis@comcast.net

Passes of Summit County

Frisco, CO

July 15 - 22 Status: Open
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$900.00
 Sy Katz, skskatz@comcast.net
 Bob Rowe, browe49@comcast.net

Colorado Western Gems

Grand Junction, CO

June 3 - 11 Status: Wait List
 8 days, Int.+ \$1,475.00
 Ken Kaplan, kennth.h.kaplan@gmail.com
 Rich Crocker, richcrocker@hotmail.com

Colorado HeartCycle 2017 Tours

Portandia Plus

Portland, OR

August 26 - Sept. 2 Status: Wait List
7 days, Intermediate \$1,420.00
Stephanie Oliver, skayoliver@gmail.com
Ken Condray, condray3@gmail.com

Womens Weekend

Colorado Springs, CO

August 31 - Sept. 3 Status: Open
3 days, Easy \$480.00
Julie Lyons, julie@lovesweatandgears.net
Margie Adams, margieadams@comcast.com

Aspen Highlights

Aspen, CO

September 7 - 10 Status: Open
3 days, Int./Adv. \$890.00
Joanne Speirs, jcspiers1@gmail.com
Doug Moll,

Coast-to-Coast Northern Tier, Year 2

Missoula, MT

September 9 - 24 Status: Wait List
15 days, Int./Adv. \$2,480.00
John Penick, jdpenick@gmail.com
Bob Raicer, rjr80544@gmail.com

Southern Indiana Hills

Bloomington, IN

Sept. 30 - Oct. 7 Status: Open
7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,175.00
Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
Alan Scott, ascott999@comcast.net