Effective Training for Cycling

Vary the Intensity

**By John Hughes**

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Six Factors for Success in Athletics

- Self-assessment and planning
- Physical training
- Healthy nutrition
- Appropriate equipment
- Skillful technique
- Mental skills

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Cycling Performance Requirements

- Physiological endurance
- Cycling economy
- Muscular power
- Core strength
- Flexibility

Energy Systems

(from *Distance Cycling*)

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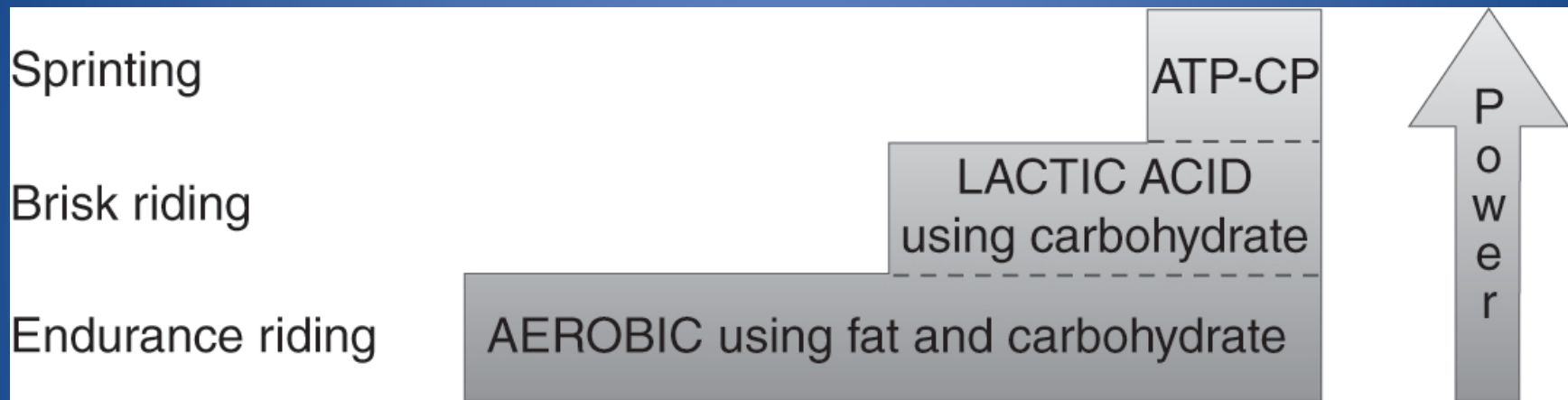
Principles of Training

Overload ➔ Stress ➔ Recovery ➔ Adaptation

Continued improvement requires progressive overload:

- *How much* one rides
- *How often* one rides
- *How hard* one rides

Principles of Training

Overload *and* recovery:

- Increase just one type of overload at a time: volume, frequency or intensity.

- Mix hard, moderate, easy and days off each week.

- Build training for 3 or 4 weeks and then cut back for a recovery week.

- Every 2-3 months take a physical and mental break for a week

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Gauging Exertion

- Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)
- Lactate Threshold (LT)
- Power Meter (watts)

Intensity Levels and Workout Types

Purpose	Workout	Hughes RPE	1-10 RPE	Heart Rate
Aid recovery	Recovery	Digestion pace	1-2	<75% LT
Build endurance	Endurance	Conversation pace	2-3	75-87% LT
Increase riding speed	Tempo	Headwind pace	3-4	88-94% LT
Increase power	Intensity	"Ouch" pace	5-6	95-100% LT

Training Phases
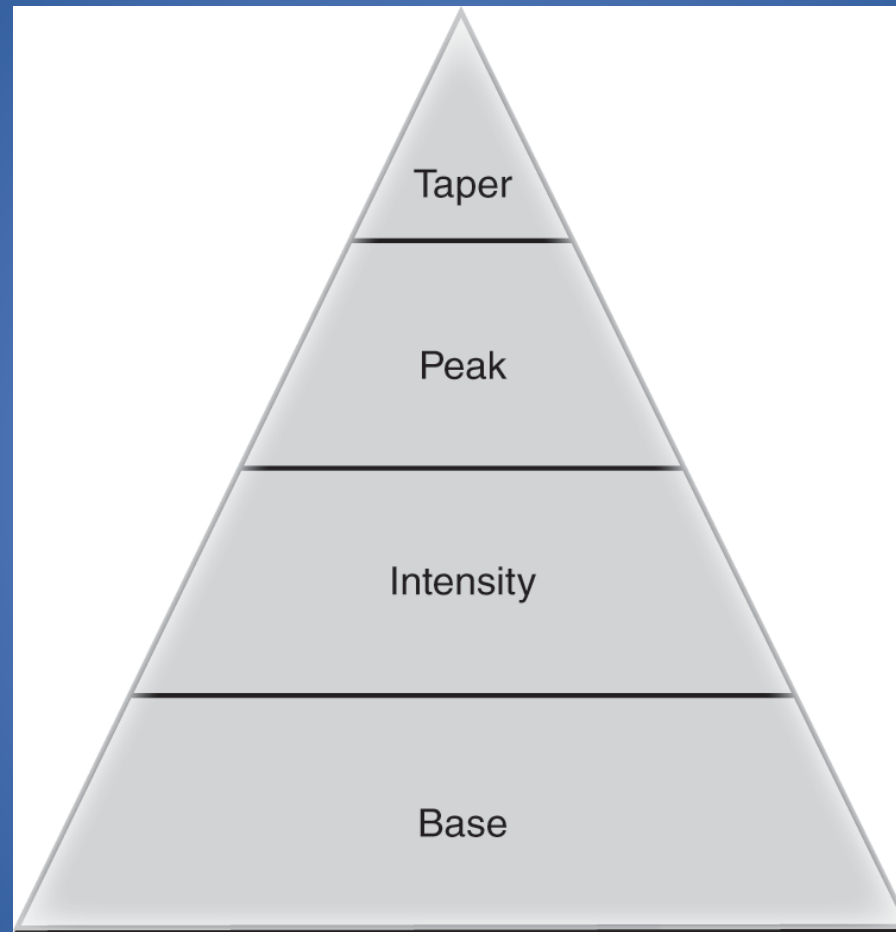
from *Distance Cycling*

Weekly Mix of Types of Riding
(includes warm-up and cool-down)

Phase	Purpose	Recovery Pace	Endurance Pace	Tempo Pace	Intensity Pace
Preseason	Get used to exercise	20-30%	70-80%		
Base	Build endurance	10-20%	60-80%	10-20%	
Intensity	Increase power	10-20%	50-70%	10-20%	10-15%
Peak or main season	Ride events and have fun	10-20%	Main rides	5-15%	5-10%

Plus core strength and stretching exercises

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Effective Training for Cycling

"An athlete should do the least amount of properly timed, specific training that brings continual improvement."

– Joe Friel, The Cyclist's Training Bible

- Least amount
- Properly timed
- Specific training
- Continual improvement