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Intermediate Bike Training News

Create a Sustainable Healthy Lifestyle

July 19, 2007

Dear Rick,

On occasion, I receive a comment or e-mail that my newsletters are intimidating. I actually intend for them to be inspirational.

My intent is not to say "hey, hey look how fast I can go." Instead, I am trying to point out "look how fast I can go with 1/4 to 1/3 the mileage of our elite RMCC riders." I'm nobody special with no special abilities so if I can achieve that performance you can too. And, I have seen that people who follow my advice are riding well in the middle of the pack with only 2-3 days of training per week.

I guess my point is to encourage you to come out for the group rides on the weekends. Don't worry about getting dropped. There are people of all abilities to ride with. You have to start somewhere. Even worse case I've seen people come out and ride last for several weeks. But, eventually, they all move up in the pack.

And, always feel free to e-mail me at rusrusson@midlifecycling.com with any of your concerns. General information is nice but to really make progress you must address your specific issues directly. While I can't give you a free coaching program over e-mail, I am willing to give you enough info to get you started in the right direction or to get you over some plateaus in your progress.

Have a great week.

Rick Russon

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On The Road...



The Midlife Cycling/Intermediate Training Group program is not about racing or standing within the group. On a team or a racing series everyone is trying to achieve the same goal of being fastest so it is appropriate to compare yourself directly to other riders. However, in our group the goal is to maximize fitness/performance in whatever time YOU personally have to work out.

The continuing mistake that riders make when they come out for an RMCC group ride is to try to keep up with the front of the pack. I'm going to put this bluntly - these are some of the best riders in the nation. Many are still competing, are past record holders, and have been riding 10,000-20,000 miles per year for the past twenty years. You and I are not going to keep up with them for very long. It is a simple fact that the first filter for performance is base mileage. 20,000 mile riders ride better than 10,000 mile riders who ride better than 4,000 mile riders. It really is that simple. Of course, there are always exceptions and that is what Midlife Cycling is all about.

I am trying to show you with my performance that a cyclist is capable of above average performance

at any age. To me, 90% of cycling performance is understanding the physiology and riding with the proper technique. This group has proven repeatedly that a person with the proper technique/nutrition can outride another cyclist who is stronger and has more base miles but poor technique.

Lucky for you I'm a geek who loves to study cycling physiology right down to the cellular level. I am interested in understanding how to get repeatable and predictable performance improvements from any recreational cyclist.

Just the other day a bike shop person was debating with me about compact cranks. He said "Rasmussen uses..." This to me is the #1 reason why most recreational cyclists are frustrated with slow performance gains. You are not and never will be an elite TdF cyclist so it is pointless to compare yourself to and train like one. So instead, set some reasonable goals and train to your strengths.

For the recreational cyclist here are some recommended goals:

- improve long-term health and fitness
- endurance, endurance, endurance
- able to ride any terrain in the United States
- able to ride most cycling tours
- able to participate in other sports

Everything else, like hanging on the wheel of an elite rider, is just icing on the cake.

[Ride Schedule...](#)

Weekend Ride...



This weekend is the first of two climbs to the top of Mt. Evans. This Sunday, Jul 22nd, we will do it from the Forest Service parking lot in Idaho Springs at 7:15 am. On August 18th we will do it from the Bergen Park side up Squaw Pass.

I apologize again for not publishing my personal ride schedule which comes from the RMCC rides. So here is a preliminary list: 7/22 Mt Evans, 7/28 200K Brevet, 8/4, 8/12, 8/18, 8/26 106 mi, 9/1, 9/9, 9/15 Copper Triangle, 9/22 300K Brevet, 9/30.

If you have done a couple century rides then I encourage you to join me for the 7/28 200K which is 30 miles longer. E-mail or call me and I will help you prepare for this ride. It will push out your capabilities in many ways but is well within your ability to complete. The 300K is my personal challenge. I welcome anyone who would like to ride that with me so we can support each other. It is done at our own pace and we can stop as frequently as we want. This will mainly be a mental challenge of staying on the bike all day.

Food and Nutrition...



This is information well worth repeating so I will...

I still see people showing up on rides with only one or two water bottles. At this level of riding nutrition is a major factor in your performance. I would go as far as saying that after a couple seasons nutrition is the only factor in your performance. As you become better conditioned your nutritional needs actually decrease for a given effort. But even the front of the club takes in between 500-1000 calories per hour during a ride. That's because as your

conditioning improves you actually increase your riding effort to continually improve.

The baseline to start with is one or more large sport drink bottles and one or two gels per hour. As you ride longer and harder you can adjust your carbohydrate/protein ratio, experiment with real foods to get higher calorie densities, and find the right balance of liquid/solid food for your stomach comfort. In any case, you either eat/drink or you don't last long on an RMCC ride.

Final Notes...

Bergen Park - Copper Triangle and back...

I have a list of six people who want to do this and a couple spouses willing to SAG for us. I still haven't decided on a date because I don't know exactly when the aspen leaves change color. Any suggestions are welcome. We could do this on 9/1, which is Labor Day weekend, or 9/22 instead of the 300K. Email me at rmrusson@midlifecycling.com if you are interested in riding this.

Again, the plan is leave Bergen Park on Saturday and ride to Dillon/Frisco. Stay the night. Then ride the Copper Triangle on Sunday. Again, stay the night in Dillon/Frisco. And return on Monday.

Quick Links...

- [Ride Schedule](#)
- [Rick's Ride Schedule](#)
- [Join RMCC Online](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Cycling Club](#)
- [Denver Bicycle Touring Club](#)

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