

[<Back](#) [Print](#)

## Intermediate Bike Training News

Create a Sustainable Healthy Lifestyle

November 2, 2007

**Dear Rick,**

Welcome to the second newsletter of the 2008 training season. Yes, it has been a month since I sent out the last "weekly" newsletter. Even with Midlife Cycling as my second business I am not immune to the time pressures of family and eeking out a living. There are lots of health and fitness resources available to you that discuss exercise mechanics and schedules. But my focus is on helping you integrate these activities into real life. Regular, set schedules just don't work for the majority of people.

**Bike Shops** - Before I discuss training for this month I would like to talk about bike shops. It seems that I am getting more comments about poor service than good service. Turns out it isn't my imagination. A Shimano survey found that cycling has had a net loss of 17 million participants over the past 10 years. The main complaints are the snobbish attitudes of shop employees and the elitist attitude of cyclists themselves. Follow the "Golden Rule." You have the gold when you walk into a bike shop. If you get treated poorly cut and run immediately. There are a lot of great shops and staff out there so you don't have to put up with abuse. If you have to go through 20 people before you find one you like then so be it. At RMCC we are constantly trying to find ways to make the club more rider friendly. It is not a beginners club so don't expect hand holding. But all of our members should strive to make you welcome and not belittle your questions. Remember, unless a cyclist is supporting their family with their riding they probably aren't as good as they think they are. So don't let arrogant cyclists discourage you. And, even if you've only done one club ride that is one more ride than a new person. You also have the obligation to welcome that new person.

**Training Tips** - we all want something for nothing. I think that's just human nature. I do it myself. However, most "bargains" are worth exactly what you pay for them. I frequently see new cyclists join RMCC to mine the "free tips" from the other riders. "So and so told me this..." Did they also tell you they've been riding 10,000 miles per year for the past 10 years? "So and so said to do this..." Did they also tell you they've never ridden more than 50 miles? "So and so says this is the best way to..." Did they also tell you they ride like crap and burn out after 45 minutes? Most successful people will tell you they look for "value" rather than the least cost. Value is getting the most benefit for a reasonable price.

Again, I do it myself. Typically I struggle to learn something on my own for 6 months to a year. Then I break down and get instruction. Usually, I improve more in 60 minutes than in the past time I've wasted. It usually takes 3-5 years of doing something before you have enough knowledge and experience to evaluate how effective a "free tip" will be for you. Don't feel bad, even though I know better, I'm down to wasting just one month before I seek help. EXPLICIT SALES TIP: if you are relatively inexperienced at cycling (i.e. less than 15,000 miles) then seek the help of a real coach (i.e. me) for at least one session. Also, there are many "right" ways of training. So once you pick a program then follow it for at least one season. Don't mix techniques in from other programs as many things don't work together very well.

**Last Month** - October was the start of our 2008 training program. The goal was to focus on starting to build your core strength and making exercise a daily habit. By "habit" I don't mean every day for one hour at 4 pm. The Midlife Cycling philosophy is that most people who try to maintain a rigid exercise schedule will surely miss a few sessions, get discouraged, then quit exercising altogether. This is not "Exercise for Life" this is "Exercise for People With a Life." We are not competitive athletes

who are trying to maximize performance. We are trying to get the most health benefit out of whatever time we have whenever we can exercise. There is no fitness "law" that says you have to do all exercise in one contiguous session. Typically I wake up and crank off a few crunches and sit ups. I have a chin-up bar in my master closet and I do some pull-ups whenever I walk by it. I am constantly doing stepups whenever I'm near stairs or a curb. If you do only 10 reps several times a day you will be amazed at the amount of exercise volume you will accumulate. As a coach, yes I do try to follow a fixed workout schedule. But even experienced athletes will find that by following my "irregular" exercise philosophy you won't feel guilty if you miss a workout session due to travel, family, or other things that come up. I am not interested in you keeping score with "sets and reps." Again you will do 10 reps per set one week, 12 the next, then maybe only 8 the third week which can be discouraging. I want you to focus on frequency for now. The volume will come as exercise becomes as much habit as brushing your teeth.

**This Month** - for the endurance athlete core strength exercises by themselves are of limited use. November is the time for adding patterned breathing (i.e. Pilates, Yoga) into the mix. For example, take the standard crunch and add breathing to it. I call this the "Driving Miss Daisy" routine. Lay flat and rise to a half-situp position with your hands out in front of you like you are holding a steering wheel. Then twist your upper body from side to side by making your hands follow an arc. While you are doing this exercise strive to breath normally. The purpose for this is that when we are climbing hills on the bike our torso will be tense. We still need to breath fully or our climbing performance will drop.

**Exercising too much** - there is a tendency for athletes of all abilities to exercise too much. Effective exercise design takes into account intensity, duration, and frequency. As we age we need to lower frequency if we want to maintain intensity. I have found that as people approach the age of 50 that a Mon/Thu weight training schedule is way more effective than M/W/F. This holds true for younger athletes but the difference between a 2 or 3 day workout isn't as great since a younger body recovers faster. So resist the temptation to "throw a bunch of exercise at a wall and see what sticks." Pick a few exercises, focus on perfect technique, and work up the intensity/duration gradually. Remember, exercise adaptation occurs mainly at rest. You just need to stimulate the muscles to grow. You shouldn't be stiff or in pain after exercise. Just a little fatigued when you go to use those muscles for something.

**Training Delivery** - the misunderstanding about the Intermediate Training Group is that it is a physical group of cyclists who go on scheduled rides together each week. I am working with RMCC to change this perception in the group discription on the website. Cycling is not like swimming or running where all the participants are constrained to a relatively small area. Within a short time after we leave the parking lot everyone is spread out over several miles. It is hard to talk to one rider let alone a dozen riders when on the road. And, finally I couldn't fit the 600 people this newsletter goes out to in one road group if they all showed up. So no on-road group training. I can only coach a few people a week personally so no personal training. I have been struggling with video production so I'm going to fall back to audio. I've received positive feedback on my Introduction CD so I'll hurry up and release the two Core Strength CDs as soon as possible. So keep a look out for the email announcement when they are ready. We follow the RMCC ride schedule so you have some ideas on where to ride. A lot of people form their own little groups and follow my training by coaching each other. I don't care where you ride just get out with others who share the same enthusiasm, that you do, for learning to ride better.

Have a great week!



Rick Russon

### Quick Links...

- [Ride Schedule](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Cycling Club](#)

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

Email Us: [info@midlifecycling.com](mailto:info@midlifecycling.com)

Call Us: (303) 756-0041

Visit Us: <http://www.midlifecycling.com>

[Forward this email to a friend](#)

 **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to [rmmrusson@midlifecycling.com](mailto:rmmrusson@midlifecycling.com), by [rmmrusson@midlifecycling.com](mailto:rmmrusson@midlifecycling.com)  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Midlife Cycling LLC | 1579 W Briarwood Ave | Littleton | CO | 80120 -3632