Holmes Fitness Coaching

Performance Cycling

Volume 1 - Issue 1 December 2007

The 3 Elements of Cycling Performance

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Performance Cycling. The primary purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with tips, tools and techniques you can use to improve your ability as a cyclist. Whether your goal is to complete a 100 mile ride, to finish a 25 mile time trial in less than an hour, or to lose weight and improve general fitness, you will receive a wealth of information from Performance Cycling. In this issue, I introduce the three primary elements of cycling performance, and offer some initial suggestions for improving your effectiveness in each area.

1. Training - The most obvious element of cycling performance is training. You cannot improve your performance as a cyclist if you do not engage in some type of training program. There have been many books, articles and magazines written on effective training for a cyclist and most of these can be helpful, depending on your experience level and goals as a cyclist. However, the simplest way to think about training is through the F.I.T.T. model. F.I.T.T. stands for Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type. *Frequency* is the number of times you cycle each week. One of the first decisions you must make is how often you want to ride. This will be based on several variables including the time you have available to ride and your goals as a cyclist. *Intensity* is a measure of how hard you work during a given cycling session. *Time* is the length of the cycling session such as 60 minutes or 20 miles. Generally speaking, there is an inverse relationship between Intensity and Time. The harder you work in a given workout (e.g., the higher your heart rate), the shorter the session and vice-versa. The key to successful cycling training is to consistently balance intensity and time in a way that facilitates improved performance. *Type* refers to the kind of exercise you will engage in during a workout (e.g., cycling, hill training, interval workout, strength training). To optimize the 'training effect' (i.e., the performance benefits you derive from your training regimen), you have to make decisions about how to best apply each of the components of the F.I.T.T. model based on your goals as a cyclist. In future issues of Performance Cycling, I will discuss training plan development in greater detail. I will also provide numerous examples of cycling workouts that can be used to achieve a variety of goals.

2. Nutrition - To maximize your performance as a cyclist, you need to engage in effective nutritional practices. Good nutrition provides at least 3 benefits. First, and most obviously, it will enhance your cycling performance by providing you with the energy you need to successfully complete your cycling workouts and events such as races and tours. Second, good nutrition will facilitate the

Inside this Issue:

The 3 Elements of Cycling Performance	1
Holmes Fitness Coaching	2

Author:

Dr. Tyrone A. Holmes, Ed.D, CPT

USA Cycling Level 2 Certified Coach

ACE Certified Personal Trainer

President and Owner

T.A.H. Performance Consultants, Inc.

Holmes Fitness Coaching

Dr. Tyrone A. Holmes, Ed.D, LPC, CPT

President & Owner

T.A.H. Performance Consultants, Inc.

&

Holmes Fitness Coaching

30307 Sterling Drive
Novi, MI 48377

Phone: (248) 669-5294
Fax: (248) 669-5295

tyrone@doctorholmes.net

www.holmesfitness.com

Holmes Fitness Coaching

At Holmes Fitness Coaching, my goal is to improve your health, physical fitness, athletic performance and quality of life. Using a variety of techniques, I will help you enhance your health and fitness, improve your cycling performance, lose weight, reduce stress and increase your work-life balance. Specifically, I offer a variety of services designed to enhance your performance:

- Cycling Coaching
- Lifestyle Coaching
- Health & Fitness Seminars
- Newsletters & TIPS Booklets
- Books & Manuals

The 3 Elements of Cycling Performance (continued)

recovery process. The difference between feeling great during a workout and feeling like your legs are about to fall off may come down to effective nutritional practices. Finally, good nutrition allows you to have a fit and healthful life beyond cycling. In future issues of Performance Cycling, I will discuss specific nutritional strategies that will benefit you as a cyclist.

3. **Recovery** - Recovery may be the most overlooked element of cycling performance. It may also be the most important. Simply stated, you don't improve as a cyclist because you train hard. You improve because you rest hard. OK, you have to do both, but the physiological adaptation process that leads to improved performance occurs during rest, not during training. This happens because of our body's desire to maintain an internal equilibrium (known as 'homeostasis'). For example, after a hard workout, you may feel extremely fatigued and sore because your body is not used to the physical stress it experienced during that workout. Your body doesn't want you to feel this way so it undergoes physiological adaptations that make it stronger. The next time you do that workout, it feels much easier because of these adaptations. The key is to allow yourself to recover from that initial hard workout. This is the essence of training for performance. You work hard, get adequate rest so your body can recover and get stronger, and then you can work even harder the next time. Of course, this is easier said than done, but your primary goal as a cyclist is to facilitate a training program that pushes you to your limits, and then allows for adequate rest and recovery so your performance can improve. Always remember, hard work without adequate recovery is a recipe for overtraining, which will have an extremely negative impact on your cycling performance.

About the Author

Dr. Tyrone A. Holmes, LPC, CPT is a speaker, trainer, consultant, fitness & cycling coach, author and competitive cyclist.