



Webinar: Winter Training for Endurance Athletes

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by

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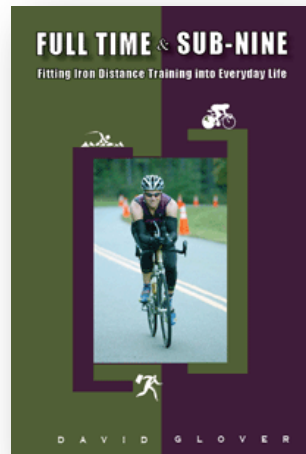


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My background

Athlete

- Completed more than 100 triathlons since 1995 through 15 winters
- My distance is Ironman
 - 28 Ironman finishes since 1997
 - 8:51 PR (Quelle Challenge '07)
 - Qualified for Ironman Hawaii multiple times (competed '02)
 - Vineman Hall of Fame '07
- Author of:



Coach

- Began coaching in '05
- Certified by USA Triathlon, USA Cycling, NSCA (CSCS)
- Co-founder She Does Tri Camps
- Founder of Luray Triathlon
- Education:
 - BS, U.S. Naval Academy
 - MS, Catholic University
 - MS (in progress), Applied Performance Physiology at Eastern Michigan University

Agenda

- Introduction
- Three options for the “transition season”
 - Keep training business as usual
 - Do nothing
 - Find the happy median
- Taking downtime and making the transition into the “transition season”
- Set yourself up for success next year
- Other strategies for the “transition season”

Why this topic?

- It's a key component for long-term success in endurance sports?
- Many athletes only consider it as an after thought?
- Burnout is rampant in the sport?
- You may not be able to train outside year round?
- ANSWER: All of the above!

There are three Options for making the transition from one racing season to the next (i.e. “Transition Season”)

- Keep training business as usual
- Do nothing
- Find the happy median

Option 1: Keep training business as usual



My personal example:

- 2007: A “personal best” year for me
 - January: Disney “Goofy Challenge” - PR in the marathon
 - June: Quelle Challenge (Ironman) – PR
 - August: Vineman (Ironman) – Win and course PR
 - August: Ironman Louisville – OK finish

- Winter 2007-2008: No break and right into marathon training

- 2008: Disaster
 - February: Ocala Marathon - 27 minutes slower than Disney; injured my leg
 - May: Triple-T – DNS
 - July: Quelle Challenge – DNF after the bike (unable to run)
 - September: Chesapeakeman (Ironman) – slowest race ever

Maintaining a high level of “race ready” fitness is not desirable over the winter

- True, it can be extremely difficult to let go of a high level of fitness
- However, it's not uncommon for athletes to experience symptoms of burnout at end of the training season such as:
 - Decrease in speed and performance,
 - Excessive fatigue,
 - Poor attitude,
 - Lack of desire and motivation to train and/or
 - Aversion to anything triathlon-related
- Burnout can happen to anyone and is more prevalent after the end of a long training and racing season.
- The single biggest mistake you can make with burnout is to deny it and keep training at a high tempo.

Option 2: Do nothing and hibernate like bears

“Perhaps I am a bear, or some hibernating animal underneath, for the instinct to be half asleep all winter is so strong in me.”

- Anne Morrow Lindbergh (American writer, aviation pioneer, 1906-2001)



Option 2: Do nothing and hibernate like bears



Coaching client example:

- June: Ironman Coeur d'Alene – earned a Kona slot
- October: Ironman Hawaii
- November – December: No exercise plus holiday parties and meals
- January:
 - Gained 20 pounds
 - Nearly started over with fitness
 - Poor early season racing results

Not surprisingly, not training impacts performance (i.e. detraining)

“Endurance-trained athletes should avoid detraining periods over a few weeks since alterations of the metabolic adaptations to training may become rapidly chronic after such delays.”

Source: C. Petibois and G. Déléris, “Effects of short- and long-term detraining on the metabolic response to endurance exercise.”
International Journal of Sports Medicine 2003 Jul; 24(5): 320-5.

What happens when you stop endurance training?

Fitness Parameter	What happens?
VO ₂ Max	Decreases (less able to use O ₂)
Blood plasma volume	Decreases (less red blood cells)
Exercising heart rate	Increases (heart works harder)
Blood pressure	Increases
RER (Respiratory Exchange Ratio)	Increases (more carbs, less fat)
Muscle glycogen	Decreases (less carb fuel)

In summary, detraining can take place within 2-4 weeks.

- Parameters worsen up to a point then eventually steady state.
- Recently trained individuals may see training-induced gains completely reversed after more than four weeks.

Source: I. Mujika and S. Padilla, "Cardiorespiratory and metabolic characteristics of detraining in humans." *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* 2000 Jun; 3(3): 413-421.

Option 3: Find the happy median



The middle ground is where you want to be in order to:

1. Avoid burnout and
2. Carry over an adequate level of fitness to next season.



First, begin your “Transition Season” with some downtime

- You need to define what downtime means to you:
 - Do nothing
 - Active, unstructured workouts; other activities like hiking, mountain biking
- When?
 - End of season
 - Burned out, sick, fatigued, etc.
 - Approaching workouts as “I have to...” and “I need to...” instead of “I want to...” and “I look forward to...”
- How long?
 - It depends. Maybe 2 weeks. Maybe a month. Maybe 2 months.
 - How long do you need?
- Keep in mind that it’s OK (and expected) to lose some fitness...but not too much

Example of “downtime” and shift to “Transition Season”

- Training for Beach2Battleship Full in November
- Early October:
 - Bronchitis and excessive fatigue
 - “I have to....” and “I need to...” do my workouts
 - Pulled the plug on the race, end of racing season
- Late October (2 weeks):
 - 3 days off per week, slept in every day, workout if I felt like it
- November – December: Transition season
 - Non-triathlon specific training: mountain biking, trail running, climbing and flexibility (yoga, Pilates) then skiing
 - Taking a break from coaching and following a structured plan
- January - TBD (committing not to commit)

Example of “In Season” vs. “Transition Season” schedule

In Season Example:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Off	Swim	Trainer	Swim	Swim	Bike	Run
	Run	Strength	Run	Bike	BRICK	Strength

Transition Season Example:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Yoga	Pilates	Bike	Yoga	Pilates	Mtn Bike	Trail Run
	Swim	Climb	Run	Swim	Climb	

What are the things that you can do to set yourself up for success next year?

- Work on skills and technique for weak areas as needed
 - Swim: Get individual swim lessons and practice more drills.
 - Bike: Proper bike fit and cadence work with drills.
 - Run: Improve running form in the winter then develop speed in the spring.

- Develop more strength and improve flexibility
 - Helps with injury prevention
 - Develops more power
 - Yoga, Pilates, stretching, etc.

- Focus on only one of the three triathlon events for a while
 - Bump up swimming to 4x per week for a month and do a swim challenge
 - Train for a spring half-marathon or marathon

- Work on your aerobic base (foundation)

Take the time to plan your next training and racing season

Client: Joe Triathlete

Profile: 2 years of triathlon experience - has done up to 1/2 IM
 Competing in first IM race in November
 Works full-time (1-2.5 hours available during week) with weekends available for long training sessions

- Goals:**
1. Complete Ironman Florida successfully
 2. Complete 1/2 marathon in April as confidence builder
 3. Complete Eagleman in June

	Week of:	Period	Weeks to Race	Events	Priority Goals
Prep Period	22-Jan-07	Prep	41		Prepare body for base period; work on skills
	29-Jan-07	Prep	40		Same
	5-Feb-07	Prep	39		Same
	12-Feb-07	Prep	38	2/15-18: Ski Vacation	Easier week
Run Focus	19-Feb-07	Base 1	37		Build aerobic base + muscular endurance
	26-Feb-07	Base 1	36		Same
	5-Mar-07	Base 1	35		Same
	12-Mar-07	Base 1	34	3/17-18: Family Reunion	Easier week
	19-Mar-07	Base 2	33		Build aerobic base + muscular endurance
	26-Mar-07	Base 2	32		Same
	2-Apr-07	Base 2	31		Same
	9-Apr-07	Base 2	30		Same
	16-Apr-07	Peak	29		Begin taper
	23-Apr-07	RACE	28	4/29: Half Marathon	B Same
Half Iron Focus	30-Apr-07	Transition	27		Easy, easy week
	7-May-07	Build	26		More race specific training
	14-May-07	Build	25		Taper
	21-May-07	Build	24	5/27: Reston 2-mile Swim	C Bigger bike week
	28-May-07	Peak	23		Begin taper
	4-Jun-07	RACE	22	6/10: Eagleman	A Race!
Easy / Off	11-Jun-07	Transition	21		Easy, easy week
	18-Jun-07	Transition	20		Same
	25-Jun-07	Transition	19	6/29-7/2: Las Vegas Vacation	Off week



Other strategies for the winter months

- Change to winter friendly activities
 - Spinning classes as an alternative to riding outdoors
 - Mountain biking can be fun even in cold, muddy conditions
 - Try something new like indoor rock climbing or ice skating
 - XC skiing, snow shoeing, downhill skiing (if climate permits)
- Take advantage of environmental changes.
 - Running routes from the summer will look and feel different
- Leave the watch and heart rate monitor at home - work on “feel”
- Seek “fun challenges” rather than “get fast”
 - For example, build up to doing 50 x 50 meters in the pool as a challenge

Thank you for your time today!

This webinar has been recorded and will be available at enduranceworks.net.

To be notified of future webinars and events, please sign up for our e-Newsletter at enduranceworks.net.

Please contact me with any questions or feedback.

Kindest regards,

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