



TOUR O THE BORDERS

TRAINING PLAN: WEEKS 1-5

PHASE 1

Frequency and the 1-5 training scale

Training for an 88km or 120km cycling sportive requires a combination of endurance, strength and speed training that must be matched with a positive mindset. I'll be providing some tips to help you establish a routine, and at this stage, it's all about frequency and building up time on the bike – we're not going to talk training zones, hills or intervals to boost performance yet, this will come later. We'll keep it simple with the 1-5 training scale used commonly in endurance training.

So, let's start at the beginning by introducing one of the key components to building bike fitness, and one of the most important determining factors for success: frequency. It's all about frequency

at this stage, organising your weekly cycling schedule to increase the number of times you are training on the bike.

If we go too hard and too fast without structure or direction, it's easy to fall off track and lose our sense of why? We have to respect our bodies; it takes time and perseverance to achieve rewards that are outstanding, eventful and worthwhile. The key to building endurance is to gradually start increasing the frequency in which you ride a bike – this can be indoor or outdoor.

There's plenty of time until the event, so the first port of call is to build your fitness and follow a simple weekly structure that fits your lifestyle.

The 1 to 5 training level scale is a common way to classify the intensity of bike training, with level 1 being the easiest and level 5 being the hardest. Here's a brief description of each level:

LEVEL	INTENSITY	USE IT FOR...	% HR MAX	NOTES
1	Easy	Warm-up, cool-down, recovery.	50-60%	This is about time in the saddle and improving your fat utilisation. It's ideal for beginners or those just starting out.
2	Endurance	Longer rides, recovery.	68-78%	This involves bringing more rhythm into your ride, close to or around your event cadence (rpm). It's good for improving overall fitness.
3	Tempo	Longer efforts, building speed & strength.	70-85%	This is the event cadence (rpm) that you feel comfortable with and that can be sustained. It's often described as 'comfortably hard'.
4	Threshold	Short, hard efforts, interval training.	85-96%	This is intense, an effort that can be sustained for short periods building Vo2 MAX (speed at which you reach maximal oxygen consumption).
5	Anaerobic	Short, all-out efforts, sprint training.	96-100%	This is working at your maximum heart rate (HR- MAX). It's good for improving power & speed but should be used sparingly.



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About Jamie Millar

Jamie Millar is a health & fitness professional with over 10 years' experience in the world of sports and exercise. He has a BSc (Hons) Degree in Nutrition and is a fully qualified Level 3 Personal Trainer.

Jamie designs and delivers fitness programs tailored to the goals of his clients, helping people find structure, purpose and enjoyment through exercise and sport, whether that's gym-based strength and conditioning, running, cycling, swimming or more. For him, cycling provides the perfect platform to build physical fitness and reconnect with the outdoors – and he loves nothing more than a hill climb.

Supporting the Tour O The Borders training programme will help Jamie achieve his overriding mission: to share his knowledge and skills in nutrition, physiology and exercise programming to maximise everyone's enjoyment and passion for cycling.



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GOAL

Aim to ride at least 3-4 times per week, with one long ride on the weekends.

PLAN

Work out your cycling schedule (3-4 days). Organise your life. What days best suit you and what equipment do you have in your arsenal?

EQUIPMENT & TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

You can build a stationary bike into some of your sessions if you have access to one. These are great for convenience and used by both beginners and seasoned cyclists. If you're worried about finding time to train, consider this option. Most gyms will have bikes making them very accessible.

It must be noted, however, that the bike out on the road will provide the most value so make an effort to work towards this being the main form of cycling in your weekly plan. Nothing can prepare you more for the open road and the challenges it brings than the bike you will use for the event so get out there and rack up those outdoor miles!

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	GOAL
WEEK 1	30mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	45mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady Ride	Rest	30mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	1hour Long Ride Outdoor Level 2: Steady Ride	Complete 4 Sessions 165mins Endurance building
WEEK 2	35mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	50mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady Ride	Rest	40mins Exercise Bike Level 2: Steady Ride	Rest	1hr 10mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1: Easy Ride	Complete 4 Sessions 195mins Endurance building
WEEK 3	40mins Outdoor or Exercise Bike Level 2: Steady Ride	Rest	55mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady ride + some hills	Rest	35mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	1hr 15mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1: Easy Ride	Complete 4 Sessions 205mins Endurance building and power development
WEEK 4	45mins Outdoor or Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	1hour Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady ride + some hills	Rest	40mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	1hr 20mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 2: Steady ride + some hills	Complete 4 Sessions 225mins Endurance building and power development
WEEK 5	30mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	40mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	30mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	45mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1-2: Easy ride + some easy hills	Complete 4 Sessions 145mins Endurance and recovery

Note: This is a plan for beginners and intermediates who have never cycled to any kind of structure – those who simply leave the house and cycle.