



PHASE 3

Interval training and level 4 & 5 intensity

In the first two phases, the training sessions were characterised by lower intensity, focusing on building aerobic duration and a solid foundation. Now we'll progress from level 1-3 by introducing new training methods to help progress your fitness and abilities on the bike. It's important to do so gradually and systematically. Here are the steps to follow in this month's plan:

Understand Training Levels: Familiarise yourself again with the training levels using the table below. Understand your level 4 threshold training and max efforts at level 5.

Assess your Readiness: Before progressing to higher intensity training, evaluate your current fitness level, recovery ability and overall readiness. Ensure you have spent an adequate amount of time building a solid aerobic base through consistent level 1 & 2 rides. Ask yourself: Have you been consistent with the training plan? How many training sessions have I missed? Have I found time to recover?

Incorporate Threshold Training: Threshold training involves riding at or near your lactate threshold, the intensity

level at which lactic acid starts to accumulate in the muscles, giving you a feeling of muscle pump closely followed by fatigue. This training allows you to sustain higher intensities for longer durations and will enhance your event day experience. Start by introducing short intervals at or slightly above threshold intensity during your rides and gradually increase the duration or number of intervals over time.

Introduce Interval Training: Interval training involves alternating between periods of high intensity and periods of recovery. It can be an effective way to improve anaerobic capacity and increase your ability to generate power. Begin with shorter, high-intensity efforts to get a feel for it, 30-60 second intervals, followed by a period of active recovery. This is where an indoor bike or turbo trainer can hold its own and be achieved on a tight schedule.

Monitor Recovery and Adaptation: As you introduce higher intensity training, closely monitor your recovery and adaptation. Take sufficient rest days and recovery rides to allow your body to adapt to the increased stress. Pay attention to signs of overtraining or excessive fatigue and adjust accordingly.

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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TOUR O THE BORDERS

TRAINING PLAN: WEEKS 10-13

GOALS

Introduce interval training. Up the intensity levels to 4 & 5 in these sessions.

PLAN

Complete 3-4 rides per week and introduce a mix of easy and steep hills. Complete the Bottomless Loch loop in week 3 (49km).

EQUIPMENT & TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

Stationary bikes can still be used in this training block but more time has been planned out on the road for the scheduled long rides.

Remember, it's crucial to listen to your body and avoid pushing too hard too soon. Gradual progression, adequate recovery, and consistency are

key to safely and effectively incorporating higher intensity training into your cycling program. High-intensity training is great fun and a necessary method for developing your bike fitness, but always err on the side of caution.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	GOAL
WEEK 1	45mins Exercise Bike Level 3: Tempo Session	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 1: Recovery Ride	Rest	50mins Exercise Bike/Outdoor Level 2: Endurance	Rest	1 hour 20mins Indoor/Outdoor Interval Session 1	Complete 4 Sessions 235mins Threshold and power development
WEEK 2	60mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Recovery Ride	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady Ride + easy hills	Rest	60mins Exercise Bike Level 2: Steady Ride flat route	Rest	1hr 2mins Long Ride Outdoor Interval Session 2	Complete 4 Sessions 242mins Threshold and power development
WEEK 3	45mins Outdoor or Exercise Bike Level 2: Steady Ride + easy hills	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 3: Steady Tempo ride + some steep hills	Rest	60mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	2hr 25mins Long Ride Outdoor Interval Session 3 Bottomless Loch (49km)	Complete 4 Sessions 310mins Endurance building and power development
WEEK 4	45mins Exercise Bike Level 1-2: Easy Ride	Rest	45mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady ride + easy hills	Rest	45mins Exercise Bike Level 2: Easy Ride	Rest	1hr 30mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1-2: Easy/Steady Ride	Complete 4 Recovery Sessions 225mins Endurance and recovery

Note: In week 3, refer to training rides on the website for Bottomless Loch Loop.



TOUR O THE BORDERS

TRAINING PLAN: WEEKS 10-13

INTERVAL SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

INTERVAL SESSION	ESTIMATED TIME	INTERVAL LEVEL(S)	RECOVERY LEVEL(S)	NOTES
1 2 X 20-MINS THRESHOLD INTERVALS	1hr 20 mins	3-5	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Warm up for 10-15 mins ·Ride at your threshold (the max effort you can sustain for 60 mins) for 20 mins ·Recover: 5-10 mins easy spinning ·Repeat the 20-mins threshold effort ·Cool down: 10-15 mins easy spinning
2 4 X 4-MINS VO2 MAX INTERVALS	1hr 2mins	4-5	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Warm up for 10-15 mins ·Ride at a high intensity, aiming for your max effort for 4 mins ·Recover: 4 mins easy spinning ·Repeat x3 with 4 mins recovery ·Cool down: 10-15 mins easy spinning
3 2 X HILL INTERVALS	2hr 25mins	4-5	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Complete Bottomless Loch route ·Max effort on Paddy Slacks hill section ·Maintain level 2 to St Mary's and back ·Repeat max effort on Paddy Slacks from Gordon Arms back to Innerleithen

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.