



PHASE 4

High intensity fitness & staying motivated

With Touro fast approaching, we continue to increase the volume of cycling, time on the bike, on the road and on track to success. If you have been consistent with the plan, you are nearing the point of being physically and mentally prepared for the best closed-road event in Scotland. This phase, we repeat the interval sessions from Phase 3, building more high intensity fitness – and include the next big training ride. This provides a platform to sharpen the hill climbing skills and build a set of legs that thrive under a long endurance ride. Staying motivated for the next eight weeks may be a challenge, so here are some tips to help maintain your focus and enthusiasm:

1. Reward yourself: Set up a system of rewards for completing your sessions. Treat yourself to a massage, a new piece of cycling gear or your favourite meal. Celebrating your accomplishments will reinforce positive behaviour and keep you motivated to continue.

2. Seek inspiration: Watch videos, read books/articles and follow professional cyclists and cycling communities on social media. Surrounding yourself with inspiring content related to cycling will motivate you to push harder. Look to the Tour de France and immerse yourself in the best cycling endurance event of the year.

3. Take rest days: Rest and recovery are essential to this training plan. Overtraining can lead to burnout and decreased motivation. Follow your scheduled rest days to recharge both physically and mentally. Use this time to pursue other hobbies or activities that you enjoy. Variety is the spice of life!

4. Visualise success: Create a mental image of yourself accomplishing your cycling goals. Visualise the exhilaration of crossing the finish line or achieving a personal best time. Use this visualisation technique during training to remind you of the ultimate outcome – and never stop telling yourself to trust the process.

5. Stay flexible and adapt: Life can be unpredictable and there are occasions when you are unable to follow the training plan as intended – embrace flexibility and adapt your schedule when necessary. Remember that consistency is more important than perfection. Adjust your plan when needed and don't let minor setbacks discourage you. They are part of the process and overcoming them builds mental endurance and resilience.

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.



PHOTO CREDIT: JERRY TATTON



TOUR OF THE BORDERS

TRAINING PLAN: WEEKS 14-17

GOALS

Build more high intensity fitness with interval training. Discover strategies to stay motivated and on track.

PLAN

Complete 4 rides per week including 3 interval sessions. Complete the Journey Out West loop in Week 3 (68km).

EQUIPMENT & TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

Stationary bikes can still be used but time out on the road is best for the scheduled long rides. If you are not local to the Scottish Borders, plan a substitute to The Journey Out West (week 3) that is approx. 68km with an accumulative elevation of 800m. 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 programme. 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	70mins Exercise Bike/Outdoor Level 4: Interval Session 1	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 1: Recovery Ride	Rest	60mins Exercise Bike/Outdoor Level 2: Endurance	Rest	70mins Indoor/Outdoor Level 3: Threshold Ride	Complete 4 Sessions 260mins Threshold and power development
WEEK 2	60mins Exercise Bike/Outdoor Level 1: Recovery Ride	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady Ride + easy hills	Rest	62mins Exercise Bike Level 4-5: Interval Session 2	Rest	110mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1-2: Endurance	Complete 4 Sessions 290mins Threshold and V02 max development
WEEK 3	45mins Outdoor or Exercise Bike Level 2: Steady Ride + easy/moderate hills	Rest	60mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 3: Steady Tempo ride + some steep hills	Rest	45mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	180mins Long Ride Outdoor 65km+ route A Journey West Loop	Complete 4 Sessions 330mins Endurance building and practice out of the saddle
WEEK 4	45mins Exercise Bike Level 1: Easy Ride	Rest	45mins Road Bike (Outdoor) Level 2: Steady ride + easy hills	Rest	45mins Exercise Bike Level 2: Easy Ride	Rest	105mins Long Ride Outdoor Level 1-2: Easy/Steady Ride	Complete 4 Recovery Sessions 240mins Endurance and recovery

Note: In week 3, refer to training rides on the website for A Journey West loop.



INTERVAL SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

INTERVAL SESSION	ESTIMATED TIME	INTERVAL LEVEL(S)	RECOVERY LEVEL(S)	NOTES
1 2 X 20-MINS THRESHOLD INTERVALS	80mins	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	62mins	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 MIX & MATCH HILL INTERVALS*	180mins	4-5	1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Complete The Journey Out West route (68km) ·Ride at levels 1 & 2 on flats ·Aim to ride out of the saddle at zones 2, 3, 4 & 5 on hill sections ·Treat each hill as a zone interval (majority level 2-3 with a couple at 4-5). Use descents for recovery

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.

*Note: Ride with plenty of water and replenishment snacks: gels, dried fruit, apples and bananas work best but sugary sweets/juice a good option for sudden energy dips.