



TOUR O THE BORDERS

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TRAINING PLANS - WEEKS 7 & 8

WEEK 7 AND 8 OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE TOUR OF THE BORDERS

16 weeks to go! Not quite got going yet? There is still time....

If you are just joining us for the structured Tour O The Borders training programme, you still have time to get fit. Have a read of the tips and training from weeks 1-6, then begin with 2 training sessions per week (unless you are already fit, in which case you should be doing 3 sessions per week). Focus on steadily building your weekly distance for the next 3-4 weeks but concentrate on building one of your weekly rides until you are comfortable riding for 2-2 ½ hours. This will bring you closer to where you need to be to complete Touro.

For those of you that have been following the programme, these next two weeks we will be increasing the distance prior to a recovery week in week 9. As per normal, we will focus on one main ride per week (usually at the weekend) plus one or two midweek rides/alternative training. One of the mid-week rides will now focus on hills at a higher intensity. Also note that the midweek sessions are interchangeable – make them fit your schedule.

Apart from the longer ride which should be on a road bike, you can still choose any type of cycling at this stage for your training.

The long rides are a key part of your training so try not to miss these, even if it is the only ride you do in that week. If the weather isn't great, try to go out anyway, as it could be windy or raining on the day. Training in poor conditions will help you better prepare, and also provide you with a chance to experiment with different clothing, fluid and energy strategies.

You will see each ride has a training intensity level 1-5. Use the **Training Zones** chart below to establish the training intensity of each ride and how this should feel (perceived effort).

TRAINING ZONES

I will refer to training zones for each ride. Normally it will be one zone, but on longer rides there may be a mix of zones. The table below will help you gauge how you should feel whilst riding in a particular zone. It also provides you with an indication of your heart rate and FTP levels.

ZONE	EFFORT	YOU CAN...	IT FEELS LIKE...	USE IT FOR...	% HR MAX	% FUNCTIONAL THRESHOLD POWER	PHYSIOLOGICAL ADAPTATIONS AT THIS TRAINING ZONE
1	Easy	Chat easily	Warming up	Warm-up, cool-down, recovery	60-65%	56-75%	Muscles become looser and body temperature gradually increases
2	Steady	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along with a bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%	Primary oxidative energy systems working. Muscle glycogen storage increases
3	Brisk	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10-20 minutes	75-82%	91-105%	Oxidative and glycolytic energy systems are both in use. The body is working just below threshold level
4	Hard	Say one word at a time	Really pushing like a hill climb	Hard efforts of 2-8 minutes	82-89%	106-120%	Blood lactate levels start to rise. Hypertrophy of slow-twitch muscle fibres
5	Very hard	Unable to chat, gasping	Flat out sprint	Very short max out efforts of 10 secs to 2 minutes	89%-Max HR	121%+	Heart rate, blood lactate levels and other physical parameters start to reach maximum levels



PHOTO: © IAN LINTON

About Phil Mack

Phil Mack is a Specialist Sports Physiotherapist and Sports Scientist. He has six sports injury and peak performance clinics located in Edinburgh and Peebles (view website).

Phil was previously Strength and Conditioning Coach to the South African Triathlon Team, South African Springboks, Leicester Tigers and Ulster rugby teams, to name a few. He has developed a global reputation in both strength and conditioning and sports injury rehabilitation.

As a triathlete and duathlete, Phil has represented both Great Britain and South Africa. He is also a keen climber and enjoys mountaineering.



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	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
WEEK 7	Recovery day	45-60 minutes level 2-3 Short hilly ride level 3 for as much of the ride as possible	Recovery day	60 min turbo/Zwift Or alternative training (eg. circuit class, cross-trainer)	Recovery day	2½ hour undulating ride Level 2 with occasional level 3 on hills (you can take a breather at the top)	Easy recovery ride or rest	Make sure you take sufficient food and fluids with you on the longer ride
WEEK 8	Recovery day	45-60 minutes level 2-3 Short hilly ride level 3 for as much of the ride as possible	Recovery day	60 min turbo/Zwift Or alternative training (eg. circuit class, cross-trainer)	Recovery day	3 hour undulating ride Level 2 with occasional level 3 on hills (you can take a breather at the top)	Easy recovery ride or rest	Make sure you take sufficient food and fluids with you on the longer ride

TIPS FOR WEEKS 7 & 8

Practice your food and hydration strategy

Taking sufficient fuel and fluids is an essential facet to make sure you finish the ride without experiencing a hunger knock or dehydration, either of which are an unpleasant experience. However, one of the big mistakes even experienced riders make is taking sufficient fuel and fluids with them, but not using them.

There are a few reasons for this, but the most common is many riders find it difficult to reach for food and water when riding in a group and as a result, end up running out of fuel. So it is well worth practicing this essential part of your riding strategy. Considering where you are going to put your food and gels that you can easily reach is really important. Some riders even put energy bars or food lightly taped to their handlebars so that they can reach these easily rather than rummaging around in your pockets.

Once you have decided which is the best strategy for you, begin practicing it now, especially when you are riding with a group.

