

Week 1

Welcome to week #1 of the LW Coaching NICA pre-season High School VARSITY mountain bike training plan. This training plan will develop your strength and base fitness sending you into the regular season as one of the top athletes on your team.

Begin this training plan 12 weeks prior to start date of your NICA league regular training season. Regular season training starts for fall leagues on July 1 and spring leagues on December 1. Colorado starts on August 1 and Tennessee starts on the Monday of the week after the week of July 4. Start this training plan 12 weeks prior to the above dates.

NOTE: A heart rate monitor is required to follow this training plan. A power meter is an optional extra that is a great advantage. Each workout contains heart rate (HR), power and perceived exertion (PE) pacing guidelines. Always follow power guidelines over HR when you have a power meter on board. Training by power is the most accurate method.

Common abbreviations: HRZ1 is heart rate zone 1. Power L1 is power level 1. These are training zones you will set in the benchmark test on day 2. PE is perceived exertion.

Mon:

- **1:00 DAY #1: Core stability and strength:** Do 30 mins of core training with a variety of exercises for your hip, abdominal and lower back muscles. Examples are bridging, pillar exercises, crunches, back extensions, Pilates. Follow this link for exercise suggestions: Core Training for Mountain Bikers <http://lwcoaching.com/core-strength-for-mountain-bikers/>

Then do the recommended exercises and repeats at this link: Stability Exercises for Cyclists <http://lwcoaching.com/stability-exercises-for-cyclists/>

Coach Lynda tip: These exercises are early season pre-hab work to counter and prevent strength imbalances caused by cycling that lead to imbalance and overuse injuries. These stability exercises are preventative maintenance.

Tuesday

- **1:30 DAY #2, session #1: Power and HR performance 20min field test:** This test is to set your power (watts) training levels and heart rate training zones. It is also used to establish a performance benchmark to compare and track your progress. You will repeat this test again in week #6 of the plan.

Do a long deep warm up prior to the test. Then time trial 20 minutes, non-stop on a flat course or up a continuous gradual climb. Pace the 20 minutes evenly with a maximal effort. Record average power if you have a power meter (a power meter is optional), average heart rate and distance covered in the 20 minutes. Finish ride time with a long easy cool down.

Use the TrainingPeaks zones calculator as follows to establish heart rate training zones:

1. Open the athlete account setting page and select Zones (athlete > settings > zones).
2. Enter the average heart rate from the 20 minute field test into the Threshold Heart Rate box.
3. Choose type Lactate Threshold from the drop down menu in the auto calculation box.
4. Choose method Joe Friel for Cycling in the drop down menu in the auto calculation box.

5. Click Calculate, then Apply, then the Save button at the bottom of the page.
6. Copy heart rate training zones 1 – 5 and start pacing by heart rate and PE!

Use the TrainingPeaks zones calculator as follows to establish power training zones:

1. Open the athlete account setting page and select Zones (athlete > settings > zones).
2. Enter into the threshold box your average 20 minute power multiplied by 0.95. E.G. Average 20 min power of 200 w x 0.95 = 190 w
3. Choose type Threshold Power from the drop down menu in the auto calculation box.
4. Choose method Coggan (6) in the drop down menu in the auto calculation box.
5. Click Calculate, then Apply, then the Save button at the bottom of the page.
6. Copy power training levels 1 – 6 and start pacing by power and PE!

Coach Lynda tip: Prior to conducting this test review the Testing Guidelines doc found at this link <http://lwcoaching.com/?p=138> for tips on how to prepare for and execute your best test.

You have an option to re-test on week #3 day 6 if you feel you did not put out your best possible effort today.

- **0:10 DAY #2, session #2: Foam roller and stretch:** After your 20 min time trial field test today, use a combination of rolling on a foam roller and stretching to work out your hot spots.

Wed

- **1:30 Improve technical riding skills:** Ride at an easy pace in heart rate zones 1-2 with a focus on technical riding skills. Go to a pump track, bmx track, bike park, technical trail or open area. Have fun with this session today and invite your friends.

Today's goals are to improve technical ride skills, speed and flow on moderately challenging terrain (no big gnarr silly stuff). Work on all aspects of technical ride skills; balance, braking, descending, cornering, pumping etc.

Ride at an easy pace in HR zones 1-2 when the trail is easy. When you reach a challenging section of trail repeat it several times until you are smooth and clean and can flow the section with less energy and more speed. Brief heart rate spikes over zone 2 in the tech sections are expected and ok. Stop after challenging sections, let your HR come down, observe the lines then re-ride with more flow and speed. Rest time counts today, so you are out on the trail for 1.5 hours and maybe pedaling for only 45 mins. This is a good session to do with a better rider to learn from, friends or with a skills coach.

Coach Lynda tip: Click on the paper clip icon above and download the LW Coaching Training Intensity Guidelines doc attached to this workout to learn how to pace with PE and calibrate your PE numbers to heart rate zone (HRZ) and effort level.

PE = perceived exertion
HRZZ = heart rate zone

- **0:10 foam roll and stretch:** Use a combination of rolling on the foam roller and stretching to work out your hot spots.

Thursday

- No riding today.

- **0:30 Core workout.** Follow this routine <http://lwcoaching.com/30-min-core-stretch-routine-mountain-bike-racers/>

Fri

- **1:30 Practice your XC race warm-up routine:** 5-10 mins of easy power L1/HRZ1 spinning, 5 mins of power L2/HRZ2, 5 mins of power L3/HRZ3, 5 mins of power L1-2, 1 x 1 min power L4, 3 mins power L1/HRZ1, 1 x 1 min power L5, 1 min power L1/HRZ1. Pace the 1 min L4 and L5 by PE if you do not have a power meter on your bike today. Look at the attached training intensity guidelines doc for pacing cues.

Finish the ride time pedaling steady in power L2 or HRZ2.

Coach Lynda tip: 1 min intervals are too short to pace by heart rate due to the physiological time lag between power to the pedals and when heart rate responds and rises. Click on the paper clip icon above and download the LW Coaching Training Intensity Guidelines doc attached to this workout to learn how to accurately pace with PE and calibrate your PE numbers.

- **0:10 Foam roll and stretch:** Use a combination of rolling on the foam roller and stretching to work out your hot spots.

Sat

- **1:30 Aerobic Base Ride.** Ride in heart rate zone 1-3 or power levels 1-3 today. Spend most of your ride time in zone/level 2. Choose a fun route with a mix of trails and dirt roads. Power will be in all levels when on single-track but should not stay in levels 3+ for long enough to elevate HR to zone 3+.
- **0:30 Core workout.** Spend 30 minutes doing a routine combining stretching, core/stability work especially with the physioball, and optionally some upper body exercises (light weight/bodyweight only).