

## End of the Season



*What is meant by “The Off Season”?*

Typical training seasons (macro cycles) are periodised into blocks of training called meso cycles and micro cycles. Meso cycles are usually made up of an off-season, pre-season, and competition season. Each meso cycle is filled with micro blocks of training weeks which undulate with individual sessions of varying load including recovery and/or adaptation days and lower load training weeks. After competition season and prior to the off-season I recommend taking some time to reflect and switch off from training and performance. Ideally you want to begin the off-season training fresh and motivated, ready for some routine training again.



*So what should this time off before the Off-Season involve?*

### 1. Retro & prospective viewing

It's a good idea, to sit down and review your training and competition year. This will only take 10 minutes. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What improvements did I make this year?
- What mistakes can I learn from?
- What would I do differently?
- What are my goals for next year e.g. technically?
- What key realistic strategies am I going to use to achieve these goals?

### 2. Mix it up



Let your hair down, get away from the sport, do something completely different. If you feel like doing exercise then forget about times, splits, pace, distance, just take sport back to its simplest form explore, relax, and enjoy it.

### 3. Physical TLC

After competition season is a good time to fully address any niggles or injuries, rest. Attend to any issues you may have been managing throughout the season. Eat right and manage a healthy lifestyle, indulge from time to time but always consider the impact on your wellbeing and your body's ability to perform day to day duties.



### 4. Pack up

Clean, mend and store away your race kit. You're not going to need it again for a few months but rest assured that when you do its ready for action!

### 5. Week Zero

The first test of the season should be whether you are eager for some training. If you are not craving the comfort of structured regular training then extend your time-off. The triathlon season is long. Motivation and consistency are key for successful meso blocks of training.



### 6. Planning your season

Take some time before Week 0 to have a think about what it is you want to achieve in the upcoming season. Check out race calendars on Triathlon Ireland and RunIreland as well as club websites for upcoming events. You may decide to use the X-Country season as part of your training or a TT series later in the year. Carefully consider how these will affect your training and performance. Staying in peak condition from February to August is not possible, so be sure to use your training and recovery/adaptation time wisely. Also plan test sessions at 4-6 weeks intervals to monitor your progress, these sessions can be done with club mates, simply ask a club coach for advice on what sessions to use and when.

Sept	Oct-Jan	Feb-April	May-Aug
<b>Time-Off</b>	<b>Off-Season</b>	<b>Pre-Season</b>	<b>Competition Season</b>
Training Load is low Variety Active Recovery	Training Load is Med to high with emphasis on a gradual increase in aerobic work and strength endurance.	Training Load is Med to high with an introduction to high intensity sessions, including threshold work, speed and race pace brick sessions.	Training Load is Low. Maintain aerobic work through recovery sessions. Depending on the structure of your events aim for one priority/ key session per week. Aim to get to the start line "fresh & sharpe".

*Note = Training Load = [Training Duration x Training Intensity (see Borg RPE scale)]*