

Looking Back to Plan Ahead

The transition phase is a good time to start planning for your upcoming season. You should have the time since you are "taking it easy" and the resources since the season is still fresh in your mind. But, before you start to map out your ATP (Annual Training Plan), you need to look back at this past season's goals, objectives, training schedule and race results. You need to critique the past before you plan for the future, and asking yourself the following questions will help you shape your upcoming season.

- 1) Did you meet your goals?
- 2) Did you follow your training objectives?
- 3) Did you address your limiters?
- 4) Were you able to stick to your training schedule?
- 5) Were you satisfied with your racing results?

When planning the upcoming season, think about how difficult or easy it was to meet your **goals**. Were they reasonable, too easily met or beyond your reach? Did your **training objectives** lead you to your goals? Training objectives are the stepping-stones to your goals and must be followed closely. Often your training objectives focus on your **limiters**. (Did you determine these?) In order to improve, you must focus on your weaknesses while maintaining your strengths. When looking back at your training journal, were you able to log in the hours that you scheduled? You need to set your training hours to blend into your daily schedule. Don't set yourself up for failure by scheduling more hours than you have available. Did you feel good about your race results? Remember to think about **your** race effort and not compare yourself to your competition. Did your race schedule fit into your life schedule? Not having enough races in a season can lead to seemingly endless training, while having too many races can lead to burn-out. Balancing your race schedule with a good mixture of "A, B, and C" races will keep you motivated to train and eager to race.

Looking back at your season and evaluating the good and the bad will provide you with a solid outline to begin designing your training plan for the upcoming season. Break out the paper and pencil and ask yourself the above questions and you will be on the road to a great season.

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