

Why Strength & Conditioning for Cyclists?

A 2hr ride @90RPM = 10,800 pedal revolutions. A slight imbalance repeated that many times for days and weeks on end is causal of injuries. Minor may be the beginning, major can be the end result if not remedied.

- Negate muscle imbalances to prevent injury
- Improve efficiency to combat fatigue

Strength & Conditioning – “The physical and physiological preparation of athletes for sport performance”.

S & C training is not about getting big muscles, it is about identifying weaknesses and/or imbalances, and developing strategies around improving these to become stronger riders, improve efficiency and prevent injury.

Yes, as a track or road sprinter there is a certain need for developing a better strength and ultimately a better power output (maximising the power to weight ratio), as this is the foundation for developing the extremely high speed necessary to be successful in these disciplines. However, even as endurance based riders, there is a need to improve this same power to weight ratio. Improved efficiency in the pedal technique, increased core stability and improved flexibility lead to the rider becoming more efficient on the bike and with this efficiency, less energy is burned for the same amount of output.

Will an S&C program benefit me as a Jane /Joe blogs?

As a general rule, riders can benefit greatly from a well-structured S & C program. A well-structured program should involve discussion with a suitably trained and practiced professional if maximum benefits are to be gained without negatively affecting performance. Just like a well-structured S&C program will provide benefits for EVERY rider, a poorly structured program could very well be detrimental to an athlete’s development.

A professional S&C coach should be well rehearsed in planning and periodisation for cyclists, and should be able to answer without hesitation, questions regarding what types of S&C training fit into rider training in various key phases of a rider’s yearly plan.

Will an S&C program be beneficial for my young son or daughter?

In short, yes.

There is no scientific evidence to suggest that proper, supervised S&C training from a trained professional will be detrimental to a young athlete. It has however been demonstrated to accelerate athlete development.

I cannot however stress enough, the importance of the provider being well trained in the delivery of S&C training (particularly strength training) to younger athletes, and the provision of suitable supervision is very important.

For the long term development of, particularly young but just as importantly, the older athlete, a solid grounding in fundamental strength training skills is hugely beneficial.

Even if your child does not continue on as a cyclist, or you as an adult (let’s hope not!) decide that you have had enough of riding a bike, these skills are transferable to every other sport there is. As an older adult, S&C “training” becomes just as important for health and vitality, including prevention of illness and injury, and in particular bone health.

Train hard, train smart!

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