

SPORTIVE TRAINING PLAN

Week 1 – Principles of Training

This training plan is based on widely accepted principles of training that can help to prevent “over training” injuries and build fitness, skills and confidence to peak for an Event. This first instalment of your weekly skills session is designed to explain how to train smarter to get fitter faster.

How the Body Responds to Training Stress

When you place the body under stress and then allow it to recover, your body rebuilds itself slightly stronger in preparation for the next stress or training session. This is the training principle of over compensation. You must treat rest and recovery as equally important as your training sessions for overcompensation to work properly. Varying the **intensity**, **duration** and **frequency** of your training sessions will vary the amount of stress that you place the body under.

- **Frequency:**

Good news for busy people trying to get fit; 3-5 sessions a week have proved to be the most effective – quality is more important than quantity

- **Duration:**

The duration of sessions increases through the plan and the more intense sessions are of shorter duration

- **Intensity:**

Varying the intensity across the plan, the week and the session will result in the body adapting to the training stress and getting fitter

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE “PAIDI O SE” SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Specificity

As the body gets fitter changes take place in the cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular and even skeletal systems. The training principle of specificity means that the specific adaptations for a particular sport such as cycling will only come from cycling. Cross training activities (running, swimming, circuit classes etc.) are beneficial but for reasons of injury prevention, motivation and the development of basic fitness. More simply: you have limited to time to train so to get better “cycling legs” spend that time on your bike.

Reversibility

Just as 3-5 sessions a week produce maximum gains, periods of inactivity can erode fitness alarmingly quickly. The best results will come from training consistently and the key to this is not missing sessions or weeks through injury; listen to your body and avoid “over training”.

Periodisation

This plan uses the periodisation method of training, the workouts get progressively tough and more specific over two four-week periods before tapering down in the final period to allow the body to recover and prepare for your sportive. By building fitness conservatively the fitness gains from each period are kept as the foundation for the next period.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE “PAIDI O SE” SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 2

Week 2 – you made it – good stuff! Many a training plan is dropped after a few days. Stick to the plan and avoid the temptation to over train; the fitness will come. This week focuses on pedaling efficiently.

Week 2 Goals:

1. Establish the routine:

Set your training plan for the week on Sunday night, factor in social appointments, work commitments and your to do list –set the training times in your diary.

2. Understand the pedal stroke:

Read the training tips on the next page and start feeling and thinking when you pedal.

3. Phone a friend:

Set a training date with a mate for your long ride and send them this plan; telling someone else that you are in training will help keep you honest and “on plan”.

Training Schedule: Week 2

This week focuses on maintain a high pedalling cadence (turning the pedals quickly), pedalling smoothly and increasing your leg speed.

Week 2 – Cadence, Leg Speed and Smooth Pedalling

By improving how efficiently you pedal you can save energy on a long ride or sportive for when you need it most on the hills and in the finale. For endurance cycling it is necessary to develop the skill of riding at a higher cadence (turning the pedals more times per minute). It's worth investing in a cycling computer that allows you to monitor your cadence. The following drills are included from Week 2 onwards to help you improve your pedal stroke:

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

“Build Speed”

Maintaining the **same cadence**, build your speed by focusing on pedalling smoothly and applying more force in the downward phase of the pedal stroke. Don't bounce, rock from side to side or come out of the saddle; try to apply more force while maintaining a steady upper body posture.

This drill is best done on a flat, straight section of road away from interruptions such as junctions or traffic lights. At first you will find you fatigue quickly, that's OK. If you need to go up the gears to maintain the cadence then do so. As your leg strength and speed improve you will transfer more power from your legs to the wheels.

"Spin Ups"

In a low to moderate gear **gradually increase** your cadence until you have reached your **maximum cadence** without bouncing. Hold the maximum for as long as you can or the prescribed time in the plan – whichever comes soonest. Slowly decrease your cadence to around 90rpm in the recovery phase of the drill. As your fitness improves you will be able to hold the maximum for longer, to start with aim to pace the “spin up” so that you reach your maximum near the end of the allotted time. The idea is to feel the increase in cadence and work on flat spots and smoother pedalling as you are increasing your cadence.

“Quicker Cadence”

When the training plan prescribes “quicker cadence” **quickly increase and then maintain** a cadence of 20rpm faster than your current steady pace cadence. A steady pace cadence of 90rpm and a quicker cadence of 110rpm is a good guide. Hold the quicker cadence for the prescribed time in the plan going down the gears if necessary. In the recovery phase you can drop your cadence to 10rpm less than your steady pace cadence.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE “PAIDI O SE” SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 3

Week 3 is the peak week for this four-week training block. Next week you'll have an easier recovery week.

Week 3 Goals:

1. Protect the routine:

If you can stick to the plan for just one more week the chances of sticking to it for 12 weeks are greatly increased; on Sunday night scan the week ahead and work out what you need to do to make and protect the time needed for training.

2. Hydration:

As training time increases, so does the need for making sure you hydrate correctly. If you don't have two water bottle cages fitted then add one. Note down how much water you needed for your long ride – did you take on too little? Did you feel a bit “washed out”? Maybe you need some isotonic drinks mixed in to maintain electrolyte levels. Start practicing hydration for your sportive now.

3. Group riding technique:

Riding in a bunch is a skill that will save you energy; follow the tips on the following page to ride a little bit smarter and save 25% of your energy.

Week 3 – Riding in a Group

In Week 9 we'll take a closer look at aerodynamics and different riding positions on the bike, but first some simple tips that you can practice now to save you energy and help you stay safe when riding in a group

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Get 25% Fitter by Riding 5% Smarter

By sheltering behind other riders in a group or bunch you can save 25% of your energy, following these simple tips will help you stay safe and do your fair share in the group:

- **Take your turn:** No one likes a free loader; make sure you take your turn at the front, be a “good wheel to follow” i.e. don’t force an uncomfortable pace and don’t deviate too much from the “turn” time that the group has naturally established; it will upset the rhythm of other riders
- **Keep pedalling and keep the cadence steady:** Freewheeling signals that you might be slowing down (like the brake light on a car)
- **Be your own back up:** Bring sufficient supplies of water, food, suncream, spare layers for the likely weather and spare inner tubes and basic tools
- **Hold your line:** When cornering hold your line and think about the safety of those around you, follow the adage of “look first, move second”

Group Riding Etiquette:

- **Ride in two columns:** The group should form two lines, riding directly behind the wheel in front and alongside the rider next to you, stay compact to give the maximum benefit to the riders behind
- **Easy pace in traffic:** Keep the pace slow and safe in towns and heavy traffic and only increase the pace when out on the open roads

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE “PAIDI O SE” SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it’s from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland’s scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

- **Make it easy for drivers:**

By staying two a breast and close to the curb the line of cyclists is shorter and more compact making it easier and safer for motorists to pass

- **Work then peel:** The pair on the front should drive a tempo that is comfortable to the group and will not result in anyone being dropped, when their turn is done peel off to the left and right respectively and rejoin at the end of the line, if someone is having a bad day, shelter and support them in the group

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 4

Rest week – result!

Chapeau, you've stuck to the plan and can enjoy a well-earned rest week. This week is lighter than the previous weeks and has no specific skills sessions on the bike. Focus on riding with good form.

Week 4 Goals:

1. Break the routine:

Adding in a session of cross training in a different sport uses different muscle groups, increases motivation (you'll feel fitter than the last time you did that sport) and helps to prevent over use injuries. Using this week to explore new routes that you can add it into your plan relieves any monotony you may be experiencing from riding the same roads.

2. Socialise:

Use the extra time to catch up with friends and family; your support network is an important part of your training environment – keep them sweet!

3. Experiment with eating:

Use this week to try some different meals and meal/exercise timings. Experiment with how long you need to leave between eating and starting your training session. Which meals and foods give you more energy? Which good recovery meals to you enjoy most? Which are quickest to prepare?

Training Schedule: Week 4

Whilst there are no specific drills this week try to remember the techniques that you have been learning and ride with good form in session #3 and #4

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 4 – Nutrition, Rest and Recovery

In Week 1 we covered the training principle of “overcompensation” discussing how the body rebuilds itself and gets fitter and stronger after each training “stress”. Gaining fitness through over compensation only works if you give the body adequate time to recover and rest and give it the right fuel before, during and after exercise.

Recovery Tips - Five Steps to Recovery Faster

1. Hydrate:

Leave a drink chilling in the fridge; you’ll look forward to devouring it after the ride

2. Protein:

Muscles need protein to repair the damage done during exercise, prepare a snack and place it in the fridge before your ride so you can immediately replace protein, easy sources include protein bars, protein shakes, egg whites, cottage cheese, tuna and fruit

3. Stretch:

Long stretches of each muscle group for 20 seconds will help flexibility

4. Self massage:

Simple self massage can help flush out toxins and help muscle recovery

5. Compression:

Compression tights can help reduce muscle soreness and speed recovery

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE “PAIDI O SE” SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it’s from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland’s scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Simple Nutrition

There's no real need to have a complex diet, we instinctively eat more healthily as the training load increases. Follow these simple tips to keep your diet on track:

- **Calorie deficit:**

Losing excess fat will help your ride faster, the simplest way to do that is to ensure you use more calories than you consume every day

- **Everything in moderation:**

The old fashioned advice works; plenty of colours on the plate, more veg than meat and as little packaged or processed food as possible

- **Eat fish:**

If you change one thing only, then eat more fish; the natural oils are hard to find in other meals and they are especially useful for oiling the chain that is your body during a period of increased training

- **Shop to a plan:**

Having plenty of healthy stuff in the fridge is half the battle; online shopping and/or going to the shops with an old fashioned list of items for a 7 day meal plan can help you reduce "on a whim" purchases

"Body Says Rest"

Sometimes your body will be sending you a strong signal to rest but you may try to ignore it and keep the plan on track. If you don't feel up for a planned session and still aren't feeling good 10 minutes into the session then turn around and head home; it could be the body sending you an early warning signal

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 5

In week 5 the training volume picks up again and builds over the next three weeks. From now on hill climbing sessions are regularly included to develop power, to improve climbing cadence and to trial the different climbing techniques explained in week 5's tips on the next page.

Week 5 Goals:

1. **Find your style:** Use session #2 to experiment with different riding positions for different gradients, up to what gradient can you stay seated and when do you need to stand on the pedals?
2. **High cadence climbing:** Work on spinning at a higher cadence using a lower gear whilst climbing, the gear you can use to spin at 90rpm+ will improve as leg power improves over the next few weeks
3. **Long ride fuel planning:** With the weekly long ride now expanded up to 2.5 hours it is crucial to plan your refuelling properly. Where will you refill water bottles? Do you plan a coffee stop halfway round? Is the route long enough for your newly improved fitness? What snack will you prepare in advance for when you get home? What new energy gels or bars will you trial this week? Isotonic drink or just water?

Week 5 – Climbing

The key to cycling in the mountains is accepting that the climb is going to go on for a while and possibly be followed by others so it's best to get into a rhythm and save energy rather than trying to emulate your favourite Tour de France rider.

Climbing Hills with a High Cadence is Easier

A high climbing cadence used to break down the task of climbing the hill into more manageable chunks. As a result you

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

fatigue the muscles less and increase the chance that they'll still be willing to work for you on the final climb of the day.

Climbing Tips

These top tips will help you maintain a high climbing cadence and conserve energy:

- **Stay relaxed:**

Monitor yourself regularly to relax and save energy; are you wasting energy by gripping the handlebars too tight? Grimacing or clenching your jaw? Holding your breath then recovering with shallow panicked breaths? All the above? Do the opposite!

- **Arms bent:** Keeping your arms slightly bent rather than locked out it will help absorb shocks from the road and reduce fatigue

- **Hands on the hoods:** Having your hands on the brake hoods gives you better leverage

- **Keep seated:** When the gradient allows keep seated, you can generate power more consistently over longer periods in the seated position. As your leg power and muscular endurance improves the gradient at which you are forced to get out of the saddle will increase

- **Change is good:** Change your hand position and climbing style around during the day to give your arms, shoulder and back muscles a rest/change and to bring different leg muscles into play

- **Cut the hairpin:** When space allows taking a line from the outside of the hairpin to the inside will often flatten the turn and give you a little breather

- **Stand up:** When the terrain gets steep or if your body just instinctively wants to stand on the pedals for a while go with the flow - it will give your muscles a change of scene and help flush out toxins too by increasing the heart rate

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 6

Week 6 is a breakthrough week, you will be riding the longest in one week so far. Make sure you take your time on Sunday night to plan routes for the week that have enough distance for you.

Week 6 Goals:

1. **Check your gearing:** After a focus on climbing last week you are well placed to make any mechanical adjustments such as adding a bigger sprocket set on the back - see this weeks tips on gearing for climbs
2. **Test for emergencies:** Pack your saddle bag for every training ride and practice a road side inner tube change using a gas canister, there's nothing worse than getting a puncture in a sportive and not remembering how to change the inner tube and use the canister!

Training Schedule: Week 6

Specific climbing sessions will be a constant presence now except for in recovery weeks. Use the long rides this week to adjust saddle position during session #4 and tweak riding position ahead of starting session #5

Pre Ride Bike Checks

- ✓ Check brakes are working well and not near wear line
- ✓ Check the tyre pressure is high; there is a pressure guide on the side wall of the tyre
- ✓ No signs of excessive puncture prone tyre wear and tear
- ✓ 750ml water bottles x2
- ✓ Saddle bag with spare inner tubes, Co2 canisters and multi tool
- ✓ Cash for the café
- ✓ Spare layer
- ✓ Sunglasses

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 7

As time in the saddle continues to increase each week, so does the importance of avoiding injury and maintaining a consistent training effort. This weeks focuses on safe and efficient descending to get you down the hills in one piece.

Week 7 Goals:

1. **Core stability:** Stick to your core stability sessions - they help prevent injury and stiffen up your torso so less energy is wasted for each pedal stroke
2. **Descending skills:** Descending a hill safely and efficiently is a skill that must be practiced

Training Schedule: Week 7

Week 7 includes two 2 hour 30 minute sessions with session #4 focuses on a break through above race pace effort in the middle of the session. Be sure to warm up properly and cool down after every session, stretching before and after training should be an engrained habit by now.

Week 7 – Descending

Descending is a skill often overlooked by cyclists as the focus before a sportive is often to fear and thus over emphasise the climbs. What goes up must come down, so it's important to actively practice good descending technique.

Descending Tips

These top tips will help you descend safely and get ready for the next climb:

- **Stay relaxed:** Keep your body relaxed; being tense will translate through to the bike and will make your bike handling more twitchy
- **Inside Leg Up:** When turning through corners keep your inside leg

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

up and your outside leg down with the weight on your outside foot to anchor the bike to the road

- **Fingers on the brakes:** Keep your hands on the handlebar drops and the fingers resting lightly on the brake levers
- **Feather the brakes:** Your braking should be progressive, don't brake sharply and look well ahead to use the contours of the descent to regulate your speed
- **Balanced braking:** Using the front brake to help reduce speed will help to reduce the chance of the back wheel locking up or skidding, as you brake the centre of gravity of the bike shifts forward, this helps the front brake to have more grip
- **Set the speed before the bend:** When approaching the bend judge the entry speed and brake well before the bend, set a speed that will mean you don't need to be on the brakes while you are cornering
- **Slower in faster out:** Aim to go into the corner slower than you will exit it, if you get the speed right you should be able to gain speed on exit through gravity and by pedalling
- **Caution after rain:** Mountain roads can get particularly slippery after heavy rainfall as the water run off reactivates old engine oils and painted road lines can be slippery too
- **Stick to your line:** In a sportive it's likely you'll be descending with others around you, make sure you stick to your line and stay aware of the positioning of others around you
- **Mountain bike:** If you have a mountain bike or can borrow or rent one then a cross training session on the mountain bike will really help improve your bike handling skills

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 8

Your second rest and recovery week has finally arrived and your reward is just 4 hours of total workout time with just 2.5 hours on the bike. Use the extra time to make sure you are organised for the next four weeks of training. In week 11 you'll be working out for 10.5 hours; what can you do this week to help create time later on?

Week 8 Goals:

1. **Active recovery:** Focus on being relaxed and content with your fitness gains during your lighter sessions this week
2. **Cross training:** Make a date with a friend and enjoy your cross training session
3. **Admin:** Look at your calendar for the next month; are there any weekend, social or work commitments that could effect your final four weeks of training? What can you do now to help ensure those key sessions happen? Does your bike need a service?

Week 8 – Benefits of Cross Training

When you have a target such as sportive looming in front of you it is tempting to just focus on getting good quality cycling sessions in. Including a little cross training has several benefits:

3 Benefits of Cross Training

1. **Endurance:** One of the best ways to improve your cycling fitness is to increase your base fitness levels but you can plateau, cross training can add some variety to test the body
2. **Motivation:** After 7 weeks of progressively harder training you'll notice the fitness gains when you try another sport this week, positive feedback reinforces the good training habits so far and a new sport will combat any monotony developed by riding the same routes

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

3. Prevention of overuse injuries: Just as with a healthy diet, variety in training is a healthy habit to develop. By using different complementary sports in your training plan you will stress and develop different muscles this can be especially useful for developing better core strength in the muscles that help stabilise the body

Cross Training For Cycling

- **Mountain Biking:** Mountain biking will give you a change of scenery and really helps improve bike handling skills, especially cornering on descents
- **Elliptical Trainer:** Similar muscle groups to cross country skiing and much easier for most people to access, you'll find an elliptical trainer in most gyms
- **Swimming:** A great option for recovery sessions as the majority of the effort is upper body with the legs mainly used for stability. Combined with a session in the sauna and Jacuzzi this is a great option for the day after your long ride
- **Running:** Many pro cyclists will not have been for a run in years, but for the amateur cyclist jogging off road builds great endurance and brings the upper body into play too
- **Yoga:** Long hours in the saddle leave you wanting to stretch out your back and legs and adding a [yoga session](#) into your training can help improve your flexibility and core strength
- **Weights:** If hill climbing or maintaining a good speed on the flats are limiters for you then consider adding some weight training into your plan, the following exercises will help strengthen your legs:
 - o Squats
 - o Leg press
 - o Calf raises
 - o Hamstring curl
 - o Leg extensions

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 9

In week 9 the total weekly hours increase again to 9.5 hours. The two key sessions this week are #3 and #5 where you will experiment with improving your aerodynamics to save energy over the long rides.

Week 9 Goals:

1. **Aerodynamics:** Read through week 9's tips and apply them this week
2. **Group riding:** Get at least one group ride in this week
3. **Bike position:** Take your multi tool out with and make any final tweaks to saddle height and riding position

Week 9 – Aerodynamics and Riding Positions

Aerodynamics and being “more aero” is a much talked about subject amongst cyclists, particularly those looking for performance improvements. Air resistance has the greatest effect on a riders ability to ride quicker or use less energy to maintain the same speed. What the manufacturers of smooth carbon frames, skin suits, aero wheels and tear drop helmets don't want the average cyclist to know is that 80% of your drag comes from your body, not your bike. The cheapest and most effective way to improve aerodynamic efficiency is to loose fat and therefore bulk. Consistent cycling training will help a rider loose fat and gain lean muscle, allowing a smaller but more powerful body shape to cut through the air. For the amateur cyclist, the next best aero gains are in learning how to take shelter well in a group, up to 25% less energy can be used by following a good wheel.

Improvements to your position on the bike can also improve your aerodynamic efficiency:

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Aerodynamics Tips

- **Hands in the drops:** When descending or driving a faster pace on the flats have your hands in the handlebar drops for greater aerodynamic efficiency
- **Bend the elbows:** One of the easiest ways to present a smaller frontal area to the wind is to bend your elbows; this will help to flatten your back and expose less of your chest
- **Keep your head down:** Keeping your [head down](#) is a key element
- **Comfort = Power:** When adjusting your position on the bike always remember that you need to be in a comfortable position to get the most power out of your legs
- **Drafting:** As explained in Week 3, riding in a group can save 25% of your energy
- **Tidy up your bike:** Are you carrying old bike lock holders, mounts from old lights or a mini pump when you plan to use a canister? Get rid of any debris that your bike is carrying that doesn't contribute to performance. Only when you have cut some weight, improved your group riding skills and worked on your position on the bike should you consider indulging the gear manufacturers marketing campaigns.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 10

The penultimate heavy week in this final four week training block features climbing, pedalling skills and a long group ride. Plan session #5 well in advance and ensure you have a group to ride with.

Week 10 Goals:

1. Know your pace:

Until now the focus has been on building fitness and leg strength rather than worrying about distance. This week take the time to note down your average speed over your longer rides and start thinking about what pace you should aim for on the day

2. Practice group riding:

Drafting is essential to save energy in a sportive so make sure you include a group ride this week to practice your group riding skills

Training Schedule: Week 10

Add a coffee or tea stop into the long ride in session #5 which must be a group ride to help you practice for your sportive. Read the "After The Ride" nutritional recovery tips in week 11 to get into good nutritional recovery habits after long rides.

Week 10 – Sportive Tactical Survival Guide

- **Pace yourself:** Your training has been building progressively so you should have a better understanding of your average speed and your strengths. Pace yourself conservatively to finish the race strongly and have finishing with a smile on the line as your number one goal
- **Create your own group:** If you are entering a sportive with mates and have been training together then stick together; you'll find people have strong moments and weak moments and they'll often average out of the course of a long day. If you are on your own you might find riders in your local Cycling Club.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

- **Pick the right group:** Find a group that are
 - o Travelling at a pace that is comfortable for you
 - o Taking turns to work at the front
 - o Communicating well and are in good spirits
- **Communicate within the group:** If you were on a 5 hour train journey or flight you'd probably talk to those around you right? Once you have found the right group you chat with people and be sure to communicate any dangers (holes, road furniture) clearly
- **Take your turn:** It's worth reading through the group riding tips covered in Week 3 again; poor group riding etiquette won't be appreciated
- **Leave the group:** When the above rules aren't being applied maybe it's time to try to find a more suitable group to ride with; don't spend five hours pulling other people along!
- **Tyre pressure:** Get into the habit now of checking that your tyres are pumped up to the recommended pressure before every ride
- **Don't use aero bars:** To get round a sportive you need to draft and using aero bars is a no-no when riding in a group, you will not have the time to react to changes in front of you
- **When you feel good eat and drink:** Don't wait until you are hungry, thirsty or tired; if you feel good then get some fuel in; aim to eat and drink little and often
- **Practice fuelling your ride:** Practice your race nutrition and hydration in training; ride looped circuits with your house or car at the centre to act as a food and water station. How many time to you refuel your bottles on your weekly long ride? What works best for you towards the end of a long ride - gels or solid food?

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Week 11

Week 11 marks the last hard week of training before the pre event taper next week. In week 12 the focus will be on recovery, rest and ride sharpness. Use this week to get your nutrition and hydration strategy sorted so that you are not testing anything new in sportive week.

Week 11 Goals:

1. **Test week:** This is the last week to test any new nutrition and hydration strategies covered in tips on the next page, set the routine for week 12 now
2. **Make it count:** Plan your week so you don't miss any sessions and start each session feeling good so that you can give your best effort before intensity tapers down next week
3. **Feel good:** Counteract any possible apprehension or negative feelings by riding routes you covered early on in your plan and feeling the fitness gains that you have worked hard for

Week 11 – Nutrition and Hydration for a Sportive

The number one rule of eating and drinking during the week before a sportive is to not experiment with anything new. The tips below apply equally to normal training weeks and training rides so if you haven't tested nutrition and hydration yet, this is the last week to try anything new and get into the right routine.

The Week Before

- **Exercise before breakfast:** If you are trying to loose weight then exercising before breakfast will raise your metabolism; your body will burn fat better throughout the day
- **Regular meals:** eating a good healthy breakfast followed by regular small meals helps keep blood sugar levels steady and weight off
- **Big healthy breakfast:** Eat as much healthy food as you can at

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

breakfast it should be your biggest meal of the day; look for cereals with as few additives as possible, free range eggs on granary toast kick start your day with carbs and protein

- **Walk it off:** Studies have shown that the body will access fat straight from the bloodstream if you take a short walk after a meal
- **Snack on nuts:** Nuts are full of natural and healthy fats and make a great snack
- **Nutrient rich food:** Eat raw fruit and vegetables and drink juices and smoothies, spinach and beetroot both help increase the body's oxygen uptake and can be juiced
- **Slow release carbs:** Choose brown rice, wholemeal bread and brown pasta to get in complex carbohydrates that will release energy slowly over the day
- **Fish:** Add oily fish to your diet twice a week as a great natural source of essential fats
- **Eat your greens:** Make sure your plate has a good balance of food types and colours and pile on the leafy greens
- **Chicken:** A lean source of protein to help muscle repair and growth as well as vitamin B
- **Melt in the mouth:** If you are having to chew something then your digestive tract will also have to work harder to break it down and get the nutrients into your body so choose casseroles and stews that melt in your mouth and contain root vegetables
- **Eat slowly:** Whenever possible always sit at the table for your main meals, talk, appreciate the food and eat slowly to help your digestive system to process the food properly
- **Green tea:** Helps burn fat, has a calming effect and can help to reduce cravings
- **Keep well hydrated:** At least 1.5 litres of water daily

Event Morning

- **Hydration:** Start hydrating when you wake up by having a sports bottle by your bed, carry it with you all morning and sip water little and often

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

- **Big breakfast:** Stick to your favoured combination that has worked well before training rides, you can wake up earlier to eat and then snooze or stretch afterwards to ease yourself into the day and give the body time to digest and absorb the nutrients and carbs

On The Ride

- **Be self sufficient:** Have your favoured combination of gels and bars in your back pocket, don't rely on the feed stations alone
- **Food alarm:** You can remind yourself to eat and drink with a repeating alarm every 30 minutes on some sports watches or use distance markers as a reminder to get some fuel in
- **Use descents to refuel:** When it is safe to take on fuel during the descent use the easier riding to recharge the batteries before the pace and effort picks up on the flats
- **When you feel good eat:** Don't wait until you are tired or hungry!

After The Ride

- **Carbs and protein:** Help the body to repair by getting in an electrolyte sports drink and a banana straight after finishing (even if it's the last thing you want to take on!)
- **Recovery meal:** Eat a well balanced meal with easily digested starchy carbs and sources of lean protein. Planning your recovery meal in advance can give you something to look forward to in the last few miles.
- **Treat yourself:** If you want to have a more 'naughty' treat to look forward to then burger and chips is not that bad if it's gourmet stuff; hand cut chips with the skins on will give you carbs and salt and a proper hand made burger will be easy to digest, a chicken burger with green salad would be a great option.
- **Celebrate with a pint or glass of wine:** Guinness or red wine are healthier choices, but whatever drink you celebrate with make sure you hydrate well, alcohol is a diuretic (it dehydrates you) so chase every alcoholic drink with the equivalent sized glass of water.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

Interspersing any post race drinks with fruit juice or electrolyte drinks is also an easy postrace re-hydration option available in most pubs these days

- **Snack attack:** Just before bed a healthy snack of wholegrain toast will help the body recover while you sleep

Week 12

Before you know it Sportive week has arrived and you are feeling nervous excitement. As you taper down for the event use the extra free time to prepare and book in for a sports massage as a treat.

Week 12 Goals:

1. **Checklists:** Go through the checklists in Week 12's Tips on the next page
2. **Remove possible sources of stress:** Get your work, social and cycling plan in place on Sunday night for the week ahead of the sportive and make travel and accommodation plans that allow you to arrive at the start area early on race day
3. **Finish the sportive with a smile:** A simple target such as finishing the sportive with a smile on your face will help you keep everything in perspective and remind you why you love sport!

Week 12 – The Final Week: Sportive Preparation

The week before your sportive features light training and therefore more spare time. Use the time wisely to go through these check lists:

Pre Sportive Check List

- ✓ Drop your bike into your local bike shop a week or so before your event or do a service yourself:
- ✓ Check all nuts and bolts on the bike are tight including the quick release levers
- ✓ Check the chain for wear and tear

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013

- ✓ Replace the brake pads so that you have enough for any long descents
- ✓ Clean the bike thoroughly, lube the chain and oil the derailleurs
- ✓ Treat yourself to some fresh handlebar tape before the sportive will not only increase comfort but also give a nice psychological boost
- ✓ Write a summary of the route plan and stick it on your top tube or stem, it should include distances marking important aspects of the climb such as the start, finish and altitude of climbs and where the feed stations are
- ✓ You will probably start early in the morning when it might be cold as you wait around in the start area; if you have some old scruffy tracksuit bottoms and a jumper you can wear these at the start to keep warm and then jettison them at the last minute or give them to friends in your support crew

Saddle bag contents

- ✓ Inner tubes x2
- ✓ Co2 cannisters x 2
- ✓ Multi tool and tyre levers
- ✓ Cash and a credit card
- ✓ ID, insurance card and contact details in case of emergency
- ✓ Camera phone for taking pictures en route and contacting supporters or riders after the race

Back Pocket Contents

- ✓ Leave room for your waterproof, arm warmers and other layers you might wear at the start
- ✓ Some gels and solid food

Paidi O Se Charity Cycle Sportive 2013



THE "PAIDI O SE" SPORTIVE IS IRELANDS NEWEST, BIGGEST AND MOST EXCITING MULTI-DAY SPORTIVE. SO WHY NOT SET YOURSELF A TRAINING CHALLENGE AND GET ON YOUR BIKE NEXT OCTOBER

The event could be looked at as a simple A to B ride – only it's from Croke Park to Ventry, covering 370 kilometers of Ireland's scenery from 10th – 12th October 2013.