



## Cycle Training Books from VeloPress

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Once again, it is amazing what I will do for free stuff. Maureen sent me an e-mail some months back and asked me if I wanted some free training books. The only catch was that I would have to write a review on them for the newsletter. “What the heck”, I said, “They’re free.” What is better than that to a cop?

As public safety cyclists, it is imperative that we are in a good state of physical fitness to do our jobs effectively. I would take this further to say that the better shape we are in, the better we can perform our duties. I don’t know anyone who has all the time in the world to train, so using time wisely to maximize the effectiveness of a workout would be high on most people’s priority lists. To accomplish this, a structured, organized training plan is a must. If your cycling goes beyond work, to club rides or racing, structure is even more important.

Over the years, I have done a lot of reading to develop my plan. Having an opportunity to read two more books only enhanced my understanding of cycling fitness. The two books I read are from VeloPress: *Maximum Performance for Cyclists: The Physiology of Training* by Michael J. Ross (\$18.95 U.S.) and *Training Plans for Cyclists* by Gale Bernhardt (\$21.95 U.S.).

Both books were worthwhile reading but each has its unique merits, depending on what the reader is seeking.

I found *Maximum Performance for Cyclists* to be on the advanced end of the spectrum. If you have been riding and racing seriously for many years and already have a grasp on the basics of training, then this book could be beneficial. The first chapter examines the age-old debate of volume versus intensity and comes out on the side of intensity being more important to fitness than volume. Then, ways to increase performance are examined. Chapter 3 discusses muscle physiology, which I found a bit too complex, but some may find it useful. Bike fit and testing are covered in the next two chapters. In my opinion, the most informative chapters are the ones on high-intensity and resistance training. These are the “meat” of the book, and if you could only read two chapters, these would be the ones. Other topics include flexibility, workouts, training plans and even recipes for eating right. This book covers cycling training in great detail which is definitely beyond what the beginner or casual cyclists needs. But if you have grown stagnant in your training or are looking for that extra edge to gain speed, this is the book for you.

*Training Plans for Cyclists* is geared more towards the beginning to intermediate rider, particularly one who is striving towards a specific goal. Part 1 covers the basics: elements of training, intensity and volume, nutrition and equipment. The next four parts were what I liked best about this book – 16 specific training plans to help you achieve different types of goals. Part 2 consists of distance ride plans for a 30-mile ride, a 100-km or 50-mile ride and two century ride plans – one to complete the ride and one to achieve a time goal. Part 3 covers multi-day tours of varying length and mileage. Part 4 addresses mountain bike racing, starting with an



entry level beginner race, and then progressing to 100-mile races and a 24-hour event. Part 5 is for those who don't have a specific riding goal in mind, but would just like to build a strong foundation of fitness. Strength training and stretching round out the material.

In addition to these two books, I would highly recommend another book that I have used as a basis for my training for almost ten years: *The Mountain Biker's Training Bible*, by Joe Friel.

Also available from VeloPress, this is the best book I've read for getting you started and organized for training for any type of racing. Friel's writing style is clear and explanations of every aspect of periodization training are included. This was the basis for the Periodization Training workshop that I presented at the last two conferences. Topics examined include the science of training, self assessment, season planning, racing, recovery and training diaries. Friel emphasizes the importance of avoiding overtraining and burnout through smart training. He also has other training bibles for road racing, triathlons and heart rate training.

If you have any inclination to get involved in a race or event, it is wise to adopt a structured training plan to help you get there. These three reads will definitely help you to train effectively and efficiently.

VeloPress offers a wide range of other books, including *The Time Crunched Cyclist*, *Weight Training for Cyclists*, *Andy Pruitt's Complete Medical Guide for Cyclists*, and *Bicycling & the Law*. For more information or to place an order, visit [www.velopress.com](http://www.velopress.com) or call (800) 811-4210.

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