

# Game Plan for Success! The Athlete's Plan for Outdoor Spring Training

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## SPRINGTIME – Taking our training outdoors into the wide-open world!

For many athletes, winter months mean being *indoors*, cycling hard on our simulators, running flat out on the treadmill, or machine rowing like an Action Hero.

### Finally, we can get out of the cage and go outside!

Before you charge out there and begin spring training in a mad frenzy, let's huddle up for a second. You're excited to be outside, but let's remember what lies ahead in the real world – things like cars, dogs, wind, and wet leaves – for starters.

That's why the [TEMPO cycling and pilates](#) team figured it was a great time to sit down with world champion cyclist and Coach (of national champions) Kirk Whiteman to talk about the best ways to transition from indoor to outdoor training in the *real world*.

### We asked Coach Whiteman to share his tips for transitioning to outdoor training.

Whether you're a cyclist, runner, or rower, Coach Whiteman shares the same recipe for performing at your optimum that he gives to his athletes competing for national titles:

- Things to be aware of – wind, body weight, and uneven terrain – as you shift from the controlled environment of indoor training to the unpredictable, *variable environment* outdoors
- Preparing yourself physically and mentally for the prospect that your outdoor performance will not match your indoor metrics immediately. Keep in mind there is an adaptation period
- Remembering the essentials – pedaling, breathing, posture, form, and more
- The importance of maintaining a few of your cross-training exercises as you go *all in* on your primary sport

### Coach Whiteman, can you share what you tell your riders as they move from the controlled environment of indoor training to the widely variable environment outdoors?

I say, just take it easy. Get out and ride; don't think about training – get out and ride. Feel the bike, feel the water if you're a rower, feel the ground if you're a runner.

Understand that you've been on a simulator for the most part for a few months. Even though the bike trainers these days are very sophisticated and the simulation is excellent, those machines still don't really account for what the wind actually *feels like* or how the hill actually *feels*.

On the simulator, you are not really carrying your body weight and once you're riding outdoors, you begin to really feel what carrying your body weight is, how it feels to *really be climbing* the hill.

### Don't assume that you're going to be as fast as you were on the simulator the first time you get on the bike.



When we first get back on the bike outdoors, it's a massive challenge – both mentally and physically. There is just so much to take in, which is why we recommend you take your time and start slow.

It doesn't mean you're less of an athlete for taking your time; it just means that you're **SMARTER** for taking your time. You're human. It's just smart to get back to full stability and confidence before ramping up the training alongside the inherent risk of getting on a bike.

We all need some time to re-learn how to steer our bikes, get on our bikes, get off our bikes, how to pedal around corners, how to adjust to our brakes and use our brakes again, going downhill. What's a comfortable speed? What's your body position? Are you holding that 16-pound bowling ball known as your head so that your neck doesn't get sore?

Many of my riders, some national champions, make impressive gains on the simulator over the winter. They tell me, *I got 15% stronger over winter; 10% faster!* I can pedal three RPMs quicker. I'm climbing at seven RPMs faster!

It's my responsibility to remind them that those metrics were on a simulator. I don't want to diminish how good and optimistic they feel about their indoor training, and I also don't want them to be hugely disappointed in their performance once they get outside.

### That one fact of going outside to train on the variable terrain is huge and cannot be over-emphasized.

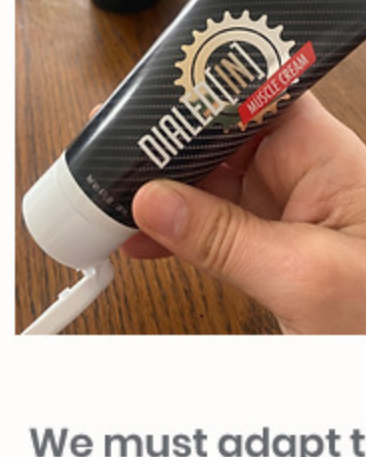
Distance	Elev Gain	Time
31.18 mi	1,388 ft	2h 11m



**Remember to plan ahead – minimize soreness and cramping from the variable terrain:** use your [DIALED \[IN\] muscle cream](#) before and after riding, running, and rowing.

By the end of the off-season, before you get outside, your entire body has adapted to the simulator. Your muscles, tendons, nerves – the whole package – have conditioned and re-formatted themselves for indoor riding and training.

The different way your body works outside means you may feel some significant soreness, even cramping, from what amounts to a brand-new, completely different training regimen outside.



This is why a lot of my riders use [DIALED \[IN\] muscle cream](#) even more this time of year – to decrease the soreness during the transition and keep their training and progress consistent.

### We must adapt to the wind, the humidity, and the transition from indoor clothes to the layers needed outdoors.

The wind – it treats us all like suckers. It's in our face on the way out, and when we turn around, it's *still* in our face. Yet another variable for our bodies to readjust to and get stronger for.

Plus, the air outside can be more humid than your climate-controlled indoor environment, and it can come loaded with pollen and allergens. Again, more things for your body to adapt to.

With the changes in air temperature and humidity, you will need to pack more water and an electrolyte mixture to compensate for the extra sweating and mineral loss.

And since you've been riding in shorts indoors all winter long, you'll have to put on layers through this transition to colder, early spring weather. Then, you weigh more and can hardly move because the clothing is holding you back and holding you down.

### I tell my riders that the first step to staying injury-free is to get out there.

Get out and ride, run, or row on the water. Just get out and get used to being outdoors. The bike will feel different. Get used to balancing on the bike again, get used to what it's like going around corners again.

You have to get used to the freedom of riding off the simulator – how the bike sways from side to side when you stand up to pedal.

And, with that freedom from the trainer comes the need for extra black and awareness – what are the cars doing? Are the dogs leashed? Is that black ice ahead? Is that moss and wet leaves coming up?

Taking your time to readjust to the outdoors is the main technique for staying injury-free. Just ride and let your vision get accustomed to seeing all these different things that are in front of you. Take your time getting used to riding next to somebody or riding in a group again.

### Remember those strength training and plyometric exercises you were doing indoors?

Choose two or three strength training exercises you were doing indoors during the off-season – exercises that gave you performance benefits, and will not leave you tired all the time during competition season.

Be sure to continue those helpful exercises. We even encourage our athletes to get back on the trainer or simulator a bit, to train in a controlled environment.

### There are many different approaches to training as we transition outdoors.

Athletes and coaches have many opposing opinions on which approaches and methods are best.

At TEMPO cycling and pilates, we have found that these methods we recommend to our athletes usually mean they ride, run, or row faster than everyone else.

### Victory speaks for itself.

We wish you a safe and exhilarating return to the wide-open springtime spaces!

**PS: If you want to receive Kirk and Jenny's monthly newsletter filled with inspiration, free coaching/exercise tips, plus find out about special offers, sign up for the [DIALED \[IN\] monthly newsletter](#) below:**

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