



ENDURANCE
SPECIFIC
COACHING

TEST DRIVE THE BODY!

Consistency forms the backbone of improvement. However there are many things that can curtail our consistency and one of the major ones is how we interpret the level of fatigue we're carrying at any time.

At TS our plans balance the training load over five different aspects of fitness. We recognise training each system has differing effects on the body and that means we can train hard in a couple of systems without increasing the overall load on the body.

Yes both systems will be fatigued but the effect is not cumulative on the body.

What we want to convey through the simple guidelines below is how you can reliably and objectively tell if the fatigue you're holding is just unmetabolized waste products that have not been flushed from the previous sessions or a deep fatigue where you need a day off.

The caveat to the below is where you are sick which you should read about in our article "Do not train through sickness".

How to Test Drive the Body (to test fatigue levels):

- Head out the door and "test drive" your body by doing 20-30 minutes of a very easy warm up.
- If you feel better *which is typically the case*, go ahead and do the planned session – you still have the choice to back it off a little. Remember it's about doing the best you can on the day. This is what matters.
- If you do not feel better but you also don't seem to feel any worse, the best thing to do here is modify the planned session so we still maintain the all important consistency. So how do you modify it?
 - If an endurance session is planned cut the duration by 50% and towards the end you can see if you feel ok to continue or keep it to half the volume.
 - If it's a race pace tolerance (lactate tolerance) session i.e. an aerobically intense session then you **need to** reduce both the duration (volume) of the session and the length of each interval should be very short (10-20 seconds) with full recovery in between. The benefit is that we still apply a slight stimulus to keep these systems firing but don't wreck ourselves by doing so.
- If after your 20-30 minute easy warm up test drive you feel worse then this is a clear warning that you should pack it in and take the day off for full recovery. Your body may



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be fighting off an illness or the body just needs extra recovery. If it's just recovery needed enjoy your day off – **no guilt**. However if your body is fighting illness then be smart and take a day or two off before easing back in. A day or two now is better than a week or two.

This simple strategy of 'test driving' your body will quickly teach you how to interpret the body's signals. Many times you'll feel this trick fatigue and throw the towel, only to lose consistency and the possibility of a great session. I can tell you from experience there have been many times I have fought the inner demons, got out there and after warming up went and posted some of my best ever sessions. Huge confidence builders.

Oh and then there are those fantastic days where you will feel great. Those are the days to give it a nudge in training just ensure you're not feeling completely fresh because it's off the back of a few days off!

When you have the right type of fatigue on the system we can go for it on those great feeling days with delivering a hammer blow to our body. An example here would be that you're feeling really good. Your paces might even be significantly quicker than normal. GO with that and don't be afraid to push it a little.

Huge opportunities here.