

Training Program



The attached 8 week program is designed for EXPERIENCED cyclists aiming for the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic 228km ride. It can be used as a guide to assist you prepare for the event with the goal of completing the course within the 9hr 30 min cut off time. It is based on four key sessions per week. If you have additional training time available you can incorporate low intensity recovery rides or cross training (running, swimming, rowing, gym etc.) sessions into the program.

This training program is a general guide only, so you should always listen to your body and ride within your own limits. It is recommended that you have completed a base level of cycling preparation comprising regular riding at least 3-4 times (200km or more) per week over at least one month before undertaking this program.

Males over 45 years of age and females over 55 years of age with a family history of chronic disease or a person of any age who has any doubts in relation to their health is advised to consult their doctor before commencing an exercise program

Definitions

EXPERIENCED: A rider with previous event experience looking at completing the course (228km) safely and comfortably within the 9hr 30 min cut off time.

Preparation for Training

1) Look at your position on the bike

- Having the correct set up will ensure that you are most comfortable, allow better bike handling, enable you to be more efficient with your pedalling and minimise the chance of injury or accident
- Be prepared and have someone experienced with bike set up check out your bike position

2) Ensure your bike and helmet is in good working order

- A well serviced and clean bike with good tyres is safer for everyone
- Check your bike over every week and pay special attention to:
 - Tyres - should be inflated to the correct level and the tread not worn or bald
 - Brake cables should be tensioned properly and not frayed. The brake blocks should not be worn or rubbing on the wheel rim
 - Chain - should be clean and lubricated, not bent and run smoothly over cogs when changing gears
- Your helmet should be fitted correctly, have no cracks in the shell and display an Australian Standards sticker

3) What you should carry when riding

- Water bottle/s
- Spare tube/s, tyre levers and a pump or CO2 canister (*know how to change a punctured tyre)
- Some form of personal ID
- Mobile Phone (in case of something happening)
- Front and rear lights if you are planning on riding early in the morning or into the evening



- Connect a bike computer to the bike if possible. This will record your speed, distance, ride time and a number of other optional data fields. It also provides added motivation by allowing you to track your riding progress. Look for a model that provides the option of measuring cadence.

Training Program Details

The program is based on 4 days of cycle training each week with the volume of each session determined by time. The following is a guide in terms of intensity and how hard to push yourself when training: If you use a power meter in training, the power for each zone is indicated as a percentage of Functional Threshold Power (FTP) which is the highest level of power you can sustain for a 60 minute all-out effort. If you use a heart rate (HR) monitor in training, the HR for each zone is expressed as a percentage of the Lactate Threshold Heart Rate (LTHR), which is the highest average HR you can sustain for a 60 minute all-out effort.

- 1) **Easy (recovery) Zone 1** – your breathing is very easy at this intensity. It is used for warm up and cool down, recovery before and after harder efforts and for recovery rides. (Power <55% FTP and HR < 68% LTHR).
- 2) **Comfortable (endurance) Zone 2** – you will sense the slight increase in your breathing rate but should be able to carry on a conversation at this effort level (Power 55-75% FTP and HR 68-83% LTHR)
- 3) **Moderately Hard (tempo) Zone 3** – you can talk at this effort level but your breathing rate is moderately elevated and your breath will interrupt you when talking at this intensity level (Power 76-90% FTP and HR 84-94% LTHR)
- 4) **Hard (threshold) Zone 4** – you will not be able to talk at this pace. It will require concentration to maintain this effort level but you should be able to sustain this intensity for 10-20 minutes. (Power 91-105% FTP and HR 95-105% LTHR)
- 5) **Very Hard (VO2 max) Zone 5** – conversation not possible due to 'ragged' breathing. (Power 106-120% FTP and HR > 106% LTHR)

Training Advice

Cadence is the number of pedal strokes per minute. Pedalling at an optimal constant rate takes less effort and reduces the chance of injury. Aim for a cadence of 80-100rpm with the majority of your riding and use your gears effectively to keep your cadence constant.

Stretching AFTER every ride will improve your flexibility, assist recovery and reduce the likelihood of injury. Focus on the quadriceps, hamstrings, calves, hip flexors, iliotibial band (ITB) and gluteals.

Warm up and **cool down** appropriately at the beginning and end of each ride. A warm up prepares your body gradually for the exercise session preventing injury and unnecessary fatigue. A cool down slows down the level of activity gradually allowing the body to re-adjust to resting levels and assists recovery. It is recommended that you warm up and cool down in the small chain ring to encourage working at a lighter load.

Drink water before, during and after you ride. If your ride is less than an hour, carry at least one water bottle on the bike. If you are riding for longer than an hour, carry one water bottle and an additional bottle with sports drink.

Adequate nutrition before and after you ride is an important component of endurance training. If you are riding before breakfast, have a light snack that is high in carbohydrates and low in fat 30-60 mins before leaving for your ride. Try and consume some food high in carbohydrates with some protein within 60 minutes of finishing your ride to assist with recovery.

Riding with a group can be motivating and supportive. Some riders feel less vulnerable in a group on open roads and they can also present the opportunity to learn from more experienced riders and develop the skills required to ride with others. Although the program is geared towards training on your own or with like-minded compatriots, it is possible to substitute a group ride for one of the weekly sessions. It is best to find a group ride that will enable you to work within the intensity parameters in the program.



Hill Repeats are best done on a climb that has an average gradient of between 5-9%. Two options are included in the program to allow some flexibility depending on the climbs available within your local area. If there are no climbs that are accessible for this session, it can be done on an undulating course or into the wind on the flat.

Muscle Endurance and VO2 intervals can be done on the flat or slightly undulating course. Select a course that has no interruptions (traffic lights, stop signs etc.) for the duration of the interval. Your cadence will generally be between 80-100rpm for these intervals. If you have a time trial bike, you may choose to use it for these sessions

Tempo Intervals can be done on a flat to undulating course with few interruptions. Ride a larger gear at a cadence of 70-80 rpm and ensure that you pedal hard on any down-hill sections.

Two training **options** are available for each session to provide flexibility in regards to riding locations and patterns. It is recommended that if you complete the 'Hill Repeats' session on Tuesday, you complete the 'VO2 Intervals' session on Thursday. Likewise, if you complete the 'Short Hill Repeats' session on Tuesday, it is recommended you complete the 'Muscle Endurance Intervals' session on Thursday.



Training Program

Week 1 (18/3 to 24/3)

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1		Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 3 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 5 mins zone 4 5 mins zone 1 6 x 2 min zone 5 (3 min recovery) 30-40 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Tempo 2.5 hrs 2 x 20 min zone 3 (10 min recovery) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 3hrs Include longer climbs (15 mins or greater) if possible. Include at least 30 minutes climbing in zone 3+ remaining seated at 70-80 rpm where possible. For most of the ride stay in zone 2.
Option 2		Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 6 x 1km climb zone 4 (3 min recovery) 3 @ 70-75rpm seated 3 @ 50-60rpm seated Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Ride 2hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 3 x 8 min zone 4 (4 min recovery) 30-60 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Group Ride 2.5 hrs Preferably on an undulating course. Include at least 30 minutes working at zone 3 plus.	Endurance 3-4 hrs Just ride easy and don't push it. Focus on getting in the time on the bike. Keep in zone 1-2.

**Week 2 (25/3 to 31/3)**

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1		Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 4 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 6 x 6 min zone 4 (6 min recovery) 15 mins zone 1	Rest	Tempo 2.5 hrs 2 x 25 min zone 3 (10 min recovery) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 3.5hrs Include longer climbs (15 mins or greater) if possible and include at least 40 minutes climbing in zone 3+ remaining seated at 70-80 rpm where possible. For most of the ride stay in zone 2.
Option 2		Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 8 x 1km climb zone 4 (3 min recovery) 4 @ 70-75rpm seated 4 @ 50-60rpm seated Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Ride 2hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 3 x 10 min zone 4 (4 min recovery) 30-45 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Group Ride 2.5 hrs Ride as you feel. Focus on you positioning in the group. It is OK to do a few short efforts but leave something in the tank!	Race 3.5 hrs Include some additional riding in zone 2 after the race to make up the time.

**Week 3 (1/4 to 7/4)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 5 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 5 mins zone 4 5 mins zone 1 8 x 2 min zone 5 (3 min recovery) 30-40 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Tempo 2.5 hrs 2 x 30 min zone 3 (10 min recovery) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 4 hrs Include at least 30 mins of work in zone 4. This work can be done on one climb or across multiple climbs. For most of the ride stay in zone 2.
Option 2	Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 9 x 1km climb zone 4 (3 min recovery) 3 @ 70-75rpm seated 3 @ 50-60rpm seated 3 @ 50-60rpm out of the saddle Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Ride 2.5hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 3 x 12 min zone 4 (4 min recovery) 30-45 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Race 2.5-3.5 hrs Preferably on an undulating course.	Group Ride 2.5 hrs Ride as you feel, preferably on an undulating course.



Week 4 (8/4 to 14/4) – Recovery Week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Endurance Ride 1.5-2 hrs Ride on an undulating course predominantly in zone 2. Extend to zone 4 on the climbs and include some work out of the saddle - over small undulations and during longer climbs.	Rest	Hill Climb Time Trial 2hrs Select a climb that takes at least 12 minutes to complete. After a good warm up, commence the time trial and do not start out too hard. Hold a manageable pace for the first 4 minutes, then hold a hard pace with the goal of finishing flat out over the last minute. If possible, record your average cadence, power and HR as well as the maximum HR reached.	Rest	Tempo 2 hrs 30 min interval in zone 3 Rest of ride in zone 1-2	Endurance 3 hrs Just ride easy and don't push it. Focus on getting in the time on the bike. Keep in zone 1-2.
Option 2	Rest	Group Ride 1.5-2 hrs Ride as you feel. Focus on you positioning in the group. It is OK to do a few short efforts but leave something in the tank!	Rest or Cross Train	30 Minute Time Trial Select a course with no interruptions. After a good warm up, perform a 30 minute time trial where you hold back for the first 5 mins and then gradually build speed for the next 5 mins and try and maintain the highest effort over the last 20 mins. If possible, record your average cadence, power and HR for the last 20 mins.	Rest	Group Ride 2 hrs The goal of today's session is to keep the overall intensity of the workout fairly low. Don't spend much time on the front and focus on working on your group riding skills.	Race 2-3 hrs Have a hit out in a short race like a criterium.

**Week 5 (15/4 to 21/4)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 4 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 including 3-5 x 20 sec bursts to zone 5 within each climb (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2-3	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 10 mins zone 3 5 mins zone 1 5 x 3 min zone 5 (3 min recovery) 30-40 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Tempo 2.5 hrs 40 min interval in zone 3 Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 4.5 hrs Solid ride in the mountains getting in the time on the bike. Do at least three major climbs and ride in zone 4 over two of them. The other climb should be done at a steady tempo pace. Also, do some fast pedalling efforts on the downhills for 3 minutes each reaching 120rpm.
Option 2	Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 6 x 1km climb zone 5 (3 min recovery) Rest of ride in zone 2-3.	Endurance Ride 2-3 hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 5 min zone 4+ 5 min zone 1 2 x 15 min zone 4 (5 min recovery) 30 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Race 3-4 hrs Choose an undulating course if possible. Include some additional riding in zone 2 after the race to make up the time.	Endurance Ride 3-4 hrs Ride on an undulating course predominantly in zone 2. Extend to zone 4 on the climbs and include some work out of the saddle - over small undulations and during longer climbs.

**Week 6 (22/4 to 28/4)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 5 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 including 3-5 x 20 sec bursts to zone 5 within each climb (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2-3	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 10 mins zone 3 5 mins zone 1 5 x 4 min zone 5 (4 min recovery) 30-40 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Tempo 2.5 hrs 50 min interval in zone 3 Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 5 hrs Try to include two mountain climbs, or do 2 x 20-30 minute efforts just below zone 4. Also, get in at least 8 solid hill bursts (between 30 secs to 2 mins) in zone 5. For the rest of the ride, just get in the distance and have fun.
Option 2	Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 8 x 1km climb zone 5 (3 min recovery) Accelerate to the top of each climb (the real top is 15m over the crest of the hill). Rest of ride in zone 2-3.	Endurance Ride 2-3 hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 3 x 15 min zone 4 (5 min recovery) 30 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Group Ride Controlled group ride with a solid 30-60 minute section of working hard. Focus on doing solid turns.	Race 4-5 hrs Choose an undulating course if possible. Include some additional riding in zone 2 after the race to make up the time.

**Week 7 (29/4 to 5/5)**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Hill Repeats 2 hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 5 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 including 3-5 x 20 sec bursts to zone 5 within each climb (3-5 minute recovery on descent) Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2-3	Rest	VO2 Intervals 2hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 10 mins zone 3 5 mins zone 1 5 x 5 min zone 5 (5 min recovery) 30-40 mins zone 1-2	Rest	Tempo 2.5-3 hrs 60 min interval in zone 3 Rest of ride predominantly in zone 2	Endurance Hills 4 hrs Start with 1 hour in zone 2 and then include 2 x 20 minute climbs (or 40 minutes cumulative climbing) in zone 4. Finish the last hour, by accelerating over 5-6 hills (30secs – 2 min).
Option 2	Rest	Short Hill Repeats 2hrs 30 min warm up zone 1-2 9 x 1km climb zone 5 (3 min recovery) Accelerate to the top of each climb. Rest of ride in zone 2-3	Endurance Ride 2-3 hrs	Muscle Endurance Intervals 2 hrs 20 mins zone 1 5 x 1 min spin ups (1 min) building to 120rpm 5 mins zone 1 30 minutes zone 3 10 minutes zone 1 at 90rpm+ 2 x 10 minutes zone 4 at a cadence 5rpm higher than your normal cadence (review the previous week) with 5 minutes recovery NB: Keep the effort steady and smooth	Rest	Group Ride 2.5-3 hrs Group ride on an undulating course. Work on group riding skills including positioning. Incorporate some efforts into zone 5 within the ride. Focus on doing solid turns where able.	Endurance Ride 4 hrs Ride on an undulating course predominantly in zone 2. Include 2 x 20 min efforts in zone 4 and finish the last hour, by accelerating over 5-6 hills (30secs – 2 min) in zone 5.



Week 8 (6/5 to 12/5) – Easy Week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1	Rest	Hill Repeats 1.5-2 hrs 1 x 6-10 min climb zone 4 with an acceleration over the last 500m Rest of the ride in zone 1-2	Rest	Endurance (with bursts) 1.5-2hrs Predominantly zone 2, include 8 x 10 sec bursts with at least 5 min recovery between bursts	Rest	Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic	Rest
Option 2	Rest	Short Hill Repeats 1.5-2hrs 3 x 1km climb zone 5 (3 min recovery) Rest of the ride in zone 1-2	Rest or Cross Train	Group Ride 1.5-2 hrs Keep the overall intensity of the workout fairly low. Don't spend much time on the front and keep your cadence high.	Rest	Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic	Rest

Good Luck!

You have come to the end of the program and you are ready to take to the starting line for the 2018 Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic. In the week leading up to the event you have an easier schedule, so use this time to check over your bike, clothing and gear so that everything is in tip-top condition for the big challenge. Prepare for the event and ensure you have packed the following:

- 2 x water bottles for the bike – one with water and the other with sports drink
- 4 x water bottles for the Feed Stations – two with water and the other two with energy/electrolyte drink (they can be placed in the complimentary event musette and given to your feeder)
- Energy gels and/or snacks (they can be placed in the jersey pocket and/or complimentary event musette and given to your feeder)
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Optional spare wheels (in case of puncture) – labelled with your race number and division. These are placed in the Spares Vehicle for your division
- Cycling shoes, gloves and helmet
- 'Race' or 'Ride' licence for Cycling Australia members
- A well-serviced bike and a bike pump to inflate tyres to the correct pressure for the race!