



Competition-Coaching Introduction Advanced (T2T)

Step 5: Training Camps



**Reference Material
for On Snow Workshop**



PARTNERS IN COACH EDUCATION

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Logistics are key for training camps

Training camps are a staple of every ski program, providing numerous training advantages to athletes and coaches including team building, focused and increased training, new and exciting training venues, opportunities to build coach-athlete relationships, and supplementary education sessions. Holding a successful training camp does require significant planning, scheduling and preparation. The following section covers the details needed to organize and run a successful training camp and some of the considerations a coach should be aware of when planning these events.

5.1 Scheduling Training Camps

Traditionally training camps involve a moderate increase in training volume compared to regular weekly training in a home environment. Training camps provide an opportunity for athletes to leave distractions and obligations at home and adopt more consistent recovery habits such as naps, regular bedtimes, self massage (e.g. foam rolling) and proper nutrition. Coaches should therefore schedule training camps to coincide with high volume weeks on their athlete's year training plans (YTP).

As a general rule of thumb, training camp training volume should be no more than 10% greater than the highest volume training week in an at home training environment. Also the length of the training camp should reflect the relative training history and age of the athletes attending the camp. For T2T athletes training camps of 4 to 6 days are often appropriate, with special considerations given to provincial team camps that occur in unique locations such as on glaciers. If the length and volume of the training camp is a significant departure from regular training volume, it is recommended that the training camp be scheduled at the end of a training cycle allowing for significant rest (rest week) after the completion of the camp. If the training camp is scheduled in the middle of a training cycle, for example due to the conflicting timing of a provincial training camp, coaches should consider changing the length of their training cycle to accommodate.

For example changing the length of a microcycle from 4 weeks (3 weeks on, 1 off) to 3 weeks (2 weeks on, 1 off). This will ensure proper recovery periods following the training camp and ensure that the athlete absorbs the training without becoming fatigued. Alternatively coaches can maintain the regular training cycles, but allow for rest days entering and exiting the training camp, but not a full rest week. The only disadvantage to this approach is that the training load of the camp may inhibit the effectiveness and amount of training athletes are able to complete after the camp until a true rest week is completed. Coaches should be conservative in training following a significant training camp until the athlete has fully recovered.

5.2 Choosing a Training Camp Location



Figure 1: Hiking Camp in Lake Placid (Photo Credit: James Taylor)

Finally you are ready to decide where you want to hold your training camp. Looking at your list of objectives for the camp, you need to find a location that allows for your team to achieve these goals. A camp focusing on rollerskiing requires a plethora of low traffic roads or bike paths with a variety of terrain. On snow camps be held at locations with reliable early snow. Once you have decided on a potential training location, coaches should scout the location in person or speak to another coach who has held a training camp in this location before finalizing the camp. In person reconnaissance is extremely important as it allows the coach to determine the best locations to hold workouts, what routes athletes need to follow for their workouts, the time needed to travel to and from training venues and opportunities for tourist or supplementary activities. All of this information is extremely important for the efficiency and effectiveness of the camp. The training camp will not be as effective without proper scouting, either due to inadequate training opportunities or delays in getting the athletes to and from training locations. Furthermore not scouting venues leaves the athletes vulnerable to hazards such as significant downhill, rough roads or getting lost.

In addition to scouting routes, coaches should provide athletes maps and information about unfamiliar training locations so they know where to go for their workouts. Invariably new training locations lead to athletes getting lost or going off track, but providing the athletes with detailed reconnaissance information these issues can be mitigated. Scouting new locations before a training camp also allows coaches to explore new and interesting training locations. Workouts that you hadn't considered may present themselves with the terrain you discover on

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your scouting trip. It is always important to take advantage of the training opportunities that new locations provide over your home training base. Maybe the area you will be travelling to has better running trails or bigger hills. Either way workouts should be planned to incorporate these factors into the camp to challenge your athletes in new ways.

Training Camp Guides for T2T Athletes:

Volume	~10% greater than high volume week at home training venue
Length of Training Camp	4 to 6 days
How often should training camps be scheduled?	~Once every 2 months

5.3 Organizing safe and effective camps

The next consideration when designing a training camp is the objective of training. The composition of training camps that occur in May, September and November are significantly different. Training objectives should reflect the objectives of the athlete's YTP. For example training camps in May should be composed of a significant proportion of non-specific training (biking, paddling and running) and lower level intensities (e.g. aerobic capacity or anaerobic threshold). Conversely, a training camp in November should be snow based and provide early season reintroduction to on snow volume and technique. It is important to remember that being at a training camp does not mean that athletes have to train on rollerskis or skis for every workout. Training camps should as best as possible reflect the overall training YTP of the athletes participating and stick to these guidelines. It is recommended that once a coach has determined where and when they want to include a training camp, they take the time to write out the type, mode and volume of training athletes should be completing at this training camp. Completing the training camp planning sheet (see page 8) is an excellent way to sort out these details before designing the daily schedule for the training camp.

Non-Training Camp Events

Once the training objectives of the training camp have been established coaches should also consider other non-training elements they wish to add to the camp to take advantage of the training camp environment. Non-training event can include:

Speakers – Coaches can bring in a former or current high performance athlete or professional to provide an inspirational or educational speech to the team.

Hands on Performance Sessions– Organize to have integrated support team experts hold a workshop session with the athletes at the training camp. For example a sport psychologist, nutritionist or strength training expert could provide significant learning opportunities to athletes.

Coach Led Info Sessions – As an expert in all things skiing, you can provide the team with world cup video sessions, technique and physiology discussions or team building activities.

Fun Adventures/Playing Tourist – Training camps should also include some fun time during training and rest. Take advantage of your training location and visit local attractions. Go to the beach, play miniputt, tour the town, the sky is the limit. This provides a great mental break from training and gets the team doing other things together besides skiing.

Training Opportunities – If you are visiting an area with similar ability skiers try to arrange joint training sessions with the local club to provide some variety and new training partners.

Extras – Bringing board games soccer balls, frisbees, and other similar activities can be excellent team building and downtime undertakings.

Developing Camp Schedules

There is no cut and dry way to schedule a camp, but in general the same rules of a standard training week apply. There should be modulation between hard and easy days, variation of workouts and recovery management is paramount.

Two a Day workouts: One significant difference to a regular training week compared to training camps for T2T athletes is the presences of multiple workouts in one day. Scheduling two workouts a day should be done with a significant rest between the first and second workout. To accomplish this goal it is recommend starting the day's first workout early in the morning e.g. 9:00am. The second workout can be scheduled at 4:00pm giving athletes plenty of time to nap and recover from the morning's efforts. Splitting up the workouts in this manner also benefits from scheduling the harder or longer workout in the morning, which spaces the harder workouts apart by 24 hours and allows a full night sleep before the next hard workout. For example athletes could do a 2hr rollerski in the morning followed by a 1 hr road ride in the evening. Road biking is usually a less demanding workout and would help precipitate recovery for the next day's activities.

Planning a Training Camp

Many of the same considerations that go into planning a racing trip go into planning a training camp. All of the same consideration of racing trips such as budgets, fee collection, transportation, accommodations, chaperones and support, food, and equipment are included in training camps. The major difference is that all the events of training camp are under the coach's control. You must build a detailed training plan with all activities, locations start times and provide support and coaching for all of these events.

Support Staff for Training Camps

The role of the lead coach will be different compared to racing trips as they will be more responsible for the organization of the trip details to coincide with the training plan and will also be responsible for scouting the training camp location. Other support staff will be responsible for onsite logistics of athlete transportation, with assistant coaches also helping to run practices.

Below is an Organizational of questions and details you need to consider to plan and execute an excellent training camp.

Training Camp Planning Sheet

Organizational Details	Things to Consider
What are the objectives of the training camp?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What time in the training season will the camp occur? • What type of training opportunities need to be available? • What type of training modes should the athletes be completing? • What equipment will be needed?
Who is going to the training camp?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many athletes? • How many support staff will be required? • What are the roles of the support staff (i.e. lead coach, trip organizer, support staff etc.)? • What 'camp extra' events will be scheduled?
Where and when is the training camp?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the departure and return dates? • Where will you be departing from? • Who will scout the location to ensure that training will be effective and efficient? • What camp extra events are available?
What are the transportation considerations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the team need to fly? • Do vehicles need to be rented? • How will team gear (rollerskis, bikes etc) be transported?
Where will the team be staying?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel, Condos, Billet? • How far are the accommodations from the training locations? • Can the athletes and support staff prepare meals on site or do they have to eat out?
Organizational Details	Things to Consider
What will the event cost?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the answers to the preceding questions develop a budget for the camp. • Use previous year's trips to help with estimates. • Solicit for payment before the camp takes place. • Provide budget transparency to participants.
Communication of trip information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once all roles and logistics have been determined all information must be clearly communicated to trip participants, including equipment preparation, and full training camp schedule provided by the coach.
Onsite logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles of support staff should be determined before departure and a schedule of events established and communicated to all parties. This should include depart times to and from the accommodations to training, expectations around non-training time for the athletes.

Additional consideration when creating a training camp

Be prepared for all types of weather at training camps

- Ease athletes into the week by not increasing volume too quickly on the first couple of days. For many athletes, a training camp represents a significant increase in volume and in turn increases in training stress on the body. Take it steady, there's the whole week ahead of the athletes.
- Be prepared for any type of weather. Conditions can change wildly, over the course of a training camp and even sunny places can get the odd cloudburst. Heat waves are common in the summer, have a flexible schedule that allows for training outside of the heat of the day. Have alternate training options prepared just in case.
- Bring repair kits and extra equipment. Rollerskis, skis, poles, boots and bikes can and will break during training camps. The larger the training camp the more likely this will occur. Bring spare equipment and tools to be able to account for these eventualities.
- If your team has recovery aids (foam rollers, psysio balls, stretching bands), or training aids (med balls, hurdles wobble boards), you may want to consider bringing them to the camp. Recovery aids are especially important as long training hours inevitably result in sore and tight muscles.
- Monitor athletes carefully throughout the camp. In large group training sessions athletes tend to push themselves to do all the training their peers are completing. Make sure that individual needs are not compromised by a large group. Some athlete will require slightly different training schedules and extra days or afternoons off.

Sample Training Camp Plan:

Day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week of: Sept 19	Travel to Lake Placid	M:Classic Z: 1 TWT: 1hr30 Include 30min of double pole	M:Skate roll Z: 1 TWT: 2h Include 10 x 10sec sprints with 3min rest	M: Skibound Z: 3-4 TWT: 2hrs Int: 4x7min Rest: 4min	M: Skate Roll Z: 1 TWT: 20hrs 30min Long Continuous workout. Coaches running support in truck	M: Classic Roll Z: 1 TWT: 3hrs Long Continuous workout. Coaches running support in truck.
Total Hours: 14						
AM Workouts leave at 9:00						
Location/ Travel time		River road/20min	Westville rd/ 30min	Whiteface mt/20min	Whiteface loop/20min	Keen loop/30min
PM Workouts start at 4:00pm	M:Skiiwalk Z: 1 TWT: 1hr	M:Skate Z: 1 TWT: 1hr Include 30min of legs only	M:Classic Z: 1 TWT: 1hr Focus on Technique	Off Team mini putt	M:Run/Skiwalk Z: 1 TWT: 1hr. Easy recovery activity	Paint Ball/ return home.
Location/ Travel time	Cascade mt./10min	Valley rd/ 10min	Valley rd/ 10min	In town/5min	From chalet, forest trails	In town/5min
Evening event	Team meeting at 8:30pm	Video Technique review	Team information session. World cup video	Speaker: Jan Hastings, sport psychologist	Stretching session with team	

Notes: Afternoon down time at all chalets in between 1:00 and 2:30. No tv or loud activities during this period. All chalets will have foam rollers and recovery drink. Dinner and evening events will be in chalet #5. Dinner served at 7:00pm, evening activity starts at 8:30. Transportation to training locations will be with parent that drove you to Lake Placid. All training equipment will be transported in the back of Steve's truck.

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Appendix 1: Sample Camp Planning Work Sheet.

Day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week of:						
Total Hours:						
AM Workouts leave at _____						
Location/ Travel time						
PM Workouts leave at _____						
Location/ Travel time						
Evening event						

Appendix 2: Training Camp Planning Sheet

Organizational Details	Ideas
What are the objectives of the training camp?	
Who is going to the training camp?	
Where and when is the training camp?	
What are the transportation considerations?	
Where will the team be staying?	
What will the event cost?	
Communication of trip information	
Onsite logistics	

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References:

CCC Athlete Matrix (2014). Long Term Athlete Development. Retrieved from <http://www.cccski.com/Programs/Coaching-Development/Athlete-Development-Matrix.aspx>

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