



Indoor Cycle Instructor PROfile Bad A*s Intervals

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Training Type: High-Intensity Intervals

Total Class Length: 30 minute work set + your additions for a 45/60 minute class

Ride Profile:

I call this workout Bad A*s Intervals because it's a hardcore interval workout & it features one of my favorite songs, "Bad A*s". This is a 3-stage workout where each stage of intervals becomes progressively harder, but each stage also gets shorter (stage 1 is 6 minutes, stage 2 is 5 minutes & stage 3 is 4 minutes). The intervals get tougher because of the changes in the work to recovery ratios - stage 1 are 1:2 ratios (20 seconds on 40 seconds off 6x), stage 2 are 1:1 ratios (30 seconds on 30 seconds off 5x) and the final stage is the mother of all 2:1 ratios, a Tabata (20 seconds on 10 seconds off 8x).

This workout is about 30 minutes because it is based on the concept that the higher the intensity the shorter the workout can be. However, you could add a 15 minute stage if you wanted to amend for a 45 minute profile - my suggestion would be a hill or two but it should be placed before the interval work because the last interval set will be about "emptying the tanks" so if you coach it right & your students ride it right, they will have nothing left afterwards. Although the last interval set is coached at a wide cadence range to allow the rider to customize their pace for maximal power, a majority of this ride is in the higher cadence ranges of 90-100RPM. There is a ton of research to support 90RPMs as an optimal cadence for power output in trained cyclists, but in recreational cyclists, maximal power is often in a lower range like 60-70RPMs. Therefore, this workout is designed to help push our students to get stronger at higher cadence by approaching that speed through interval work (because sustaining a fast pace with heavy resistance takes a lot of strength and endurance, pushing high intensity for a short duration is oftentimes more manageable for the novice rider).

I teach this ride on the Schwinn Echelon Console, which allows the rider to see wattage (in real time as well as their averages & maxes), RPM, MPH, HR, caloric expenditure (based on wattage), time & distance (predicted via wattage). On the first interval set the goal is to "go for feeling" and really focus on rate of perceived exertion (RPE). During stage 2 the rider will go for distance by using the stage timer, and on the last stage they will go for maximal power. It is important to note that on some indoor cycles that give distance based on RPMs (and not on wattage), students get rewarded for pedaling faster and not for pedaling harder in which case the "going for distance" goal should not be used.

This ride is taught on a scale of 1-5. 1 easy (50-65% HR max), 2 moderate (65-75%), 3 hard (75-80%), 4 very hard (80-85%), or 5 all out (85%+). However, it will be essential in this workout to cue less on numbers and coach them more with descriptions of feeling. Because you will be using the console, if you give too many numbers it will only confuse students and ultimately is not as powerful as having descriptive ways of coaching intensity.

Warm-up:

The 9.5 minute warm-up consists of 3 minutes of easy intensity at 90-100RPMs, 3 minutes of moderate intensity at 80-90RPMs, and 3.5 minutes of moderate intensity at 70-80RPMs that includes 2 30 second efforts (1 hard & 1 very hard) & a 45 second effort in which the last 15 seconds you go breathless.

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Song 1: Notorious B.I.G. 90-100RPMs Easy (3:11)- Coach students to find just enough resistance where they can get the legs moving quickly but still feel comfortable. This is a great opportunity to let them feel that 90-100RPMs can be relatively easy with light resistance, but that later they will be at the same speed with a much harder effort because the resistance will be heavy. I like to always have a way to get across the message that RPM in the absence of resistance will not be an effective workout & that RPMs alone do not determine ones intensity.

Song 2: Green day Basket Case 80-90rpms Moderate (3:03) - Cue riders to add resistance until they have to slow down. Have them notice that even though the RPMs have decreased, their wattage has increased. Let them know they have 3 opportunities coming up to " test their standing legs", 20 seconds each (00:38, 1:24, 2:21). Before the first push, say, "feel how light you are in your grip, that shouldn't change when you get up". Before the second one say "can you maintain the same wattage you have while in the saddle when you get up"? ". Before second push say "if you noticed your wattage drop on the last push add resistance when you stand so it matches where you are now".

Song 3: What I wouldn't do by Serena Ryder (3:40) - add some resistance so it feels like you need to slow down to 70-80RPMs, still moderate but borderline moderate and hard work, preparing for 2 hard efforts (30 seconds each, 0:37 & 1:39) and then last effort is 45 seconds (30 hard, and last 15 anaerobic, 2:38).

Song 4: Marcatto string madness by Jorge Quintero (1:16). Use this 75 second long song to let them recover from the sprint, and to give the students a big picture perspective as to the class expectations. I like to ask the class, "You all want the good news or the bad news"? – Bad news is there are 3 interval sets today and each one gets tougher, but the good news is each one will get shorter! First set is 20/40 6x, second set is 30/30 5x, and last set is 20/10 8x. Also let them know that after each set they will get about 3 minutes to recover.

Stage 1:

Song 5: Paradise City by Guns & Roses (6:46) - Before this round (as they recover in song 4) divide the room into 3 teams. I literally get off bike and set up the teams & get them pumped up to be working as a group. They get the first 45 seconds of the song to sync up with the beat and find 90-100RPMs. Remind them that they are going for all out effort for 20 seconds followed by recovery for 40 seconds, 6x. The goal is to maintain the cadence and increase the resistance for the push and decrease for the recovery. Team 1 starts at 00:45 and goes for 20, followed by team 2, and then team 3. Your goal as the coach for this round is to cue them via RPE. This means there's a lot of coaching high intensity descriptions & recovery descriptions. Here are some examples:

High Intensity cues:

1- if you are not sure you're working hard enough there are 3 ways to check: your mouth is open, you see droplets of sweat dangling on the tip of your nose, and if I asked you to smile right now you'd be pissed!

2-If you are not sure you can make it through this interval, great! If you are positive you can finish this then you are missing the mark.

3-Your RPMs are an indicator of how fast or how slow your legs are moving -not how hard you are working.

4- I don't need to look at your legs to know if you are working hard, I only need to look at your face.

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Recovery Cues:

- 1- Is your heart rate coming down between intervals?
- 2- Can you take a full deep breath before the next push begins?
- 3- if the recovery feels too long you can go harder on the next push.
- 4- breath into the front, sides, & backs of your lungs.

Song 6 – Cups (“When I’m gone) by Anna Kendrick (2:08) 100-110RPMS -This is the beginning of their 3 minute and 30 second recovery. Cue everyone to find a partner. Have the riders decide who is rider 1 and who is rider 2 (if there’s a group of 3 then 2 will ride together). This round they will take turns racing their partner down the road. At all times the goal is to keep the same speed as their teammate but they switch between 1 rider working for the speed and the other recovering at the speed (again reiterating to students that you can have the exact same speed but at a variety of different intensities).

Stage 2:

Song 7 - Bad A*s by Aphrodite & Mickey Finn (6:39)- Take the first 90 seconds to finish recovery and to find the 90-100RPM range again by using the music. Remind them that these are tougher than the first set of intervals. These are 30 seconds in and 30 seconds out - the sprint is therefore longer and the recovery is now shorter, but they are not alone, they can cheer on their riding buddy whenever they can catch their breath. Cue rider 1 to turn up their resistance and go as hard as they can for 30 seconds at the 1:30 mark of the music... And then it's back and forth 5x. This round uses the stage timer on the console to measure the rider's distance. Cue riders to click their stage timer right as they begin their 30-second effort in order to see how far they can go in 30 seconds. Remind them to check their distance after their first bout and then each interval to follow -their goal is to meet or beat that distance. Coach them that the harder they work (the higher their wattage) the further they will go.

Song 8 – Royals by Lorde (3:10) 80-90RPMS – 3 minutes to recover and setup the last interval set. Have students double click the top of console to check their maximum wattage thus far in the workout. Their goal is to hit that as many times as they can in the last interval set. Explain that because this round is a 2:1 ratio and their recovery will therefore be half as long as the interval that it will be extremely challenging. Remind them that it is even more challenging being that it is hitting them at the end of the ride when fatigue is really setting in. Make them aware that they might “fail” at hitting their max wattage every time, but in this case “failure would be success”. This round is mostly about giving whatever you have left to give – figuring out how much gas you’ve got left in the tanks and make sure that by the last interval you are on “E”.

Stage 3:

Song 9 – Renegades of Funk by Rage Against the machine (4:34). This is the only song where the beat of the music doesn't set the pedal pace; instead the song is based on the aggressive feeling of a Tabata set. Cue riders to keep an eye on their console to make sure they stay within the cadence range. On this one explain that you can be anywhere from 70-100RPMS as this is optimal range for power, but it is up to them to figure out the speed and resistance ratio they need to hit their best wattage. They sprint for 20 seconds and recover for 10 seconds, 8x. Using a timer like the Ultra Timer app is highly recommended on this round for you as a coach to be able to keep good time. Start the first 20-second sprint at 00:30 in the song.