



Indoor Cycle Instructor PROfile Epic Wine Country DVD

Created by **John Macgowan, Instructor ICI/PRO**

Training Type: **Muscular Endurance & Climbing Strength Training**

Working HR Zones: **T1 (Aerobic Threshold) to T2 (Anaerobic Threshold AT/LT)**

Total Class Length: **60 minutes**

Profile Description

This profile is the companion Audio PROfile for the Epic Planet DVD *Epic Wine Country*. PRO members can purchase this DVD at a 30% discount using Coupon code **ICIPRO30%** at <http://epicplanet.tv/>

Objective and Intensity

Epic Wine Country DVD is the basis for an exciting and entertaining class. It features a 20 minute endurance section where you can conduct a T1 Aerobic Threshold assessment and pre-fatigue everyone's legs, during the flats, before heading into the hills. The 25 minute mark signals the start of 2 major climbs of 9:22 and 10:56 with very little recovery in between. The key to your student's success on these long climbs is to balance the work between their cardiovascular and muscular systems. To do so, we want to encourage everyone to keep their cadence up above 70 RPM for the entire class.

Music Selection

The structure of the class is in the video! In general, I like to use music that communicates a cadence of 80 – 90 RPM for the early flat sections. Once we get to the hills, the tempo slows to the mid 70's RPM range to help you, and your class, maintain a T2 (Anaerobic Threshold AT/LT) intensity.

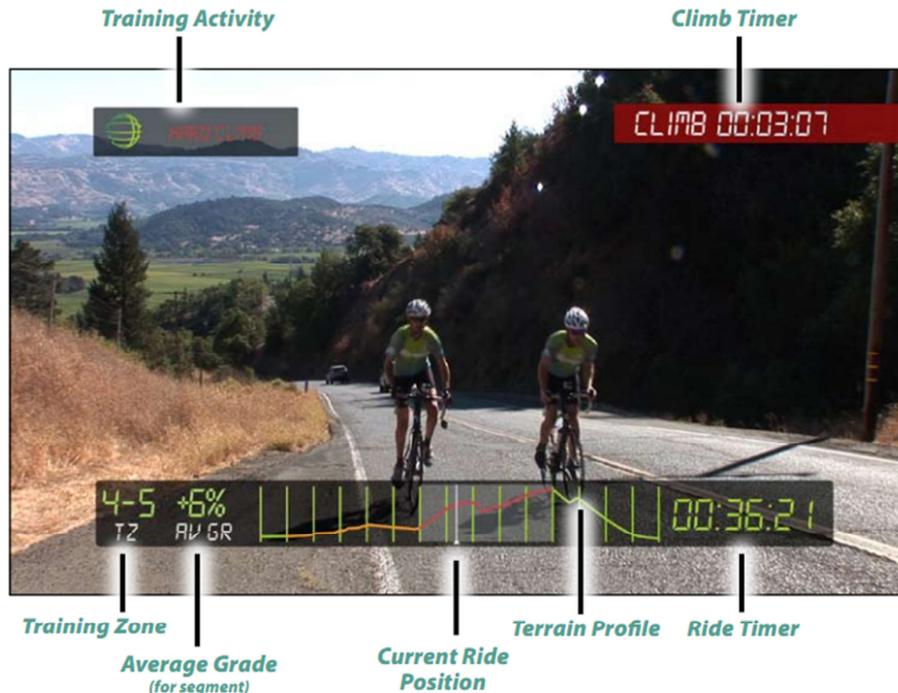
NOTE: I find it maddening to time my playlist music perfectly to the video. Focus your efforts at having the tempo change at the 25:00 mark and then run with it. If you have good music, at around 74 RPM, It always seems to work out 😊

Suggestions for teaching with video

When I teach to a video, I always ride in the front row, along with my class. I do this for multiple reasons:

- If you are up front, facing the class, you can't see the information presented in the video.
- We ride as a team. I find this a wonderful chance to encourage everyone ride near me, minimizing students scattered around the room.
- The closeness adds a level of energy that I find difficult to replicate when I'm teaching *at them*.
- We have mirrors in the front of our studio and I position myself so I can see everyone and keep an eye on them.
- Riding in front of a mirror helps me to see my own form.
- It gives me a chance to hear what my class hears and learn the proper volume for my mic and music.

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Information available in this video.

The graphic across the bottom, from left to right, communicates:

- Training Zones – I find these confusing as they don't reflect the Training Zones I use when I teach. I ask that everyone ignore this.
- % Average Grade – Here's your chance to help everyone understand how steep the hill is, as most people have no clue what % grade = a steep climb. I personally like to draw comparisons with local roads in our area but you may want to describe them this way:
 - +1-2% is when you feel you are going up.
 - +3% is the safe limit for railroad tracks over mountain passes.
 - +4% is considered to be a decent climb that will have your legs burning and HR at T2 (AT/LT) if it's of any length.
 - +6% is the maximum grade of a modern highway and is a very serious climb that has you in your granny gear, out of the saddle and questioning whether or not you will make it to the top.
 - +8% (or more) is *get-off-and-walk* for all but the Billy goats in your class.
- Current Ride Position – The distance between each vertical line is 5 minutes. I find that this is easily understood by my class and helps them gauge their efforts so that they finish feeling like they were successful.
- Terrain Profile -
- Ride Timer – Shows the time elapsed. The last climb ends at 55 minutes
- Climb counter (top RH corner) – Counts down the time remaining in each climb

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Introduction and Initial Warm-up (5 Minutes)

I begin by introducing myself and explaining the profile; *hi, my name is John Macgowan and today I have a special treat for everyone! We will be riding to this video set in the hills around Wine Country in Napa California. Over the first 25 minutes we will get you warmed up and I will take you through a simple assessment of your aerobic threshold Heart Rate. Then we will ride along with the video over rolling hills working aerobically as we prepare for the two major climbs! Not to worry. I see all of you as accomplished endurance athletes and believe each of you will be able to ride and finish with us at the top. I ask everyone to find a comfortable cadence and add enough load into your pedals so you are feeling productive with each pedal stroke.*

T1 (Aerobic Threshold) Assessment (5 Minutes)

I like to include a simple assessment in every class I teach. I feel it helps my students connect with the feelings of crossing metabolic thresholds and gets them thinking about distinct Training Zones; below T1, between T1 & T2 and above T2. The HR training zones I'm used to working with has T1 at the base of Zone 3 and T2 AT/LT at the top of Zone 3.

In the past I have referred to T1 as your JRA (Just Riding Along) heart rate. There's a lot of research that identifies this first threshold like the *Foster talk-test*. I have found, over years of teaching endurance classes, that it's easiest for my student to feel T1 early in their warm-up. This assessment can become part of the typical warm-up surges or accelerations you are normally teaching to raise your student's level of intensity.

Instead of using a subjective RPE number, I prefer to give everyone a tangible (objective) feeling that they can relate to the range of HRs T1 and T2.

They are:

- Below T1 = you can breathe comfortably through just your nose.
- Just over T1 = you start to feel the need to exhale through your mouth
- Between T1 & T2 = a combination of nose and mouth breathing
- T2 = mouth breathing only

If this is new to you please give it a try on your own and in your next class. Then let me know your experiences.

The assessment:

*I explain that beyond warming the body, what we are trying to accomplish is transitioning from a resting state, to our bodies becoming aerobic. I now want everyone to find their **Aerobic Threshold. For most of us this is the place where you can no longer breathe in and out only through your nose.** I would like you to close your mouth and get comfortable breathing just through your nose. Next we are going to maintain our pedal speed (~90RPM) and add enough load to push your intensity to the point where you feel some distress / discomfort breathing only through your nose...now hold your effort there. Wait for it. You will begin to feel your body adapting and with it some comfort. Many of you will be able to close your mouth again. When that happens, that is your signal to add another gear, and bring yourself back to that place where you can breathe in through your nose, but need to exhale out your mouth.*

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For those of you with a HR monitor, each time you get to the point where you feel the transition in your breathing, check your HR. For many of you with an understanding of your Anaerobic Threshold AT/LT you should be seeing a number that is about 10% less than your typical AT/LT. I'm trying to get all of you to understand the feeling of crossing this metabolic threshold.

Over the next 5 minutes we repeat this process of adding load, feeling the additional stress, the transition in our breathing, waiting for our bodies to adapt, feeling the comfort and then we do it again. I'm encouraging everyone to work independently, **cueing themselves based on how they are feeling and responding**. The process should have everyone warm, working above T1 (into Zone 3) and ready to work.

Class Format

NOTE: You can teach this DVD two ways; recoveries below T1 (Interval Format) or recoveries down to just above T1 (Endurance Format). Either way if you guided them through the T1 assessment your class will know the feeling and be able to maintain your intended recovery intensity.

Rollers and Fast Flats

10 minutes into class I tell everyone; *the next 15 minutes are just to prepare you for the climbs* – I point out the terrain graph where it changes from orange to red – *and really just a continuation of our warm-up.*

I bring their attention to the video (I skipped the first two short climbs) and ask them to pay attention to the top RH corner of the screen.

Over the next ~7 minutes that are 3 short climbs (rollers) where I coach everyone to maintain cadence and add more load than they think they should – but not lose their form or pedal speed. The object is a series of Intervals, each one pushing closer to T2.

Next come the Fast Flats. You can choose where you want everyone to work, but I like to coach it as a sub threshold endurance pace. Your music should still be at a tempo of ~90 RPM. *To stay with us you need to be working at an intensity near the place where you must breathe in and out through your mouth. That's the feeling that you are close to your anaerobic threshold, what I will refer to as T2 or your second threshold. Maintain your cadence and manage your effort using your load.*

After a minute (and then multiple times during the class) I ask them;

- *Is your intensity where you're supposed to be? Test it by closing your mouth. Did you feel an almost immediate need to open it? If not, you're not keeping up us...*
- *Riding smooth? (using smooth pedals, with no discernable push down)*
- *Riding solid? (smooth pedals = minimal upper body movement)*
- *Riding strong? (good posture – flat back – relaxed upper body – communicating strength through your body language)*

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25:00 – The Climbs

Your music should noticeably slow to ~ 74 RPM and with you can tell your class; *The Fun Starts Now!*

We have 25 minutes of climbing in front of us and it's important that we keep a nice steady cadence to balance the energy we are creating from the muscles in our legs and the speed you deliver it.

I want everyone to first find the tempo of this music and lock into it. Your plan is to maintain this cadence for the next 9 minutes.

Now begin to add your hill until you feel you need to stand... but we don't. The feeling in your legs should match what you are seeing on the screen.

Pay close attention to your breathing as a gauge of how hard you are working. This is mouth only breathing, with you at T2 - your anaerobic threshold.

Two minutes in we do another self-check:

- *Is your intensity where you're supposed to be? Test it by closing your mouth. Did you feel an almost immediate need to open it? If not, you're not keeping up us...*
- *Riding smooth? (using smooth pedals, with no discernable push down)*
- *Riding solid? (smooth pedals = minimal upper body movement)*
- *Riding strong? (good posture – flat back – relaxed upper body – communicating strength through your body language)*

My objective is for everyone to climb at T2 AT/LT.

I try to keep my coaching to a minimum on the climbs. The only thing I tend to correct is when I see someone with too slow a cadence. You decide if you want to keep them in the saddle for the whole climb or not.

The first climb ends at 34:28 – many times I will have them leave their load in place and coach them through a standing, slow pedal recovery (30-40 RPM). They will welcome the chance to stand and the slower cadence will bring down their HRs to the recovery intensity you have planned.

NOTE: If you are teaching with conventional friction resistance cycles (not magnetic) this slow cadence is a great time to challenge your students. I tell them; *without the benefit of the flywheel momentum, your pedals should feel very heavy right now... **heavy to the point of you not being able to turn them.** Trust your legs! I would like everyone to sit down and again add load to the point you feel you need to stand.*

With their load still in place have them stand and accelerate back to the tempo of the music (74 RPM) through the short roller at 37:13 – there is no recovery at the end of this. Watch for the sharp turn to the right which signals the start of the second big climb. You may want to alternate standing and seated here for the next 10:56. Two minutes in it's time for another check where I ask them to assess their breathing, keeping HR at T2.

The last climb ends at the 55:00 mark. I use the downhill as the recovery that you follow up with your class ending. Enjoy!

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Wine Country DVD Playlist

Training Prefixes H = 74RPM, E = 86RPM, D = 90RPM

Name Time Album Artist

Ruska 4:40 Apocalyptica Apocalyptica

D: Bad Stone 5:10 Vegas The Crystal Method

D: 47 Burning Violins 5:20 Reclaimed Property Volume 1 Kalabi

D: Sly (Eternal Feedback) 6:26 No Protection Massive Attack vs. Mad Professor

E: Escapism (Original Mix) 5:27 Moleman EP Moleman

H: Pushing West 5:31 Pushing West Machine Love

H+ Home 5:43 Ultra Depeche Mode

H: Phantom_Kicks_Mix 6:48 Mix From Free Music Friday 4/8

H: Strangle Hold 8:25 Ted Nugent

D: Kalandéro 5:19 Alegría Cirque du Soleil

C/D Out/In 3:19 The Golden Hum Remy Zero

If you missed this last time...

How you cue the addition of intensity is very important in an Indoor Cycling class of any format and its different dependent on the type of Indoor Cycle you're riding.

- With any Indoor Cycle that uses friction to create the resistance I suggest adding resistance to cadence. Class is pedaling ~ 90 RPM and then add load to reach intended intensity.
- If you are riding a Keiser M3 or Schwinn AC with magnetic resistance you can add resistance to cadence *or you can do the exact opposite*, adding cadence to resistance. *You've never heard that before, have you?* It's why I see magnetic resistance as being superior.

Here's why:

My biggest struggle (besides getting people to be quiet) is how to best communicate load in class. If you have been paying attention in class you have noticed that when you slow your pedals they get heavier. We have all seen the person who was supposed to be accelerating out of a climb start bouncing like they have no resistance at all. This happens because as your student pedals faster, the added centrifugal force overcomes the fixed amount of friction, making it easier and easier to pedal, until it's like they have no load at all. Not Good ☹ Cycling is all about endurance. We want them to endure it! The solution is to establish leg speed and then adjust load to regulate the work they are doing.

Indoor cycles with magnetic resistance (M3 and AC) work very differently. As the speed of the flywheel increases the *Eddy Currents* that create the load increase as well. So these Indoor Cycles actually get harder to pedal as cadence increases, just like a real bicycle. So with these types of cycles cue your students to set there load at a slower RPM and then simply increase cadence to add intensity. *Note: I've taken over a dozen classes on these bikes and have never heard the Instructor mention this. You will be the first in your club.*