



Indoor Cycle Instructor PROFILE

Exploring Aerobic Fitness

Created by **Tom Scotto / Cycling Fusion**
Training Type: **Beginner Class**
Working HR Zones: **Zone 1 to Zone 3**
Cycling Specificity: **2**
Total Class Length: **30 minutes**

PROFILE DESCRIPTION

A class for the beginner. The ride provides an opportunity to explore the affects of cadence and resistance as riders discover their aerobic fitness. The use of cadence and resistance is presented in a simple way so riders are not overwhelmed but trying to focus on too many commands at one time.

OBJECTIVE AND INTENSITY

The objective of this profile is to allow riders to get acquainted with how leg speed and adding resistance affects the intensity of which they ride. Since this is a beginner class, it is even more important that we stress that each person needs to work at their own pace and speed. They should avoid comparing themselves to others.

Riders can experience a wide range of intensities depending on how hard they push during each effort. The drills that utilize leg speed have the greatest potential for increasing heart rate exponentially. The goal is not to push riders to their limits, but help them learn how their body responds and enjoy the fitness benefits of indoor cycling.

Teach off the Bike

This is a perfect class to spend time teaching off the bike. Walk around the room to meet riders and learn their names. Since this is a beginner class, many riders will need encouragement and help with form and technique. Your engagement with them will make them want to return and stay a part of the group.

Lead from Behind

It is common in many indoor cycling settings for the instructor to be that inspiring figure of fitness at the front of the room. This may not be the most effective posture for inspiring beginner riders. I recommended leading from behind. This is where you the instructor takes pace with the weakest rider in the room. Not in a patronizing way, but similar to riding with the last rider at the end of a century ride to keep them encouraged and energized.

THE PROFILE

WARM-UP (Part 1)

Length: 6:00 Minutes

Intensity: 50-60% PE / Zone 1-2

Cadence: 70-80 RPM

Try to keep the intro of the ride simple and light. There are not many elements to the ride and you may be able to cover them in more detail as you start each drill. Normally, we attempt to maintain a leg speed closer to 85 RPM during the warm-up, but keep in mind that your riders are beginners. They may even find 80 RPM challenging. Let them warm-up at their own pace and leg speed.

“Today our workout is going to be fun and easy to follow. We are going to first experiment with the speed of our legs and then with how much resistance we add to the bike.”

“The most important thing to remember is to work at your own pace. If you find your heart rate or breathing becoming uncomfortable, it is OK to back off and recover and rejoin when you are ready.”

“Also, remember that form is more important than performance. It is better to use less resistance or less leg speed if trying to do more will cause you to lose your form. If you get tired at any point, reduce your effort and focus on your form until you recover.”

Give Me More - Speed

Length: 4:30 Minutes

Intensity: 60-75% PE / Zone 2-3

Cadence: 60 – 80+ RPM

This is a simple drill where riders choose a slower starting leg speed and then increase their speed a small amount every 15 seconds for 1 minute. After a minute they return to their starting speed and do it again. I recommend starting at 60 RPM and use music to match the tempo so everyone can hear the pulse of the starting speed. This will also create some tension and excitement as they pedal faster than the rhythm of the music.

“This next drill is not about going as fast as you can but just adding a bit more speed to your legs.”

“Remember, leg speed is a skill that must be trained and each of us will have different amounts of it. So don't judge yourself by what the rider next to you is doing. Work within yourself and challenge yourself.”

“We will return to this easier leg speed after each minute. If you get tired or need more rest, let another minute pass and then try to join in again.”

Give Me More - Resistance

Length: 4:30 Minutes

Intensity: 60-80% PE / Zone 2-4

Cadence: 70 – 90 RPM

The goal of this drill is to have riders hold a steady leg speed and then add small amounts of resistance without slowing down. Music that has a faster tempo (80+ RPM) can help keep the excitement and encourage riders to maintain their cadence. Have riders begin by finding a leg speed that “they” consider comfortably fast and then add light, noticeable resistance. This will be their starting point.

“This drill is very similar to what we just did except this time we will add small amounts of resistance every 15 seconds for one minute. At the end of each minute we will return to our starting point and try it again.”

“Don’t add to much resistance. If you feel your legs beginning to slow down you have either added more resistance than you can handle or you are getting tired. Either back off some resistance on the legs or skip a minute of the drill to give yourself time to recover.

“Remember ‘Quality over Quantity’. It is better to do a few excellent efforts with good form than a lot of mediocre efforts with bad form.”

CAUTION – RESISTANCE IS RELATIVE

Regardless of whether your bikes have a resistance nob or gears, avoid telling riders to add a certain amount of resistance such as “add a ¼ turn or 1 gear”. Depending on the wear and tear (and other factors) of each bike a ¼ turn on one bike can feel like 2 full turns on another and visa-versa. This is a beginner class with a wide range of fitness and muscle conditioning. Let riders add what they feel is noticeable and appropriate.

RECOVERY

Length: 3:00 Minutes

Intensity: 50-60% PE / Zone 1-2

Cadence: 70 - 80 RPM

[Lower the Music Volume] This is a great time to ask people how they felt or if they have learned or experienced anything specific.

“Did you feel your heart rate increased more when you added leg speed or resistance?”

“Which drill had a greater impact on your ability to breath?”

“Which drill felt harder on your leg muscles?”

“Does anyone have questions?”

Give Me More...

Length: 6:00 Minutes

Intensity: 70-80% PE / Zone 3-4

Cadence: 60 – 100 RPM

This drill combines both of the earlier drills. For the first 30 seconds riders will pedal at their starting point at a comfortably fast leg speed with light, noticeable resistance. Riders will then increase their leg speed for the next 15 seconds and then add a small amount of resistance for the last 15 seconds for a total of 1 minute. The class will then return to their starting point and repeat the effort.

“Now we will get a chance to incorporate both of the drills we did earlier – Adding leg speed AND adding resistance.”

“This is a longer song than what we’ve done previously (6 minutes), so there is a greater chance you may get tired of fatigued in the last minutes. Pace yourself and remember ‘quality over quantity’.”

STANDING OPTION: Many beginner riders can struggle to pedal standing. You can give them an option to stand for the last 15 seconds of each minute. Don’t make it sound as if this is the “strong” or “better” option. This can make those still unable to stand feel unsuccessful. Ask them to “give it a try” if they are willing and feel up to it.

COOL-DOWN / STRETCH

Length: 6:00 Minutes

Intensity: 50-60% PE / Zone 1

Cadence: 70 - 80 RPM

It is always a challenge to devote time to stretching during shorter classes and especially a 30-minute beginner class. Keep in mind that it is not so much about providing the hardest workout but rather giving the rider a good (successful) experience and teaching them good habits as they continue. I sometimes use more of the cool-down time ON the bike with a few lower-body stretches at the end. I use the on-the-bike time to provide a quick recap of what we did and ask again if there were any questions. If riders were just setup on their bikes, this may be an opportunity to ask if they still feel comfortable. Address any issues riders may have with their form and/or fitness. These beginner groups tend to be smaller and are often a better environment to talk and discuss what people felt during the class.

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE!

You will notice that I avoided much of the heavy “technical” words during this profile. One of the bigger challenges for instructors will be to change the way we speak and the words we use when addressing beginners. It may be considered cool to use cycling-isms during our regular classes, but beginners may be intimidated or find it hard to connect when they don’t understand what the instructor means by certain phrases or illustrations. DON’T talk down to them, just use plain English and keep it simple.

THE MUSIC:

Song Title	Time	BPM	Artist	Focus
Feels Like Home	6:10	83	DJ Demi	Warm-Up
Buster Voodoo	4:24	60	Rodrigo y Gabriela	Give me More Speed
Whatever	3:03	95	Iris	Give Me More Resistance
Clique	3:03	94	Rom Di Prisco	Recovery
Back to Reality	6:13	64	Chainsaw Therapy	Give Me More
Sunrise Sunset	6:12	88	Honeyroot	Cool-Down / Stretch

Have FUN!