

TRAINING TIPS FOR THE ADA NEW ENGLAND CLASSIC
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You've registered for the NEC. NOW WHAT?? You tell yourself "it's four months away, no problem; I'll start to train in June. I can ride a bike 550 miles in seven days. No big deal." Why not? After all you've been riding a bike since you were a kid. THINK AGAIN!!! If you want to ride the seven day NEC, you need to train.

That means riding.....*a LOT*.

WHY TRAIN?

Training is critical to any long distance bike ride. This is not a ride to your grandmother's house. Training prepares you for being in the saddle for several hours and many miles at one time. By training in all kinds of weather, you'll be prepared for the changing New England weather – rain, wind, heat. You'll be prepared for the long hills and mountain passes..... New England is *NOT* flat! You'll enjoy the tour and the camaraderie of fellow cyclists when you're prepared for the miles that lie ahead.

WHY TRAIN NOW?

You need to build a base so that by the middle to end of May you will be ready and able to ramp up the distance. There are no shortcuts to putting in base miles. You simply have to ride, ride, ride and ride some more. By the end of base training you should be able to ride one third to one half of the longest day of the NEC (approximately 50 miles).

You should be prepared to ride 70 -75 miles on back to back days at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of the NEC. This takes time to build up to. As soon as possible begin your training; slowly. You should consider short rides during the week and longer rides on the weekends. Start with 15-20 miles per day, 3- 4 times per week and increase your mileage by about 15% - 20% each week. To give your body a chance to recover, you should take time to rest every 4 - 5 days.

You are training for endurance. Therefore the weekly long rides are the most important aspect of your training. The long rides train your muscles and cardiovascular system as well as your digestive system.

The weekly long rides should simulate the NEC as much as possible. This means hills, LOTS of hills; long hills, short steep hills, long steep hills, gently rolling hills and long gentle climbs. The NEC has rest stops about every 15 - 20 miles. During your training rides, stop approximately every 15 - 20 miles to rest and refuel your "gas tank" as though you were already riding the NEC. Be sure to eat and drink. This is *NOT* optional.

In addition to training on your bicycle, you should consider weight training either in the gym or at home. Bicycling requires the use of nearly every muscle in your body. In particular are the "core" (abdomen and back), trapezius (upper back and neck) muscles. The core and neck muscles are what hold you upright on the bike for many hours at a time. Consider doing stability ball crunches, oblique crunches, planks, hanging leg raises. For more ideas on core exercises/training, Google "core exercises" or "core workouts". Train your legs with leg presses, squats, walking lunges, leg curls, etc.

The **NEC 150** riders should consider training similarly, with less emphasis on the hills. The primary focus will be on endurance and being able to ride back-to-back days of approximately 60- 70 miles each day.