

## Cyclists – check out your ‘engines’

In the technology age, many cyclists fret over shaving grams from components to make their bicycle lighter . . . . and hopefully faster. Often overlooked is the condition of the engine – your body. Riders, wanting feedback on their on their “motor” to integrate body and bicycle, can go through lactate threshold (LT) testing.



Frank Johnson of Boise said he got tested to “help me train smarter and more efficiently. Like everyone, my time on the bicycle is limited.” Prior to LT testing, Johnson said he would usually just hop on his bike and pedal his chosen route as hard as he could.

Johnson said that his past approach was “a little draining”, either pedaling hard and gasping for air or worried that he was not going hard enough. After getting LT feedback, Johnson hopes “to be faster, fresher, more motivated, and have more fun.”

Corey Hart, M.S., of Physio Performance Lab/G-Fit Studio in Boise, said that LT testing helps “make it relative for each individual” and to see where they are “typically operating at.” All too often, Hart said, people get a training tape but, “It’s one person giving the same training to everyone out there. A majority has a lot of misinformation.”

For testing, cyclists pedal at a given pace. Periodically, Hart takes a drop or two of blood from the ear lobe. When the lactate level rises, it means the person is using more carbohydrates and the person “cannot sustain that level of activity.” The LT feedback, plus proper training, can mean the difference of being at “intensity for three hours or 20 minutes” before bonking.

LT testing isn’t just for racers. Hart said it’s “useful for everyone” to find out what they are “typically operating at” and then help them determine the “best strategy to go from Point A to Point B.” Whether a person is aiming for a race, an endurance ride (100 miles or more) or recreational riding, the goal is to avoid “training/exercise that’s not doing them any good at all,” Hart said, in addition to receiving “guidance to avoid setbacks.” Hart added that the ultimate goal is for “every rider to have an enjoyable ride” and to “keep it fun.”



