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Name of Article: Holding Back the Horses

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So it's December, you have enjoyed the off-season and motivation for 2007 is running high. You are fresh and want to be the group ride world champion, but you must remember to "Hold back the horses"! A bike racers season can be summed up in two words: long and hard. With the 2007 season finally on the visible horizon it's easy to get carried away, work too hard now, and be fried for the beautiful month of June.

Coaches base December training plans with the Annual Training Plan in mind and set limits to efforts accordingly. I remember a few years back when everyday Chris Whery came and joined the other Pros in Boulder for our daily group ride. While we pounded out 4-6 hours, Chris would turn off after the first effort. Why? His coach set very low limits for him not to exceed. He kept in his low watt range in December, even though it meant riding by himself. Chris's dedication paid off as he went on to win US PRO champs in Philadelphia that June.

Many of you are in colder environments and have many uncontrollable variables in the weather. Just remember in December, how long the season really is. Training has to be altered last minute. Please don't stress too much, as your season can't be made in one day of super training. Have some fun, perhaps cross training, just don't stress now; the intensity of our sport will do that.

"Holding back the horses" does not mean December and January are easy months. It simply means efforts must be kept in check according to your Annual Training Plan and don't stress too much over the weather if it alters your training. Last winter in Boulder, we had an awful patch of weather in December. I stayed positive, got in a little trainer time and some skate skiing. Two months later my head was 100% focused at the Italian season opener, Trofeo Laigueglia, and my fresh legs made it over the 10-mile climbs with the likes of Eric Zabel and Filippo Pozzato. My best advise for December is simply stay in your limits and have some fun, because that's why you started cycling in the first place.

[Michael Scherer](#) has been racing since 1995 and turned professional in 2001. He has also completed a B.A. of Economics from University of Colorado while racing where he also studied nutrition and psychology and is a huge believer in the power of the brain and understands how essential it is to keep the "head in the right place" to achieve your goals in such a demanding sport.



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