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SPRING TRAINING

TIME TO TRAIN

Tips and tricks to get
you going for the season

BACKCOUNTRY TURNS

A guide to skiing and
riding out of bounds

WHERE THE PROS GO

Two former racers go
from competing to teaching





BIKE

Pro Racers to Passionate Teachers

Catching up with Alison Dunlap and Mia Stockdale

By JB Brockman

Former professional mountain bikers Alison Dunlap and Mia Stockdale negotiated interesting routes that eventually led them to rewarding careers.

"I went to Colorado College hoping to make the soccer team and got cut," recalls Dunlap. "I saw a poster for the cycling club and figured, 'why not.'" For Dunlap, four years of collegiate road racing culminated with a win at the Collegiate National Championships. She then raced on the national team and made the Olympic team in 1996. Then came her transition to the trails.

"I was dating a pro mountain bike racer in Breckenridge and I'd watch him race," Dunlap explains. "After the Olympics, I was burned out from road racing but not ready to quit cycling, so I put the word out to the mountain bike teams in search of a contract." Dunlap landed a spot on Team GT and switched over to mountain biking in 1997. The rest is history: seventh place at the 2000 Sydney Olympics; winner of the Vail 2001 UCI Mountain Bike World Championships; and overall champion at the 2002 UCI Tissot Mountain Bike World Cup, just to name a few. Dunlap fully retired from racing in 2006.

Mia Stockdale's cycling bug started in her home state of Iowa. "I bought my first real bike when I was 22," she explains. "It was a road bike and I rode it on RAGBRAI [The Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa] for six straight days thinking I was so cool."

After college, Stockdale moved to Vail and entered the local mountain bike race series. The following summer, Stockdale raced expert in the Colorado Off-Road Point Series, with promising results. "I got to know mountain bike legend Sara Ballantyne and saw her making a living as a mountain bike racer, so I decided to give it a shot," says Stockdale. Dad-sponsored in 1991, Stockdale turned pro and raced the national series where she was named rookie of the year. Then she got picked up by KHS Bicycles. "In the summer of 1992, I had two top five World Cup

finishes," she says. Stockdale fully retired after the 2001 season.

For these former mountain bike pros, figuring out what to do next was a no-brainer. "After racing mountain bikes for nine years at a high level and feeling so passionate about it, it was so natural for me to start Vail Mountain Bike Camps and teach the sport," explains Stockdale. Stockdale and her partner, Shane Sluder (another former mountain bike racer), run women's weekend clinics in Fruita and Vail, and three-day camps for kids in Vail throughout the summer. The duo also offers private and group coaching.

"Every member of our staff has raced mountain bikes at some level," says Stockdale. "And they all have a lot of teaching experience." Stockdale and Sluder also own and run the Vail Nordic Center (www.vailnordiccenter.com)—Stockdale's other passion and off-season training ground for mountain biking.

"I knew I'd retire somewhere after [the] Athens [Olympics], so in 2003, my husband and I started Alison Dunlap Adventure Camps," says Dunlap. "While I was still racing, we started doing camps and clinics during the off-season with the idea that it would take a couple of years to build the company." Twice a year, Dunlap offers five-day, all-inclusive clinics for intermediate/advanced riders in Moab. Riders can also hit up a number of her one- and two-day clinics in Colorado Springs and Denver, catch one of her NORBA Nationals race clinics across the country, or hire her for private or group coaching.

The big selling point for Dunlap's camps is, well, her. "I teach every camp and I offer 18 years of riding and racing experience, plus knowledge about nutrition, training and gear," she explains.

Both Stockdale and Dunlap consider themselves lucky to be teaching the sport they're so passionate about. And while they miss certain aspects of racing—for Dunlap, it's teammates and staff on the race circuit; for Stockdale, it's being at that top fitness level—they're both enjoying the retirement ride.

"Seeing the smiles and excitement in people after they've made an incredible breakthrough, and know that I made a difference—I love that," says Dunlap. "Watching people get to that next level and improve their confidence is so rewarding," Stockdale says.



Mia Stockdale (above). Below, Alison Dunlap photographs a student during one of her camps.



For more information about Stockdale and Sluder's camps and clinics, check out www.vailmountainbikecamps.com

To learn more about Alison Dunlap Adventure Camps, visit www.alisondunlap.com

Spring It On

Training tips from the experts to get you ready to hit the ground, pavement, water and rock this season

By Glenn BurnSilver



Spring is officially around the corner and the anticipation of another sports season grows with each passing day. Now is the time to start getting ready for your respective sport(s), so pull out that dusty gear, stretch those muscles, glance at your favorite magazine for inspiration and then ... wait.

Before embarking on a spring training regime—whether of your own design or that of a coach—there are a number of important considerations that should be examined before stepping outside: goals, gear, general training and much more. With that in mind, Rocky Mountain Sports brings you tips, tricks and common sense advice for cyclists, climbers, runners, paddlers and triathletes looking to get going after that winter layoff or slowdown. These thoughts come from high-caliber athletes and professional trainers (sometimes both in one) considered experts in their chosen pursuits.

> CYCLING

We gathered cycling tips and advice from Traci Brown, three-time U.S. Collegiate Cycling Champion and former U.S. Team Member (badleroy100@msn.com), and Alison Dunlap, two-time Olympian and former World Mountain Bike Champion (www.alisondunlap.com).

What's the best advice you can offer a cyclist just getting going again following a winter lay-off?

Brown: A fast rise leads to a fast fall. There aren't any shortcuts to training. Do your base miles and stick to the system. ... Ramp it up gradually so you can keep consistency. Going so hard one day that you're ineffective the next two isn't the best plan.

Dunlap: You should always ease back into any athletic activity. Your muscles, joints, ligaments and tendons need a chance to get used to the motion of bike riding, lifting, running, etc. Don't jump on your bike and go for a five-hour mountain bike ride in the mountains. You will be crippled for weeks.

Anything specific a cyclist should watch for when beginning training in the spring?

Brown: I have my athletes report to me immediately if they're training hard and not sleeping at night. This is a sure sign of over-training.

Dunlap: Pay attention to your body. If the knees hurt, then ice them. If your back hurts, then do sit-ups. If you feel really tired, then take a day off. If you feel like you get sick all the time, then maybe your iron levels are too low. If you are grumpy and don't feel like eating, then you might be over-trained.

What are the biggest mistakes you see people make with spring training regimens?

Brown: Going into the season full blast and not really planning. It leads to burnout and over-training.

Dunlap: Doing too many general workouts and not enough specific training. Don't be afraid of intensity."

How important are goals?

Brown: What's more important than that is planning the season properly and knowing what it takes to get to where you want to be. Going into the season "blind" is the biggest mistake that any racer could make.

Dunlap: Goals are super important. I would have a list of long-term goals and short-term goals. Do you want to go to the Olympics? Do you want to win the local race in two weeks? Set goals that are big and lofty, as well as short-term goals that are realistic.

What should be done with gear to ensure the best success?

Brown: Get a pro bike fit if you haven't already.

You can save yourself injury and buy yourself efficiency that no high-dollar titanium part will.

What are common gear mistakes that should be easily overcome?

Dunlap: Get a helmet that fits and don't wear the helmet strap too loosely. Find a cycling shoe with a stiff sole. Use sunglasses when riding.

Any special tips or advice?

Brown: It's the engine that makes the bike fast. To focus on your equipment too much is a mistake. Just ride your bike and enjoy it.

Dunlap: Don't wear underwear under your bike shorts.

Need a bike fit? Give a call to any of the following and they'll get you set up right.

Boulder Center for Sports Medicine. Boulder. 303-441-2285. www.bch.org/sportsmedicine.

Boulder Cycle Sport. Boulder.

303-444-2453. www.bouldercyclesport.com.

Carmichael Training Systems.

Colorado Springs.

866-355-0645. www.trainright.com.

Champion Sports Medicine. Denver.

303-455-0366. www.championsmpt.com.

Green Mountain Sports. Lakewood.

303-987-8758. www.greenmountainsports.com.

Integrated Cycle Fit. Lyons.

www.integratedcyclefit.com.

Wheat Ridge Cyclery. Wheat Ridge.

303-424-3221. www.ridewrc.com

> RUNNING

Our running tips come from Scott Fliegelman, executive director at FastForward Sports (www.fastforwardsports.net), and Dr. Stephen Ho, a runner who trains there.

What's the best advice you can offer a runner just getting going again following a winter layoff?

Fliegelman: In endurance sports such as running, cycling or triathlon, there are no shortcuts, so you may as well enjoy the steps along the way. This includes the highs, the lows, as well as the plateaus.

Ho: I usually start the season slow and easy, generally try and build base endurance and general fitness for the first one to two months before intensifying the workouts.

What are the biggest mistakes you see people make with spring training regimens?

Fliegelman: Expecting that the body will pick up where it left off from last season instead of easing into the training program.

Ho: I usually have to make special efforts to make sure that my running pace is appropriately slow for the majority of my early-season miles. Slowing down to build endurance is something that I focus on. A heart-rate monitor can be helpful here.

How important are goals?

Fliegelman: Setting a "reasonably challenging" goal is a terrific motivator, but doing so accurately can take years of practice and can be helped out along greatly by an experienced coach.

Ho: Having a race goal is important for me. It motivates me to train regularly. However, the actual race results are less important than knowing

that I was disciplined enough to train regularly. Being able to complete a training program and get to the start line healthy and feeling good about my fitness is the biggest reward for me. Doing well at the race is just icing on the cake.

What's the most important piece of advice someone has given you regarding training?

Fliegelman: From a training adaptation standpoint, it is the spaces in between the workouts that are actually more important than the workouts themselves. You must recover properly from a given training stress with adequate rest, fuel, hydration, etc. in order to grow stronger and faster.

Ho: Listen to your body. If you are feeling overtrained, it is okay to back off for a few days. Most of us are working full-time with other social or family obligations. It is very easy to be overtrained or not recover properly from our workouts. If we are constantly stressing our body without proper recovery and rest, eventually our performance will suffer and injuries will occur.

What should be done with gear to ensure the best success?

Fliegelman: See the experts but don't become a slave to your Garmin or heart-rate monitor. Use them as guides, along with "perceived exertion" and experience to help you find the proper training/racing intensity.

Any special tips or advice?

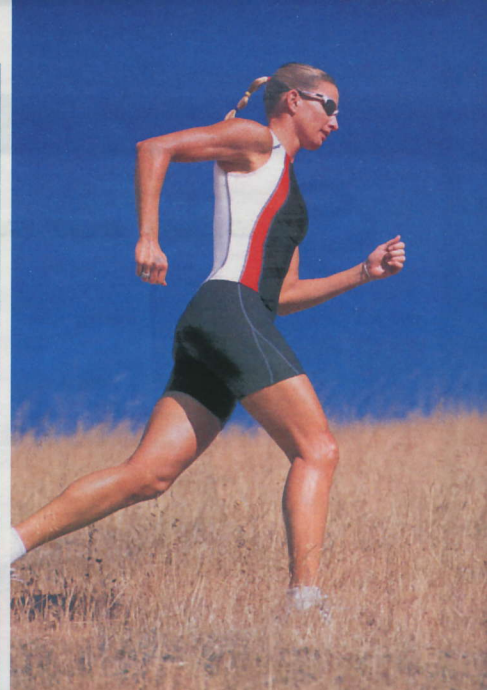
Ho: Don't be too hard on yourself. I have been running regularly for about five years and I feel like I am just getting started. Every year I learn something new about myself and running.

Need some motivation to run? Check with your local running store to see if they offer group runs. Here are a few options.

Fleet Feet Sports. Fun runs around Boulder. 303-939-8000. www.fleetfeetboulder.com.

Niketown. 3- to 5-mile runs in Denver. 303-623-6453. www.niketown.com.

Runners Roost. Groups runs. Stores in Colorado Springs, Denver, Aurora, Lakewood and Fort Collins. www.runnersroost.com.



> TRIATHLON

Tips and advice on triathlon come courtesy Steve Pye, USAT Level II certified coach (www.practicalcoaching.net), Jonathan Siegel, CSCS, head of JDS Sportcoaching (www.jdssportcoaching.com) and triathlete Jen Szabo.

What's the best advice you can offer a triathlete just getting going again following a winter layoff?

Siegel: Have a lactate test performed to determine your heart-rate training zones. Use a heart-rate monitor. Start slow and steady training on the bike or for the run. Increase time/mileage slowly each week. After two weeks of just easy running or swimming the legs, then start adding drills of different intensities and techniques.

Pye: It is important to incorporate base building into your plan. Base building is also a great time to work on form and build strength with weights.

Szabo: Take rest days seriously, let your body recover. You will actually perform better if you allow yourself to rest.

Anything specific a triathlete should watch when beginning training?

Szabo: My body goes through "phantom pains" when I start something new. I believe it is my body's reaction of shock of what I am putting it through. I like to see them go away a few weeks into training, of course if it is persistent, I consult a professional.

Pye: Pacing is key to endurance sports. Be sure to start each workout at a pace slower than what you will be finishing. The biggest mistake people make is going out too fast.

How important are goals?

Pye: Goals are the most important part of a training regimen. They help solidify your season. Knowing why and what you are training for helps