

The Skinny on Cycling
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Ode to my trainer

As I write this column, the Colts have just returned from Miami after having won the Superbowl. Early this morning the thermometer on my car read -8 degrees. At least three times at work today I told someone "I can't wait until spring so that I can ride my bike again!" As soon as I'm finished with this column, I'm going to begrudgingly get into my cycling shorts and ride my trainer for an hour or so. I really hate my trainer. Dumb trainer. Ugly trainer.

I'm a pretty regular participant on the BikeForums.net web site. If you can't ride, at least you can talk about riding and be chastised by those who live in warmer climates and ride year round. On BikeForums, this time of the year, there is a lot of talk about trainers: "How much time do you spend on your trainer each week?"; "What's your favorite song when you ride your trainer?"; "Which gives you the best workout: rollers or trainers?"; "Why is my trainer so noisy?"; "How can I stay motivated to be on my trainer?" As for me; I really hate my trainer. Silly trainer. Noisy trainer.

I don't know about other CIBA members, but I don't think I've ever heard about a cyclist writing sonnets to their trainers. I don't think I know anyone who sneaks out of work an hour early to spend an extra hour on their trainer. I certainly know many folks who would rather hit the snooze button on their alarm clocks a few extra times instead of getting up early for a little "quality time with their trainer". I really hate my trainer. Awful trainer. Loathsome trainer.

You see, folks, I don't think any of us really like to spend time inside on our bikes, in the winter, pedaling against metal cylinders staring at the wall. It's plain boring. Boring trainer. Heinous trainer.

Conversely, I know that we all absolutely love that first early spring ride when the crocuses are blooming and the brown grass is starting to be replaced by little shoots of green. We all fondly look forward to that first deep breath when we're out on our first real ride of the spring and we're starting our first climb and you feel like a kid again with the wind in your face! Your heart pounds and the world is alright again. By midsummer, we're feeling strong again and we're finding ways to challenge ourselves and break our records from the previous year. You wish you could quit your job and ride all the time. By autumn, our rides may get a little shorter and a little slower as we try to squeeze every ounce of sunshine from the waning hours of daylight. The leaves are falling and the sunsets take on that gorgeous quality that is completely unique to Indiana in the fall. We ride on, knowing that winter is coming and that we'll have to get our trainers out again. Nasty trainer. Rotten trainer.

We learn in kindergarten that the seasons change. We read in sacred texts that there is a season for all things under heaven. We learn, by staring at the wall, sweaty and bored, that in cycling, as in the rest of our lives, there are seasons. This, my friends is *trainer season*.—and I’m pleased to say that it’s soon drawing to a close! Necessary trainer. Evil trainer.

Spring is God's way of saying, 'One more time!' -- Robert Orben

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Wade Wingler, the author of “The Skinny on Cycling” is the father of one adorable little girl, the husband of a beautiful & talented librarian, a Yogi and an avid cyclist. His web site, www.HowILost100Pounds.com features common sense advice on losing weight without suffering and improving your cycling through healthy living.