



## **Summer Dryland Training**

### **"Training Wheels"**

**By Edie**

**from**

**VARA's Youth Coordinator Alex Krebs**

Hello VARA members!

We are now a good way in to the summer season, many athletes head off to different camps whether they are soccer, lacrosse, swimming, horseback riding or overnight camps with all sorts of activities, these are all good! It's great to see that our young athletes are outside and active! It is however, important to remember that our sport of alpine skiing is very unique and sometimes takes special off season training to be fully prepared for the next year. Some of the "ski specific" exercises that need to be done during the summer months will make athletes dig down deep within themselves to find the drive to do them either on their own, with a friend or perhaps they are lucky enough to have an opportunity to participate in a camp where these are part of the daily curriculum. Either way, it takes a "tough minded, independent thinking and driven ski racer" to want to become the best they can be!



Below are some excellent comments, thoughts, ideas on summer dryland training from my friend Edie Thys Morgan. For her full article please visit her website [www.racerex.com](http://www.racerex.com) and look for the article "Training Wheels".

Enjoy and let's get "sweating"!!!

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Please visit the VARA youth Coordinator page on the VARA site. <http://www.vara.org/resources/youth-coordinator/>

## Training Wheels

by [Edie](#)

Every summit starts with the first step, and maybe an annoying song in your head.

**Training wheels are key:** This is a good thing because there comes a time, at about age 13 or 14, when kids who want to pursue sports at a high level have to start devoting time to real off-season training. Ultimately the motivation to train has to come from inside each kid, but the adults around them can play a huge role in framing training as something accessible and enticing. It involves more than handing them a workout and saying, "Just do it!" As when learning to ride a bike, a little support in the beginning is all it takes to get kids moving all on their own.

**It's all about the goals:** Really, that's what training is—setting and achieving a series of goals. Without the individual goals, training just sounds like one heavy, endless chore. It's like starting a hike up a mountain. If you look up to the summit from the bottom too long it'll just bum you out. It's better to just put one foot in front of the other and pick a good tune to hum.

**Training your way:** One of the many beauties of skiing is that it calls for the ultimate generalist, who has a good base of strength, power, agility, endurance, coordination and flexibility. That leaves the door wide open to a lot of fun cross training, be it mountain biking, waterskiing, dirt-biking, rock climbing or whatever makes you strong and takes you to your happy place. Nerves of steel help, and those too can be built by steadily ramping up challenges in your off-season training. To be successful in ski racing you don't have to be off the charts at any one thing but you do have to bring together a diverse collection of skills, to figure out as many pieces of the puzzle as you can and then put those pieces together.

**Test for yourself:** Like it or not—and trust me I was wayyyy on the *not* side of this—testing is part of training. Testing can range from a formalized official event to you and a stopwatch. Either way it is less a judgment than a benchmark, a snapshot of your relative strengths and weaknesses and a framework for setting goals. Not to sound too much like Oprah, but you only have to worry about being

your best you.

**Put the force of habit to work:** "The chains of habit are too light to be felt until they are too heavy to be broken." When I first read this quote it bummed me out because I thought about it in the context of all my bad habits. But it is also true about good habits. If you regularly set goals and get up every day and start working towards them, pretty soon you are a doer. You are a person who does 50 push-ups before breakfast, does squats and crunches during commercial breaks, sprints up every set of stairs instead of walking them, does a long ride every Saturday morning or tackles that particularly heinous workout

twice a week.

**And finally, crotchety grown-up advice:** I recall when a former teammate, both of us then new parents, reflected on our lives as athletes. "Remember when we thought it was virtuous to train hard, and it was our job? Now training is a total indulgence!" **If you have the physical ability, the motivation and the support to dedicate your time to training, it's a privilege. So go out there with a smile and suffer, if for no other reason than because you can.**

For Edie's full article on "Training Wheels" visit her website blog [www.racerex.com](http://www.racerex.com)

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