

TRAINING TIP OF THE WEEK

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFF-SEASON

After a competitive season, some athletes schedule too many intense workouts, concerned that they are going to lose their edge during the off-season. However, instead of maintaining fitness, athletes end up fatigued, sick, or injured, or they peak long before the season has even begun. The off-season should be just that – a time to rest the body, to rehabilitate injury, and to plan ahead on how to improve performance in the season to come. There are two key parts to the off-season. First is the rest and recovery phase. This is a time of active rest, which includes any necessary rehabilitation and cross training to allow muscle healing. Focus should be on flexibility, strength training, core muscle work, and correcting muscle imbalances. The second part of the off-season is the pre-season. During this time, training focuses on building aerobic fitness, with the goal of peaking at the start of the competitive season. This is the right time to re-evaluate equipment and work on form, whether it be running stride, throwing motion, or swim stroke. The intensity



of work-outs at this point should remain low with their duration increasing as the season approaches. A good aerobic base is an invaluable foundation to build intensity and speed leading into competition. Having good core strength, adequate flexibility, and good form all give you the best chance of having a successful, injury-free season.

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