## Performance Point





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To perform at their best, elite athletes must relentlessly and systematically train the technical, tactical, physical and mental factors associated with their sport. The constant attention to training should ideally be interspersed with regular analysis of how the preparation is progressing. This is often achieved subjectively as part of regular discussions between the athlete and their coach and many methods are used to supplement the athlete and coach's "sense" of how things are going. For example, routine physiological assessments provide information about the effectiveness of the training regime and preparation plan. Additionally, training logs that allow the athlete to record the training completed, a training commentary and usually a self-assessment of performance state can provide information that otherwise would be missed or dismissed. When viewed retrospectively over a period of a few weeks, trends may emerge that help the athlete and coach identify challenges in the implementation of a training plan or suggest a tweak a training approach.

There are many types of training logs ranging from simple notes kept by the athlete to more detailed and complex logs that document every aspect of training and lifestyle. Training logs exist in the traditional notebook form and athletes can also subscribe to on-line training logs. The on-line logs facilitate more sophisticated analysis of log information and athletes can give permission for coaches or others to view their logs if they like. Additionally, many of the on-line logs allow athletes to download training information from heart rate monitors and/or other devices such as power meters and GPS systems, for example <a href="www.trainingpeaks.com">www.trainingpeaks.com</a>. These are very powerful software tools that can be extremely beneficial. Nevertheless, these systems may not be appropriate for every athlete and every sport.

A key point with respect to training logs is that more information is not necessarily better. The power of a training log emerges when it is used over the long-term. Long-term tracking of a few simple measures will expose trends much more readily than intermittent use of a very complex log system. There is also much individual variance in what constitutes useful information. For one athlete, variations in sleep quality may provide useful information about fatigue state and help guard against overtraining, while for another training enjoyment may be a more useful marker. It may take a few months use before the athlete and coach can settle on which information is of the most use to track. The key performance point is that regular tracking of training information and performance state can assist athletes and their coaches in optimizing their training and minimize the guesswork often required to determine whether a training phase or approach is successful or not.

**Note:** The Canadian Sport Centre Pacific Athlete Logbook (PAL) is a traditional training log that can be purchased through Performance Services for a nominal fee. Contact Roz Eckardt for more information <a href="mailto:reckardt@Canadian Sport Centre">reckardt@Canadian Sport Centre</a> Pacific.com.

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Sample page from the PacificSport Athlete Logbook (PAL).

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