

Definitions/Glossary:

With the increased use of technology many of us now have access to heart rate monitors and even power meters. Whilst these instruments help us measure our effort when training it is not imperative to use such instruments. It is possible to ride on “feel” alone and with practice you will know instinctively what “zone” the effort being expended equates to if you were using either a heart rate monitor or power meter. Old coaches used to describe how hard the intensity was by how freely you could speak whilst riding.

The basic zones are broken down as thus:

Zone	Effort
1	Easy – You can speak as freely as if you were not riding you could probably even sing!
2	Slow – Possible to hold a normal conversation
3a	Steady – Speaking becomes less easy but still just about able to hold a conversation.
3b	Brisk – Speaking will be difficult and require you to take a breath between sentences.
4	Threshold/Tempo – only able to speak in short sentences between taking deep breaths
5	Hard – possible to utter the odd word only
6	Very Hard – unpleasant caveman type grunts at best.....

Obviously this method of measuring effort is less objective than modern methods but does allow riders without such devices the chance to understand what effort they are making

Zone 1 would equate to <60% Maximum heart rate

Zone 2 around 70%

Zone 3a around 75%

Zone 3b around 80%

Zone 4 around 85%

Zone 5 around 90%

Zone 6 as hard as you can.

For more accuracy it is advisable to contact a coach and arrange to complete a simple test to determine your exact values based on your heart rate.

Functional Threshold(FT) is described as the average effort that one can sustain in 1 hour of non-stop riding. It is similar to the power produced when riding a 25 mile time trial. There is a simple test devised by Hunter Allen of training Peaks that is used extensively to determine FT.

- Warm up for 20 mins
- Complete 3 X 1min efforts at around 120rpm with a minute rest after each.
- Ride easy for a further 4 minutes
- Ride as hard as possible for 5 minutes
- Ride easy for 10 minutes
- Ride as hard as you can for 20 minutes. (You should finish feeling that you can give no more!)

You need to ascertain the average power or heart rate for the final 20 minute effort. Multiply that average by 0.95 to arrive at your Functional Threshold.

Obviously you will need access to a heart rate monitor or power meter for this test. Do not complete this test unless you are fit to do so