

ATTACHMENT 12

Road Cycling Skills Training Session

Balance and Braking

Instructor(s)	Date	Time	Venue
Equipment required		Age and group number	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen, paper, clipboard • Activity notes • 40-60 cones or plates • Whistle • Stopwatch 			
Session Format		Session Goals	
2-3 mins	Introduction	By the end of this module riders will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use their body position to control their bicycle; • maintain bicycle control while riding slowly; and • stop quickly and safely. 	
5-10 mins	Warm up Game or activity from previous session. Box Game or Turtle Race		
5-10 min	Skill and activity instruction		
60 min	Activities below		
3-5 min	Session summary		
Activities		Completed (tick)	Notes
• Slow Ride			
• Turtle Race			
• U-Turn			
• Controlled braking			
• Stoppies (Advanced Braking)			
Cool down			
Session Summary			

Activity: Slow Ride

Objective

Riders will be able to ride slowly while maintaining balance and control.

Group management

Split the group into 3 or 4 even-sized groups to allow ample opportunity for repetition of skills and to maximize the time available for both practice and opportunity for individual instruction.

Activity Organization

Mark out a small rectangular box shape with cones approximately 3m long and 50cm wide.

Have riders line up at one end of the rectangle. One at a time, riders ride in through the area as slowly as possible without putting a foot down (riders must go forwards not backwards).

It is an individual challenge to remain in the area for as long as possible.

Appoint a timekeeper for each group to time each individual. Time starts when the front wheel enters the area and stops when the front wheel exits the area.

Safety

Ensure the area is clear before the next riders start.

Technique Points

- Riders start a couple of metres before the area. In their own time they get started and ride into the area. Time starts when the front wheel crosses into the area. Use small pedal movements and brake at the same time. This helps you maintain your balance.
- Look ahead and keep a straight line.

Discussion Questions

- What skills should you be using to maintain balance?
- Where should you be looking?
- Can you think of situations where you need to balance on the spot, or ride REALLY slowly?

Common Faults

- Often riders will try too hard and fall over without recording a time. Encourage riders to keep a forward motion when their balance starts to get shaky.

Modifying the Activities

Beginner:

The marked area can be made larger to allow longer times (and therefore boost confidence).

Advanced:

- Reduce the width of the area to challenge the more advanced skills; or
- make the area only slightly longer than one bike length. Do not start timing until the whole bike is inside the area, i.e. the rear wheel has entered.

NOTES:

Activity: U turn box]

Objective

Riders master making tight turns in a confined space while maintaining balance and control.

Group management

Instruction is given to the whole group, which is then split into 3 or 4 evenly sized groups for practice.

Activity Organization

Set out 3 or 4 (one per group) open-ended "boxes" on the ground (approximately 2,5m wide, and deep). These can be marked with cones, or even lines chalked on the ground if using a concrete surface.

Each group lines up 10 m back from their box. When it is a rider's turn, they ride to the box, enter it and perform a U-turn inside the box without putting a foot down or riding outside of the box.

Practice left and right turns. Perform both sitting in the seat and standing out of the seat.

Safety

- *Only one rider at a time per group may attempt a U-turn.*
- *Wait until the rider is clear of the box before the next rider attempts it.*

Technique Points

- Control speed while entering the box.
- Look where you want to turn.
- Ride close to the outside edge of the box to allow space to execute the turn.
- Wait until the front wheel is deep into the box before turning.

Discussion Questions

- Can you think of occasions when you would have to make very tight turns?
- Do your front and rear wheels follow the same path?
- Does this impact on where you steer your front wheel?

Common Faults

- Performed too fast.
- Rider is too close to the centre of the box and runs out of room.
- Rider does not ride far enough into the box
- Rider is better turning in one direction than the other.

Modifying the Activities

Beginner:

Place a target on the ground for riders to aim their front wheel towards that will guide them on the correct path for their wheel to follow.

Advanced:

Make the U-turn box smaller and narrower.

NOTES:

Activity: Controlled Braking

Objective

Riders learn to use brakes in a controlled manner to slow and/or stop quickly and effectively.

Group management

Bring the whole group together for instruction and discussion and then split into 3 or 4 evenly sized groups for activity.

Activity Organization

Mark out a narrow lane with cones (or utilize lines on a court or sports field), set out about 10m long and 1-2m wide.

At the end of the lane use different coloured markers to set out a braking zone 1m long.

Riders are to ride down the lane, begin braking as they enter the braking zone and come to a controlled stop inside the zone, without skidding.

Off their bikes, have the students raise their hands in the air and outstretch their fingers. On the instructor's command, the students should slowly curl their fingers over a count of 5 to make a fist (repeat a number of times). Explain that this is how the brake levers should be used, i.e. a slow and progressive squeeze resulting in even and controlled braking. For contrast, you can also have them snatch fingers closed, illustrating what NOT to do.

Safety

- Ensure the area is clear before the next rider starts.
- Set up multiple areas to allow for maximum practice time.

Technique Points

- Brake levers must be squeezed rather than snatched at.
- Keep arms extended with a slight bend in elbows.
- Look ahead.
- Keep weight low and centred.

Discussion Questions

- Which brake is more effective?
- How weather conditions (or riding surface) affect braking?
- Why is skidding the wheel not desirable?
- Is a skid ever useful? If so, when?

Common Faults

- Riders jamming on brakes, rather than a controlled squeeze of the levers.
- Riders taking feet off the pedals before stopping.
- Riders not using the front brake (relying on the rear only).

Modifying the Activities

- Modify the length of the braking zone - longer for the less skilled riders and shorter for the more advanced riders.
- Encourage riders to ride with more speed when approaching the braking zone.
- Instead of using the markers, have riders stop on command (which can be given at random times).

NOTES:

Activity: Stoppies (Advanced Braking)

Objective

Riders learn to use and trust their front brake in a controlled manner to slow/stop quickly and effectively.

Group management

Bring the whole group in together for instruction and discussion and then split into 3 or 4 evenly sized groups for activity.

Activity Organization

Mark out a narrow lane with cones (or utilize lines on a court or sports field), set out about 10m long and 1-2m wide. At the end of the lane use different coloured markers to set out a braking zone 1m long.

Riders are to ride down the lane, then begin braking as they enter the braking zone using only the front brake.

They are challenged to come to a controlled stop inside the zone, with their rear wheel elevated approximately 2 inches off the ground (no higher).

Safety

- Emphasize the need to be sensible.
- Ensure the area is clear before the next rider starts.
- Set up multiple areas to allow for maximum practice time.
- Keep a close eye on proceedings.

Technique Points

- Stand out as you approach the braking point.
- Progressively squeeze the brake lever. Do NOT snatch at it.
- Extend arms with a slight bend in the elbows.
- Slightly bend at the waist to keep weight low and centered.

Common Faults

- Riders jamming on brakes, rather than a controlled squeeze of the levers.
- Riders staying seated.
- Riders taking their feet off the pedals before they stop.
- Lack of confidence in the front brake.

Important Notes

It is important to debrief the riders after this exercise. Some will have failed to execute a "stoppie" despite firm use of the brake and will become frustrated, whilst others will have been elevating the rear wheel too high.

It is crucial to explain that the exercise is to learn control and feel for the front brake, that they should not be scared of it and that it is a very important part of the bicycle.

Effective braking results from progressive and controlled use of BOTH brakes.

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