

OFF - SEASON CONDITIONING GUIDE



ADAM IACOBUCCI

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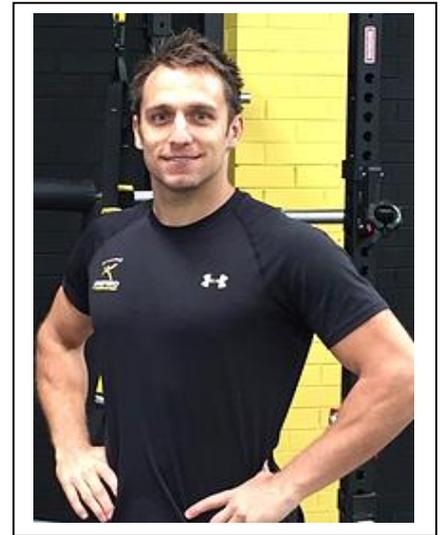
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Adam Iacobucci is the founder and Head Coach at Unified Fitness Systems. Adam is CPPS Level 2, Poliquin PICP Level 2 Certified strength & conditioning coach and Precision Nutrition Level 1 Certified. Sports, fitness and nutrition have been a lifetime passion of Adam's and he is now ready to pass that passion and knowledge onto his clients.

Adam has trained and played at elite levels as a professional athlete. Playing Aussie Rules since he was a junior, Adam was drafted to the Collingwood Football club in 2004. After his tenure in the AFL, Adam continued his passion and went on to captain the VFL side, The Northern Bullants until 2011. Adam has a passion to help both aspiring athletes and everyday people to achieve their health and fitness goals.



He is now passing on his knowledge and experience to help his clients become stronger, faster and more confident giving them the best chance at achieving their own fitness goals. Adam's goal is to make sure you become the best athlete or best version of yourself you can be. He has experienced the mental and physical peak in athleticism and knows what it takes to be the best.

If you have any questions you can always contact him directly via email adam@unifiedfitnesssystems.com.au and I'll get back to you ASAP.

You can also catch him on all the major Social Media Platforms. Please "Like" and/or "Follow" our pages for the latest training and nutrition info.



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Enjoy!

Off-Season Conditioning

Intro

This is a guide to help you with your conditioning for this off-season - because there's always work to be done.

The off-season is a great time to rest and recuperate, giving your body the chance to heal all those niggling injuries football athletes tend to sustain during the competitive season. However, recovery doesn't mean that it's time to put your feet up.

To stay on top of your game you can't simply stop and do nothing during the weeks before the start of pre-season. You might have six or ten or however many weeks before the pre-season begins, but you need to use it wisely. I always recommend two weeks off to refresh and recharge but after your two week break it's time to engage in some form of exercise. Now is the time to start getting your body prepared for the rigours of pre-season.

I'm a big believer in off-season training. It's a great opportunity for players to build up their work capacity by incorporating conditioning methods targeting the aerobic system. These training methods will help your body recover from the competitive season whilst building a strong foundation for the start of pre-season, so you can get a head-start on your competition. If you start pre-season without having performed a single training session over the off-season (and unfortunately so many athletes do), you're setting yourself up for failure. You're at a greater risk of injury, and you'll have to play catch-up over the rest of the pre-season. Your fitness levels will have fallen by the wayside, and you'll struggle to realise your potential on the field.

The following four week conditioning program is simply a guide - every athlete we encounter requires an individual approach based on their specific needs, previous training history and current fitness levels. Use this as a basis and adjust according to your own capability. The program consists of three different conditioning methods. All three are designed to help build your aerobic energy system and increase your work capacity by targeting your aerobic energy system. This because (and sorry in advance): the off-season is a great time for athletes to build up their aerobic conditioning. Yes, the most dreaded word in modern training: "aerobic". It's worth preparing the body for

the rigorous training sessions you'll be exposed to come pre-season. Trust me, you'll feel much better in the long run; you'll be glad you didn't take it easy.

Over-reliance on high intensity training techniques in the early preparatory phases of training can have undesirable ramifications for the repeat sprint athlete, especially if they haven't first built a strong foundation to sustain their higher intensity activities. That's why your progress through each phase of the four week training program will be marked by small adjustments to overall training load. This way you'll keep pushing yourself, and in turn your body will continue to adapt and improve as the overall training volume increases.

Above all else, as you progress through this four week program, remember this: *it's easier to stay in shape than it is to get in shape*. The work you do now will keep you from having to work much harder later and risk your chance of succumbing to injury by trying to do too much too soon, so don't get slack: it's for your own good.

With that in mind, here are the three conditioning methods you can use to help build a strong foundation.

Training Methods

Cardiac Output

Cardiac Output training improves the body's ability to supply muscles with oxygen by improving how much blood your heart can pump with each beat.

The best way to perform your cardiac output sessions are to perform different activities/circuits at lower intensities. Your aim is to simply stay in the right heart rate zone. Because your other three sessions involve running, we don't recommend incorporating long slow distance running for this fourth session. Instead you can include swimming, biking, bodyweight circuits, or mobility circuits, all of which are great options for this style of training.

The range you need to stay in is a heart rate between 130-150bpm for the allocated time. For this reason we highly recommend using a heart rate monitor during these training sessions. Just remember: as long as your heart rate stays within the right heart rate zone for the allotted time period your free to perform any activity you enjoy.

Tempo Method

This training method is essentially a low to moderate intensity interval training style. The big benefit is that it allows you to start building more of fast twitch muscle fibres without fatiguing and burning yourself out. Plus, you can do more of them, more frequently without over-training and risking injury as they are performed at a lower intensity.

Training Guidelines – To perform your Tempo Work, you must run at about 70-80% of maximum pace for about 8-15sec. You can measure this based on time or you can run for a set distance. Around 70-90m is a good distance to start, then you can adjust your distance depending on how long it takes you to perform your working interval. You'll then rest for 45-60sec between efforts or until your heart rate drops to 130-140bpm.

It's also recommended to include mobility drills and/or core stability exercises like planks and side planks as part of your rest.

Complete your tempo intervals for the total time prescribed.

Cardiac Power Intervals

This is where the program gets serious!

Cardiac Power Intervals are the highest-intensity conditioning method that I've included in this program. You'll notice we've included this method in weeks 3 and 4 of the program - once a strong aerobic foundation has been built. Don't go too hard too fast.

Cardiac power intervals are used to up-the-intensity and overall volume of work; focusing on developing the heart's ability to deliver oxygen at higher intensities to help improve your power endurance. Your goal is to run as far as you can and get your heart rate up as high as possible during the two minute work period. Then you'll rest for 2-3 minutes, or until your heart rate drops to 120-130bpm. No stress if you can't run as these intervals are just as effective when done in the pool, on a bike or any other form of hard cardio equipment.

If you don't have a heart rate monitor, allow yourself 2-3 minutes rest between sets - it's important you get almost full recovery so you can maintain your intensity for your working intervals.

Remember to:

- Adjust your volumes and intensities for each session as necessary, based on your training age, fitness levels and how you feel that day.
- Incorporate strength training 2-3 times per week.
- Always complete a thorough warm-up before your training session.
- I'd highly recommend performing each session using a heart rate monitor to better track your recovery between sets.
- Have a de-load week after the 4-week program where no *Cardiac Power Intervals* are performed.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Tempo Intervals 15-20min	Off	Cardiac Output 30-40min	Off	Tempo Intervals 20-25min	Cardiac Output 30-40min	Off
2	Tempo Intervals 30-35min	Off	Tempo Intervals 25-30min	Off	Tempo Intervals 35-40min	Cardiac Output 40-50min	Off
3	Cardiac Power 3-4 x 2min w/ 2-3min Rest or HR Recovery 120-130bpm	Off	Tempo Intervals 20-30min	Off	Cardiac Power 4-5 x 2min w/ 2-3min Rest or HR Recovery 120-130bpm	Cardiac Output 40-50min	Off
4	Cardiac Power 5-6 x 2min w/ 2-3min Rest or HR Recovery 120-130bpm	Off	Tempo Intervals 30-40min	Off	Cardiac Power 6-8 x 2min w/ 2-3min Rest or HR Recovery 120-130bpm	Cardiac Output 50-60min	Off