

## Varying Your Training To Avoid Burnout

Summer's gone, school's back in session, work is stressful and your bowling season just started. Many have not exercised seriously for months and are wondering what happened to that dedicated exerciser from last spring. All the gains made are nearly lost and you're somewhat depressed lacking motivation to return to the previous training. The question you ask yourself is, "what happened?"

All too often do committed exercisers reach a peak in their training only to lose motivation or incentive and fall off the exercise train. We see it all the time in collegiate athletics - a student/athlete trains all summer, prepares heavily in the fall, then becomes bored and lazy throughout the winter only to lose the physical edge when competing in a spring sport. It happens with recreational exercisers - you join a gym, attend regularly for several months, then develop a sudden case of absenteeism only to be remembered as a one-timer. It even occurs with home exercise equipment - you purchase a wonder machine, use it for a month or two, the unit is barely worn and then becomes a dust collector in the garage or under the bed. Does any of this sound familiar?

Encountering burnout and boredom in both sport and exercise is common. I am sure we have all experienced it with our bowling. We spend all season practicing improving our game, bowl a few tournaments, then hit the big state or nationals late in the spring. Afterwards, we suddenly lose our motivation to practice and eventually storing our equipment for the summer. Sound familiar? I have noted bowling burnout generally occurs during the summer months when the weather is pleasant and the golf season is at full steam. How many of us can attest to the almighty driving range averting our attention?

It is not a bowling crime to divert your attention from time to time. In fact, one of the key ingredients geared toward avoiding many of bowling's cumulative trauma injuries is to incorporate rest and time away from our sport. Even beyond our sport, many individuals exercising for improved health and performance may also experience similar burnout. Exercise burnout is often a main reason people cease participation. The current participation literature has cited and validated multiple reasons for exercise termination ranging from: (1) a lack of time, (2) loss of energy, (3) decreasing appreciable results, and (4) preoccupations. Whatever your reason may be, exercise compliance weighs heavily on the ability to stay motivated and satisfied. To combat this dreadful problem, let us take a closer look at what can be done to avoid or bounce back from exercise burnout.

In order for us to fight the burnout syndrome we must first recognize its presence. There are several ways to determine exercise burnout such as stress testing or fitness testing. Though both are highly valid and reliable methods, they are not always practical and available to the public. Therefore, individual or self-evaluation must be initiated. Some more common recognizable signs and symptoms to look for include the following:

- a decrease in health benefits such as stabilization in weight and strength gains.
- a lack of motivation to exercise.
- low energy levels during the evening time.
- boredom with exercise.
- frequent minor injuries.
- almost no improvement in bowling performance.

If you encounter any of these symptoms, you may be experiencing a case of exercise burnout, therefore, acknowledging its existence is your first step confronting it.

Once exercise burnout has been identified, it's then time to act accordingly. There are many ways to rejuvenate your exercise habits including joining a gym, securing a training partner, or even purchasing a new exercise device or tape. **One of my favorite ways to jumpstart your exercise habit is to vary your training routine while maintaining the basic goal of general and bowling-specific fitness. By providing a new challenge with exercise you are revealing a willingness and dedication to bounce back from burnout.**

Understanding exercise and its effects on our human physiology is a complicated matter I sometimes struggle with myself. Needless to say, through study and application we can achieve desired outcomes. There are various exercise training principles available today and determining which to implement and why has become more of a complicated science than a simplistic selection process. If you long for understanding the reasons why to choose which principle, then follow this simple table to a wealth of knowledge.

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Muscular Endurance</b>	<b>Cardiovascular End.</b>
<b>Improves muscular strength</b>	<b>Promotes muscular endurance</b>	<b>Enhances cardiovascular endurance</b>
<b>Enhances joint flexibility</b>	<b>Increases energy levels</b>	<b>Increases energy levels</b>
<b>Moderate to heavy resistance required</b>	<b>Light to moderate resistance required</b>	<b>Little to no resistance required</b>
<b>Movement is specific to the muscle</b>	<b>Movement is specific yet repetitive</b>	<b>Movement is repetitive in nature</b>
<b>Resistance machines or dumbbells</b>	<b>Resistance piece or body weight</b>	<b>Aerobic machine or element</b>
<b>One set to failure or pyramid sets</b>	<b>One or two sets of high repetitions</b>	<b>A timed exercise &gt; than 20 minutes</b>

The strength training principle (first column) has been recently praised by the exercise community for its specific benefits. I most often espouse this routine as a viable means enhancing your bowling performance. In fact, most of the bowling specific exercise routines I develop use this proven method. Strength training is low maintenance requiring only the apparatus or weights needed to fatigue muscles during one set of maximal effort. Pyramiding your sets can also be performed under this training routine. Strength training is time efficient allowing the exerciser to get in and out of the gym in relatively little time. Most strength and flexibility programs average around 26 - 45 minutes depending on the availability of equipment and spacing. Ultimately, strength training is the basic exercise routine prescribed to millions of recreational and competitive athletes around the world.

The second routine (column two) involves training for increased muscular endurance. It has a lesser track record of late than the strength training method, yet still has a large quantity of research and practical application to support it. Muscular endurance training is done with lighter resistance and a high amount of repetitions. The idea is to fatigue the energy sources of the muscles while extending the fatigue point, hence producing greater muscular endurance. Many endurance athletes such as runners, swimmers, rowers (crews) and even those of the martial arts train using this method. Though not entirely specific to the bowler, I have found it to be a good substitution when exercise boredom sets in. Try it. I think this different twist to training will challenge you to improved health and performance.

Finally, cardiovascular endurance or otherwise known as the aerobic exercise routine (column three) was tremendously popular during the running boom of the 1970's and the aerobics boom of the 1980's. Aerobic training is still used immensely in our society and is utilized by many of our rehabilitation programs such as cardiac and respiratory. Aerobic exercise is most proficient for strengthening the internal organs while burning a large amount of calories, especially fats. Cardiovascular training requires only an aerobic piece of equipment such as a bike or stair climber, or a natural element like a swimming pool for lap swimming or snowy climate for cross country skiing. The training is moderate to higher intensity extended for a lengthy period of time between 20 - 60 minutes. Cardiovascular training calls for minimal resistance allowing the exerciser to complete the specified time frame while stressing the cardiovascular system. Cardiovascular training is another good routine that will rejuvenate your willingness and dedication to exercise for improved performance.

As you attempt to initiate one of these training routines, do not be afraid to try all three before making a selection. Again each has specific demands and will require experimentation with resistance factors and apparatus the first session or two. Test each and I am sure you will find one challenging enough to get you back into the swing of things.

If you have fallen from the exercise train and need a boost to bolster your motivation, challenge yourself with a different type of training. Try either strength training, muscular endurance or cardiovascular endurance exercise to rejuvenate your dedication and enhance your bowling performance. Always consult your doctor or physician before beginning this or any other form of exercise or activity.