**COACHES FORUM – PERIODIZATION**

**Periodization** is the systematic planning of [**athletic or physical training**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physical_fitness)**.** The aim is to reach the best possible performance in the most important competition of the year for a particular athlete or number of athletes. It involves progressive cycling of various aspects/components of a training program during a specific period, based on the plan objectives and the characteristics of the athlete, and the phase of training.

***This must be Athlete-centered, Coach-driven and Science-based training***.

There are three main **Cycles of Periodization:**

1. Macrocycle
2. Mesoscycle
3. Microcyle

Below is a diagram explaining each of the Cycles.

One can now understand that these cycles work as the building blocks in designing an athlete’s training session, in preparation for a year in which the athlete will compete.

The annual plan is important in that it directs and guides performance training over an entire year for the athlete. It is based on the concept of [**PERIODIZATION**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Periodization)and the principles of training. The objective of training is to have the athlete reach the highest level of performance (peak performance) for the year. The athlete has to develop skills, bio-motor abilities and psychological traits in a methodical manner, in order to attain his/her peak performance.

This annual plan has different phases and each phase has its own objectives based on the athlete’s strengths and weaknesses.

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| PHASES OF A TRAINING A PLAN/PERIDIZATION |
|  | PREPARATORY PHASE | COMPETITIVE PHASE | Transition phase |
|  | **GENERAL PHASES**  | **SPECIFIC PHASE**  | **PRE COMPETITION**  | **COMPETTITON**  | **RECOVERY** |
| OBJECTIVES  | To attain/ develop training abilities that all athletes need such as endurance, strength, etc. No tactical work should be done in this stage. However, great emphasis should be placed on developing techniques.  | This is the phase where work focuses on the needs of the athlete based on his/her event and set objectives for the session. Continue developing techniques, along with an introduction to mental skills.  | This phase refines the athlete’s preparation. Low training volume & high training load, developing the factors needed for optimal performance:* Work on specific exercise
* Mental skills
* Tactical work
 | This phase maintains all that is gained from previous phases; maximizingperformance.The training loads are adjusted to keep the athlete as fresh as possible.  | This is the phase for the athlete’sphysical and mental recovery.This is the period when the athlete rests completely. He/she may play a different sport for recreation. No competition.  |
| DURATION  | **4 – 6 weeks**  | **4 – 8 weeks**  | **2- 4 weeks**  | **4- 6 weeks**  | **4 – 5 weeks**  |
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Our next article will address the principles of training and their objectives.