

Issue 17

09.2022

INDOOR CYCLING INSIGHTS & INSPIRATION

# RIDE HIGH

## Time to Shine

The power of positive energy  
at Brunei's pioneering studio

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## YELLOW FEVER

We re-live Denmark's  
Tour de France celebrations

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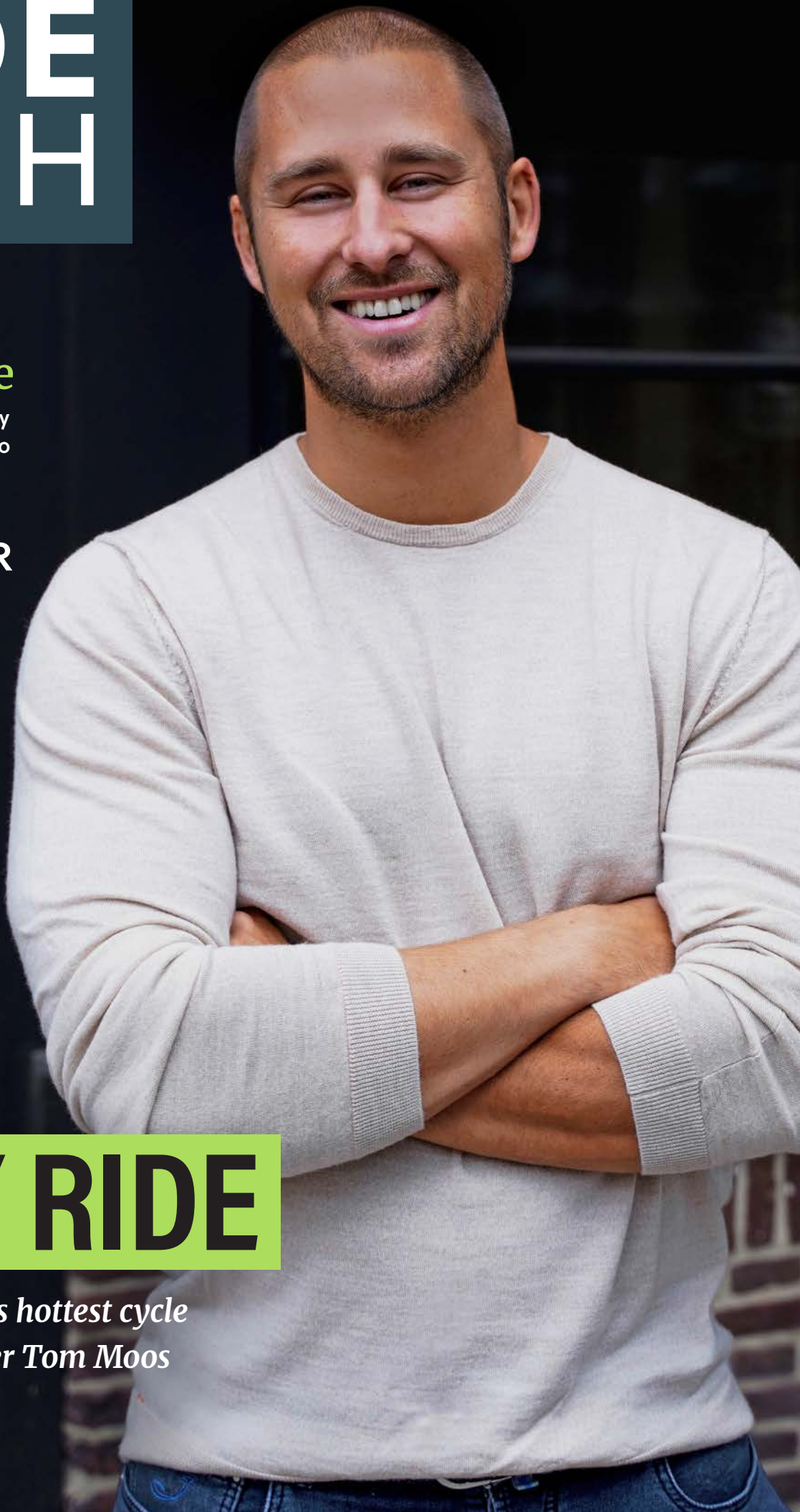
## The Training Stress Score

The secret to doing all  
your classes, injury-free

ON THE COVER

# HOLY RIDE

*Inside Amsterdam's hottest cycle  
studio, with founder Tom Moos*



*Tour de France celebrations in the Danish city of Nyborg included a yellow jersey group cycling class (see page 46)*



**“However strong the individual, teamwork is always stronger. It is on every business leader to set their team up for success and help their stars to shine”**



# YELLOW FEVER

**A**s I write this letter, it is the day after the thrilling final leg of the Tour de France 2022. My overriding sentiment: one of sheer awe at the power of teamwork and what can be achieved when individuals come together with a shared dream.

For me, it began with the Danish population. This was the first time the Tour had started in Denmark and, as my good friend Jesper 'JAS' Sørensen explains on page 52, “there was a massive focus on making it one big party, with armies of volunteers coming together to make it a success.”

Support for the race itself was also huge, with around a third of the Danish population turning out to watch the race go past. And what a race they saw, not only in the three Danish stages but throughout the 21 stages of this epic race – a Tour in which a small, slender boy from the pancake flat country of Denmark blew past all the experienced mountain climbers to claim not only the polka dot jersey but also overall Tour victory. Watching Jonas Vingegaard arrive in Paris wearing the yellow jersey is something I will never forget.

Let’s not forget that only five years ago, he was working at a fish factory in the morning before training in the afternoon. It just goes to show that nothing is impossible if you set a goal,

manage your training, develop the mental strength you need to win and have the right team around you.

And Vingegaard certainly had that, from the support of his girlfriend and management who worked to steady his famously edgy nerves, to the logistics and service personnel who kept his wheels turning smoothly, to his fellow riders in the Jumbo-Visma team who protected him throughout, making personal sacrifices for the greater good of the team and the yellow jersey. Everyone played their role in the final result.

And this, for me, is the real lesson: that however strong the individual, teamwork is always stronger – something that’s as true in business as it is in sport.

To echo the thoughts of Zack Schares in our fascinating look at the future of indoor cycling education (page 18), it is on every business leader to set their team up for success and help their stars to shine.



*Above: BODY BIKE proudly showcases the medal for its role in the special Tour de France cycling class*

**Uffe A. Olesen**  
CEO, Body Bike International A/S



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PHOTO: © BOOM CYCLE/UNITED FITNESS BRANDS



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How many studios can say they have members who come every day, often more than once a day? RIDE HIGH talks to the team behind Shine Cycle and Shine X to discover their secret.

**18** **Future-proofed instructors**  
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Cycling is a way of life in Denmark, but the Tour de France had never started this far north – until this year. The city of Nyborg hosted in style, including a yellow jersey group cycling event.



PHOTO: © SIMON CONNELLAN



## 56 **Recovery at work**

Recovery has become something of a buzzword recently, but as an instructor, how do you strike that perfect balance between staying well and running all your scheduled classes?

## 64 **Legend has it**

How has indoor cycling evolved over the years, and what does the future hold? We caught up with industry legends Emma Barry and Steven Renata at BODY BIKE's 25th birthday celebrations.

### CONTENT & CONTRIBUTIONS

*Do you have a great indoor cycling story you'd like to share? From studio successes to new innovations – and everything in between – we're keen to showcase best practice in indoor cycling from around the world. So if there are any topics you think we should cover, please let us know!*

**ALL IDEAS ARE WELCOME**  
– [info@ridehighmagazine.com](mailto:info@ridehighmagazine.com)



*Tom Moos launched the first Saints & Stars club in Amsterdam in 2018*

**“Indoor cycling is the #1 GX format in the Netherlands. We knew we needed to do something very different to stand out.”**

# Tom Moos

The founder of Saints & Stars, Amsterdam’s eye-catching boutique fitness brand, gives Kate Cracknell the low-down on its exciting new launch: immersive group cycling concept Holy Ride

## **When did you launch Holy Ride –and why?**

We launched Holy Ride in April of this year, inside our first Saints & Stars club in Amsterdam Oud-West – a club that originally opened in 2018.

The ‘why’ is interesting, because when we went back to our original drawings for the club, it included a Ride studio; even before we launched Saints & Stars, we had always planned to offer indoor cycling.

At the time, though, I thought it might be tough to execute three distinct group exercise formats really well, all at the same time. So instead of group cycling, we created our Personal Training offering – something I felt really comfortable with having worked in clubs for years – alongside boxing concept Holy Box and cardio HIIT bootcamp Holy Shred.

Now I realise we should have done Holy Ride from the beginning! Because it’s what our members want, and that’s how we make all our decisions.

We did an in-depth survey of our members and our former members to understand what more they wanted from

us and why they had left. The findings were very clear: people loved our brand but we didn’t have all the concepts they wanted. Specifically, we lacked indoor cycling and reformer pilates – with cycling far and away the number one request – and people were going elsewhere for these two disciplines. The decision to create Holy Ride was therefore a very easy one.

## **How would you describe Holy Ride?**

Indoor cycling is the #1 group exercise format in the Netherlands, and in Amsterdam, boutique cycling is incredibly competitive. We knew we needed to do something very different to stand out in a mature market.

At the same time, though, we felt there was an opportunity to raise standards. Looking across the market, we saw too little focus on performance. Yes, a ride has to be fun and a great experience, but we believe the output is important too. We saw strength tracks that we didn’t think were particularly good. We saw immersive environments poorly executed. We saw inconsistencies in quality within brands. ▶



*Above: This spine-tingling video will seriously whet your appetite for Holy Ride!*

*Below: A ride can be fun, but it also has to be effective, says Moos. The output matters too.*



- ▶ We therefore talk about Holy Ride as ‘Redefining the Standards’, because we’ve taken all of this and turned it on its head in our concept.

We use bikes where you can track all your data and we deliberately make our workouts a little tougher. It’s OK not to be for everyone. We format all our classes, minute by minute, because we believe a strong brand comes from providing the same experience and quality across every class. And we’ve spent €100,000 on the Holy Ride audiovisual system alone, for an immersive experience like no other.

That makes it the most expensive AV system we’ve ever installed, but we had the luxury of the new studio being the conversion of a pre-existing space. The club also already had members, so Ride classes were full the moment the studio opened. We expect to achieve ROI in three months.

Over and above all that, you only have one chance to make a good first impression, especially in a mature market. We were never going to cut corners or skimp on the investment.



*Right (all photos): Saints & Stars does events in style, and the launch party for Holy Ride was no exception*

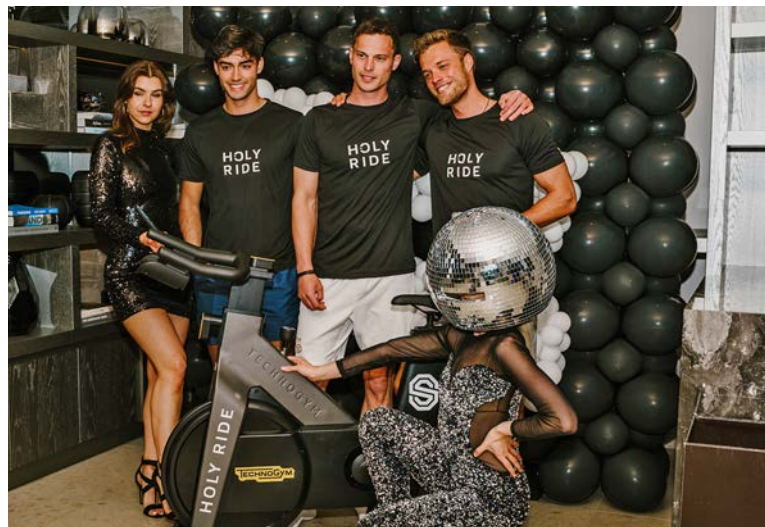
**“Holy Ride classes were full the moment the studio opened. We expect to achieve ROI in three months.”**

**Tell us more about the AV.**

We knew we wanted to create something really special, so we went outside the fitness sector and spoke to Awakenings Festival – the best festival producer in the Netherlands. It had previously used our studios for smaller events, so we’d seen the incredible lighting and sound effects they could create just from their laptops – far better than anything we’d ever done! We were therefore really keen to work with them, and they were excited by the chance to think outside the box and work on a brand new, small-space concept.

The result is exceptional. We have lasers and LEDs. We have ‘moving heads’ – the tool we use most, which allows us to create all sorts of shapes and effects with our lighting, flooding the space with light and movement.

We have water-based smoke, which is really cool. In a cycle studio, you’re part of a pack, but you also want your own space to focus on yourself. The smoke helps create that sense of personal space, which is impressive given we have 60 bikes in 130sq m of floorspace. I’ve never put so many people in a room! ▶





► And because our classes are formatted, we know exactly what's coming, so the sound and light all comes together perfectly with the class content. In a climb, for example, we use music and beams of light to build the 'scenery' of a climb. In a sprint, the lighting is suddenly very quick, with lots of colour and lots of white, culminating in a blinding flash of light at the end – done! – and then a sudden plunge into total darkness and silence before slowly building back up again.

The instructor also has the best seat in the house when it comes to the sound. This isn't the standard approach, but it ensures they're absolutely on-point in their delivery.

### **Are your stars OK with formatting?**

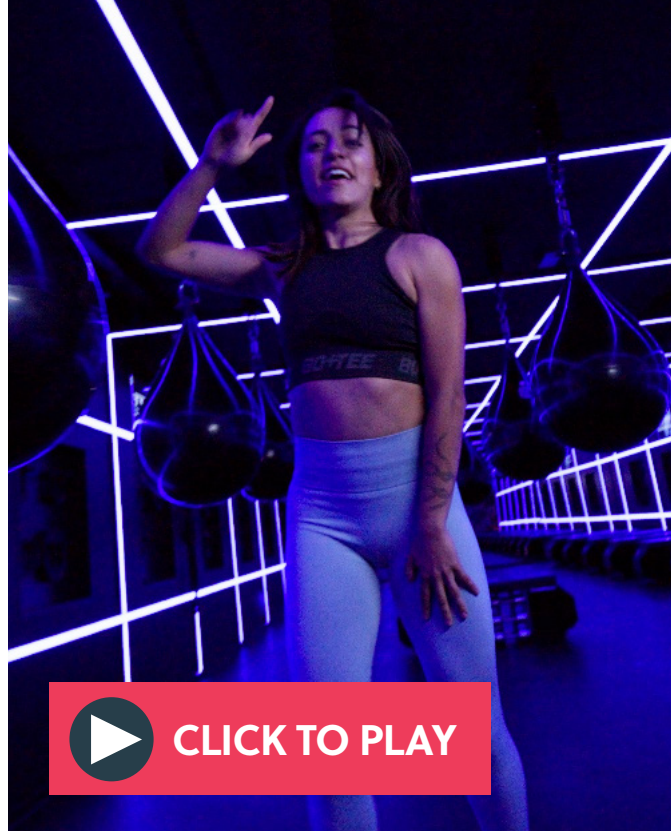
A lot of people say formatting kills creativity, but I disagree. All our classes

are formatted, not just Holy Ride, and I believe it's a real strength for us.

It certainly doesn't mean the experience is repetitive. Our members typically do around three classes a week, and we change formats regularly enough that you'd be unlucky to do the same class twice. This isn't hard to do, either, because there are moves in indoor cycling that you always do in every class. If you move sections around to be in a different order, change the music and the lighting, it's instantly a very different experience. Even just changing 15–20 per cent of a cycling class makes it feel totally different.

Then consider that even good instructors elsewhere might use the same playlist multiple times... I don't think it's formatting that makes the experience boring!

*Above: The Holy Ride studio has 60 bikes in 130sq m of floorspace*



*Left: “We make our workouts tougher. It’s OK not to be for everyone,” says Moos*

*Below: Holy Build is a members-only, technique-based small group strength class*

**“In the two months post-launch, we grew our membership by 30 per cent across both our clubs”**



- ▶ The challenge was persuading star instructors of this – because as with all our concepts, I wanted the absolute top indoor cycling instructors in Amsterdam to come onboard and deliver Holy Ride.

We'd done our research and we knew who we wanted, but getting them onboard was the toughest part of the whole project. The secret – other than paying them well and continually training them, which is something we've always prided ourselves on – was to get them involved early. We invited them to help develop the concept and the formatting, creating the product they would deliver, and we got the instructors we wanted.

**How has Holy Ride performed so far?**

In the two months post-launch – so May and June, which are traditionally quieter months for us – we grew our membership base by 30 per cent. That's our total member base across both our clubs, too, not just membership of our Oud-West club where Holy Ride is based.

Meanwhile, right now [18 July 22], we're scoring an average of 4.8 out of 5 in our customer reviews. That will likely get even higher once Ride has attracted a regular crowd; at the moment, lots of people just want to try it even though they aren't



*Above: Holy Ride turns indoor cycling norms on their head to 'redefine the standards'*

*Above right: At Saints & Stars, Moos set out to create a look & feel that the brand could own*

*Left: Saints & Stars offers seven distinct training concepts*

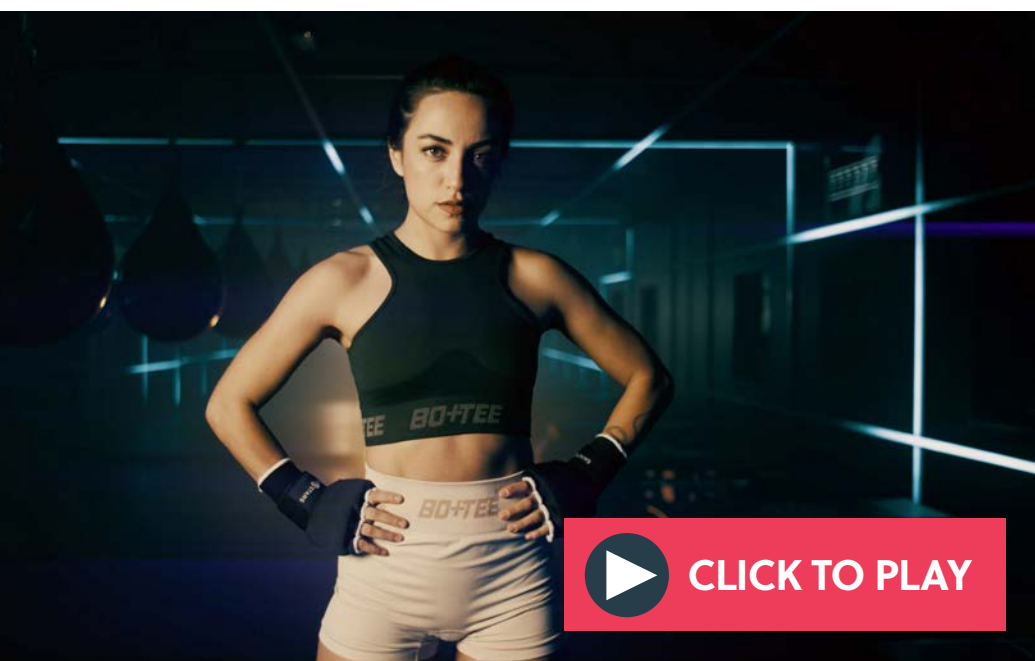




PHOTO: © EWOUDE ROOKS

**“Our member base grows each time we add a new concept, so it makes sense to make our product as ‘whole’ as possible”**

really fans of indoor cycling! That always happens when we launch something: people want to try all our new concepts.

**So, you have seven concepts now?**

Yes, we have Holy Ride, Holy Shred, Holy Box, Holy Booty, Holy Build – a small group technique-based workout for members only, not those on class packs – Personal Training and our Open Gym.

Holy Shred is the only concept that’s currently on offer at both our locations, because our clubs only about 10 minutes’ cycle ride apart. It’s easy for people to use both of them, depending on which workout they want to do that day.

Our members typically each do three or four of our seven concepts. There’s



PHOTO: © EMOUD ROOKS

Left (all images): At Saints & Stars' two clubs in Amsterdam, it's very much a case of architectural style as well as workout substance



PHOTO: © EMOUD ROOKS



PHOTO: © EMOUD ROOKS



PHOTO: © EMOUD ROOKS

- ▶ one cluster who veer towards Personal Training, Open Gym and Holy Build – typically members who like gym workouts but who want a more experiential environment. The other cluster is more group exercise-focused, whereby people mix and match between Holy Ride, Holy Shred, Holy Box and Holy Booty.

When we first set out, I feared that if we offered too much – too many concepts – we might dilute the brand. I no longer worry about that, though, and in large part that's because our marketing is higher level, focusing on our overarching purpose at Saints & Stars. Particularly for an audience of Millennials and Gen Zs, that's really important. They want to know why you do what you do.

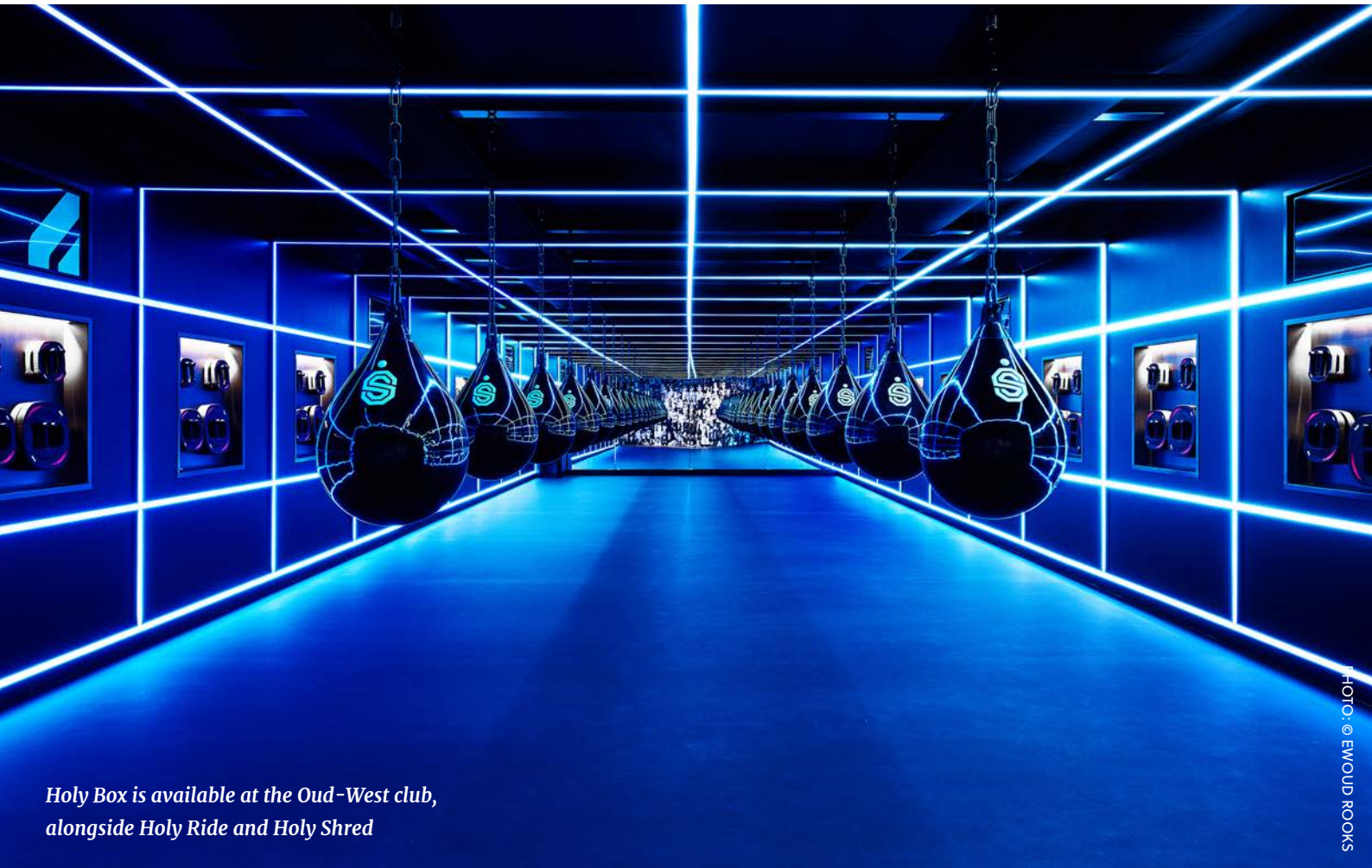
It's also the case that our member base grows each time we add a new concept, so it makes sense to make our product as 'whole' as possible.

### Will you launch more Holy Rides?

We won't retrofit Ride into our other existing club in Amsterdam Oud-Zuid. The club is large enough to house another studio, but our members spend lots of time in our communal areas and we don't want to detract from the experience by cramping the space, especially since the 30 per cent growth in membership.

We are, however, opening a new club in Amsterdam in early 2023. If Ride is still in our top three concepts when we design it, it will probably have a Ride studio!

As I say, we respond to what our members want, so in any new club we'll put in the most popular concepts. We might even introduce an eighth concept in the next



*Holy Box is available at the Oud-West club, alongside Holy Ride and Holy Shred*

PHOTO: © EMOUD ROOKS

**“We respond to what our members want. The Gen Z mindset changes all the time. You have to be ready to change with them.”**

one, which at this stage would most likely be reformer pilates. But we'll always have flexibility in space and mindset to change things in the future if needed. The Gen Z mindset changes all the time. You have to be ready to change with them.

**Any other plans you can share?**

The boutique sector remains challenging, with studios sadly still going out of business since the pandemic; I imagine there may be opportunities to grow further by acquiring and converting existing studios. I'd also love to take Saints & Stars beyond Amsterdam.

The pandemic changed my outlook in other ways, too. For example, I always said we would never do digital content, but in lockdown it was one of the many things we did to keep our community and our instructors engaged with our brand. The content was free to use at



*Moos is open to rolling out Holy Ride if it remains in the top three concepts*





► that point, and accessible to everyone, and it was great for brand awareness.

Moving forward, although I'm still not 100 per cent sold on digital, I have to recognise that hybrid lifestyles have embedded themselves. It won't be this year, but at some point in the future I can see us doing some sort of paid-for digital offering.

**What's the future of indoor cycling?**

In Amsterdam, which is the market I know, I believe indoor cycling will become increasingly immersive and experiential. There are still a lot of dark boxes at the moment!

We'll see the technology that customers experience at festivals, for example, becoming affordable for smaller-scale delivery in fitness studios. Operators will need to keep their fingers on the pulse to find the next exciting thing that will engage people in their studio experiences.

We looked at holograms for Holy Ride, for example. In the end, the technology was still too expensive for our business model – for now anyway – but things like this will continue to come through and we need to be ready to embrace it.

**“I believe indoor cycling will become increasingly experiential. There are still a lot of dark boxes at the moment!”**

**What drives you in all of this?**

A business like ours isn't based on spreadsheets or business models or trying to make the most money possible. The only way to build a business like this is to do what you love, focus on what you can be really good at, add your own flavour – because a copy job will never, ever work – and then put your whole soul into it.

I love fitness – I train every day – and I love looking for new trends and creating new things. This is my passion and I love the fact that it's also my job. ●

*Above: Saints & Stars invested €100,000 in the AV system for the Holy Ride studio*

 @saintsandstars

# Future-proofed instructors

As indoor cycling evolves, how must education evolve with it to ensure we have the instructor workforce we need? Our expert panel share their thoughts.

## TASH MARSHALL BEAN

*Founder, Authentic Instructor Training Inc.*

**D**elivery methods have no doubt diversified within indoor cycling, encouraging all of us to keep learning, growing and challenging ourselves.

Yet particularly as our sector re-opens from the pandemic, bringing a wave of new clients into fitness, I believe it's critically important that we take classes back to basics; while we've all had time to research our trade, now may not be the best time to introduce all sorts of next-level moves into your classes.

As an instructor, your role is to make every participant feel successful, but I'm currently seeing far too many instructors making things too complicated for their riders and leaving people behind. So, my first observation from an education perspective: instructors must (re)learn how to integrate new riders with well-versed riders to maintain client success. Practise next-level choreography at home or post-class with fellow instructors, but only slowly introduce new moves and combos so you build your class together.



Second, let's be honest, very few people fall in love with a stationary bike. They fall in love with the experience of riding together to the beat of incredible music in an inclusive community. It's why we love doing music workshops – because, from boutique studios to big box gyms, music is key to instructors scaling up their class experiences.

All the instructors we train learn to 'tap' every song – using a BPM app – to register the beat. Once they have the BPM, our tempo guidelines tell them how and where that track could be used in class. Only then do we look at musical rhythms, big beat drops and lyrical connection to give their riders goosebumps.

Next, teach instructors to be comfortable on camera: they're going to need it in this hybrid world. Our experience is that instructing online is harder than in-person, so we actually train people to deliver online first. This builds a solid foundation before we move on to in-person.

Online instruction requires a very different skillset from in-person to ensure



Right: "People fall in love with riding together to the beat of great music"



those on the other side of the screen feel engaged and seen. At a minimum, your energy should be at least 25 per cent higher online, with a good balance struck between showing great technique on the bike and being off-bike, connecting with clients individually and checking their form.

Finally, my firm belief is that you can't teach someone to be an elite indoor cycling instructor in eight hours alone. There are so many levels to creating a great experience, and it takes time to build people's confidence to get out there and deliver. I'd like to see a governing body in place to monitor the industry and ensure consistent standards are maintained.

Yet however much indoor cycling evolves, I believe one requirement remains unchanged: whether newly qualified or highly experienced, instructors must forge a genuine connection with their customers, and that requires an ongoing focus on building next-level engagement skills. Emma Barry said it best: "If clients like you, they'll leave you. If they love you, they'll stay."

**"Music is key to scaling up class experiences: our instructors learn to 'tap' every song using a BPM app so they know how to use it in class"**

 @trainingwithtashie



Tash Marshall Bean shows cycling instructor trainees how it's done

# NOËL NOCCILOLO

*Cycle master trainer,  
boutique thought  
leader, consultant*

**B**ig box gyms must decide if they wish to be known for great instructor talent. With other departments competing for budget, this is not always the case. If they do, a new approach to investment is required, countering the lure of high-promising boutique studios by rewarding talent financially and investing in continuing education, hosting regular workshops for free or at a reduced price.

Meanwhile, boutiques must move away from the 'one big training pre-opening only' approach, and/or knee-jerk training only when competition arises, instead investing in regular growth and mentorship. Talent is the product; riders may come for the luxe amenities, but they stay for the connection forged in class by the instructor. Internal curricula and continued up-leveling of skills has never been more essential.

But what should that continuing education look like? For me, nothing will replace quality continued education that's rooted in exercise science, evolving over time with new research and conclusions and not adding a move just because it was seen on Instagram. Alongside this, however, as gyms and studios increasingly compete for riders' time, money and attention – including at-home – instructors must also hone their training for personality, vibe and inclusion.



I myself hit the jackpot in that I completed the entire SoulCycle instructor training in 2011: less about anatomy and physiology, more about music manipulation, energy and performance. I then took the Schwinn Classic certification the following year with Rachel Buschert Vazaralli, who blew my mind with her personality and musicality when delivering scientific principles. She made pure riding fun: on the beat as well as with a purpose. Both sides of that training coin have helped immensely in the way I've delivered education myself since 2014, showing how every style of cycling class can be made captivating and 'entertraining'.

As co-creator of PEP For FitPros, I also believe the way we use our voices is key to being captivating and 'entertraining'. In our course, we teach instructors to preserve their voices and protect their careers, but also to authentically differentiate themselves

*Above: Noël Nocciolo believes every style of class can be made 'entertraining'*

***“When coaching those unfamiliar with power training, I aim to tangibly show the impact of efficient pedal-stroke speeds even when still riding to the music they love”***



Above: Nocciolo completed SoulCycle's instructor training as well as Schwinn's

Right: Instructors must learn to differentiate themselves vocally, says Nocciolo

vocally from other coaches. Personality, energy and attitude can all be traced back to how we use our voices healthily and as performers: screaming on microphones, losing our voices and risking longer-term voice injury are out; compelling coaching is in.

My training always supports technology too. When coaching those unfamiliar with power training, I aim to get a demo bike with a power meter to tangibly show the impact of efficient pedal-stroke speeds, even when still riding to the music they love and whose beats they want to ride.

In short, I like to see continuing education as a buffet we take from and budget for annually, taking the best of the certifications, and the best of the internal trainings and performance workshops, to help new and veteran instructors to grow and become more rounded. I'm interested in what we can add to our educational lives rather than take away. ▶





*“Lack of leadership is the greatest impediment to us having the instructor workforce we need. That’s why leadership is the focus of my new workshop.”*

## ZACK SCHARES

### *Fitness consultant & talent agent*

**A**s indoor cycling evolves, there are many instructors – whether newly qualified or in it for years – who are looking to upskill to meet the emerging, predominantly boutique-driven expectation of a true performance in the saddle.

It’s why I run multi-weekend instructor training workshops that dedicate a full weekend to getting each participant up on the podium, running a class and taking feedback. I want everyone to really understand what it takes to be up there, engaging the room, being a great coach and mentor rather than just a good rider.

I also encourage people to find their own style; it’s not about going online and watching the top brands and influencers, then trying to copy them. It’s great to be inspired by others, but these brands do so much behind the scenes to lead people in the way they do. It simply doesn’t work if you try and copy them. You have to find your own style.

If you want to run a studio yourself, you also have to be a great leader. You have to set your team up for success.

I’ve sadly seen too many examples of instructors leaving their employers to set up on their own, thinking they can do better but without any strong leadership skills. Their mindset isn’t right: they push to make it all happen quickly, putting pressure on their teams, so focused on doing better than the local competition that they haven’t properly thought through how they want to run their own businesses, build their own brands, lead their own teams.

Meanwhile, head instructors don’t really know how to manage those teams, especially when they’re filled with creative types as instructors tend to be.

I believe this lack of leadership is the greatest impediment to us having the instructor workforce we need, which is why leadership is the focus of my new workshop. I believe this is the most important way

*Right (all photos): Zack Schares encourages all his students to find their own style, getting each of them to spend time on the podium to understand what it takes.*

*“It’s not about going online and watching the top brands and influencers, then trying to copy them,” he says.*



in which education can evolve to give us the indoor cycling instructors we need.

Launching in September in Mexico City, I’ll be delivering the workshop in partnership with Christopher Chandler from The Nutrition School – a specialist in health and life coaching. With a basic premise that strong leadership starts from within, we’ll define what leadership means at different levels of a business and cover topics such as building credibility and trust, giving feedback, problem solving, empowerment and effective listening.

We recommend that at least two people attend from each organisation – owner, head coach, instructor – so teams can take away their shared learnings and grow together.

I believe this workshop has the potential to make a real difference. I believe the instructor workforce we need will result from strong leaders setting that workforce up for success. ▶

 @zax\_fit



## JENNIFER SAGE

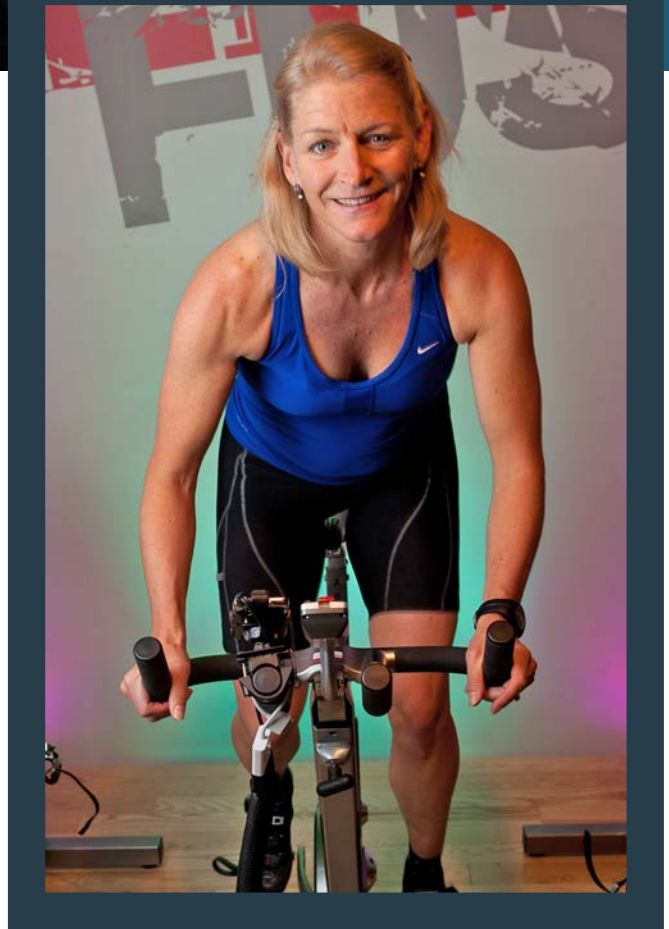
### *Founder, Indoor Cycling Association*

I have enough to say on this topic that I could fill pages! Instead, I'm going to deep dive into how in-person and online education can combine to produce the highest quality instructors.

During lockdown, we saw an explosion of online training courses, certifications and virtual classes. Yet for me, the hands-on guidance of in-person education – so valuable especially when just setting out as an instructor – is hard to replicate online. I firmly believe original certifications should be delivered live.

Where online can add real value is in continuing education – something many studios didn't insist on pre-pandemic for cost reasons. Online is a cost-effective way to broaden knowledge: while your primary certification should be on the bikes you teach on, you can upskill by taking online courses from other providers.

Online courses, e-books and indoor cycling membership sites can also be excellent ways to enhance your knowledge of cycling science, technique, coaching and cueing, communication skills, motivation, power



training, profile design, sourcing music, using the power of music to match the message of your profile, working with older or less fit riders, teaching virtual classes and so on.

Indeed, more complex subjects such as exercise physiology and teaching with power are arguably better studied online, simply because of the ability to repeat the content.

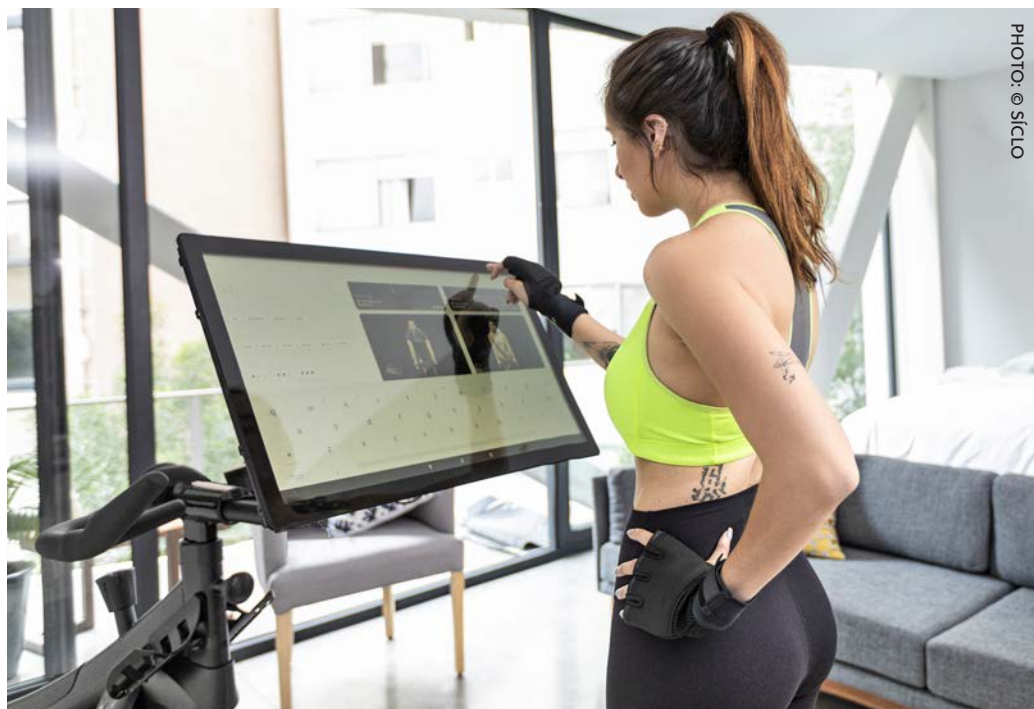
And even virtual cycling classes, while not a course per se, are a fabulous way to improve



*Above left: It's important to understand power, whether your bikes have meters or not*

*Bottom left: Jennifer Sage is the founder of the Indoor Cycling Association*

*Right: Study the virtual classes of your favourite instructors, advises Sage*



## **“Expand your knowledge of the science of cycling, not just the entertainment aspect. You’ll become a more rounded instructor who can create classes with a purpose.”**

your coaching skills. Subscribe to your favourite master instructor’s virtual rides and write down their inspirational cues. It’s not much different from being at a conference!

But proceed with caution: there are some very poor instructors out there sharing sub-standard ‘education’. Thoroughly vet your sources and be wary of free content. Just because it’s popular, doesn’t make it good.

Other tips for online education include ensuring it’s based on proper exercise science. Seek to expand your knowledge of the science of cycling, not just the entertainment aspect that’s so popular at the moment. You’ll become a more rounded instructor who can create classes with a purpose and more confidently answer riders’ questions.

Look for a course on teaching with power. Even if you don’t have power meters on your bikes, you’re still producing it. When you understand the elements of producing power (cadence and resistance/force), you’ll have solid foundations to create safe, effective classes that produce results for your riders.

Seek courses in teaching across the entire intensity spectrum, so you don’t fall into the common trap of only ever teaching high-intensity intervals. Consider taking a course or reading a book on working with elderly riders. Seek courses in how to be an empowering, motivational, inspirational, engaging instructor (riders will flock to your classes!)

Finally, when choosing your online courses, ideally find someone with prior experience of training instructors in-person – they will have a greater understanding of relaying information than someone who’s never taught live workshops – and make sure there’s a way to contact them with questions. Check they provide transcripts and/or handouts, too.

Done well, online continuing education can play a major role in improving the quality of our instructor workforce. ▶

 @indoorcyclingassociation

 @ridewithjennifer



PHOTO: © BOOM CYCLE/UF8

## LOUISE AGER

### *Fitness education consultant*

In Denmark, the last couple of years has seen a shift away from specialist cycling classes – larger timetables of differentiated classes catering specifically for beginners versus intermediates versus the ‘go hard or go home’ brigade – and towards smaller timetables of signature classes where the instructor has to try and cater for all levels and needs in one class.

This is particularly evident at larger gym chains, and for me it’s a great shame. Of course, I appreciate the desire to deliver consistent experiences. I appreciate that many instructors are sadly not sufficiently qualified nor experienced to choreograph their own excellent workouts – I’ll come on to that in a minute. I appreciate that having too many cycling classes on the timetable may mean they aren’t all full.

However, I believe we must offer diversity in class styles to bring a broader audience to indoor cycling: classes for beginners, for overweight people, for seniors, for endurance enthusiasts, for those short of time, for fans



of different music genres. The more generic the experience, the less likely you are to really engage someone.

Education has a major role to play here. Five to 10 years ago, cycling certifications in Denmark took between five and eight weeks to complete. Now many have dropped to three to five days

– a dramatically condensed timeframe that I believe offers little scope to explore the wide range of possible class styles. I think this is a major contributor to the shortage of really good cycling instructors now, and in turn to the timetables clubs can deliver.

I’d like to see certifications take longer again – 50–70 hours as a guideline – to allow new instructors to really get into the detail of different class types and audience needs. Newer topics like technology and online delivery need to be covered too, and there must be plenty of time for practice in the saddle. New instructors have to learn how to capture an audience.

They must then continue to develop themselves, attending workshops to keep

*Above: Instructor training should explore numerous styles of class, says Ager*



PHOTO: © ØRBIKE

*Above: We should let instructors be true to themselves and focus on their strengths, says Ager*

building on their initial certification, fine-tuning their craft and getting better and better at engaging people, making it fun, reading the mood of the room and instantly adapting to it in their delivery and even the shape of the ride itself. Mastery is an ongoing process.

Put bluntly, we need to make instructors good enough again that they don't have to rely on templates. We need to push standards back up.

We must then let instructors be true to themselves, focusing on whatever they're really good at and the audiences they're really good with. They don't have to be able to do it all – being different is good – but they do need to be better at delivering whatever they choose to specialise in.

Of course, the next step is educating studio managers and supervisors to start scheduling for a broader audience, with targeted classes that have a purpose and an intentional audience. This will be a process, but I do believe it's the right thing to do. ▶

***“I'd like to see certifications take longer again – 50–70 hours as a guideline – to allow new instructors to really get into the detail of different class types and audience needs”***

# ANGELA REED-FOX

*Course director, Indoor Cycling Institute*



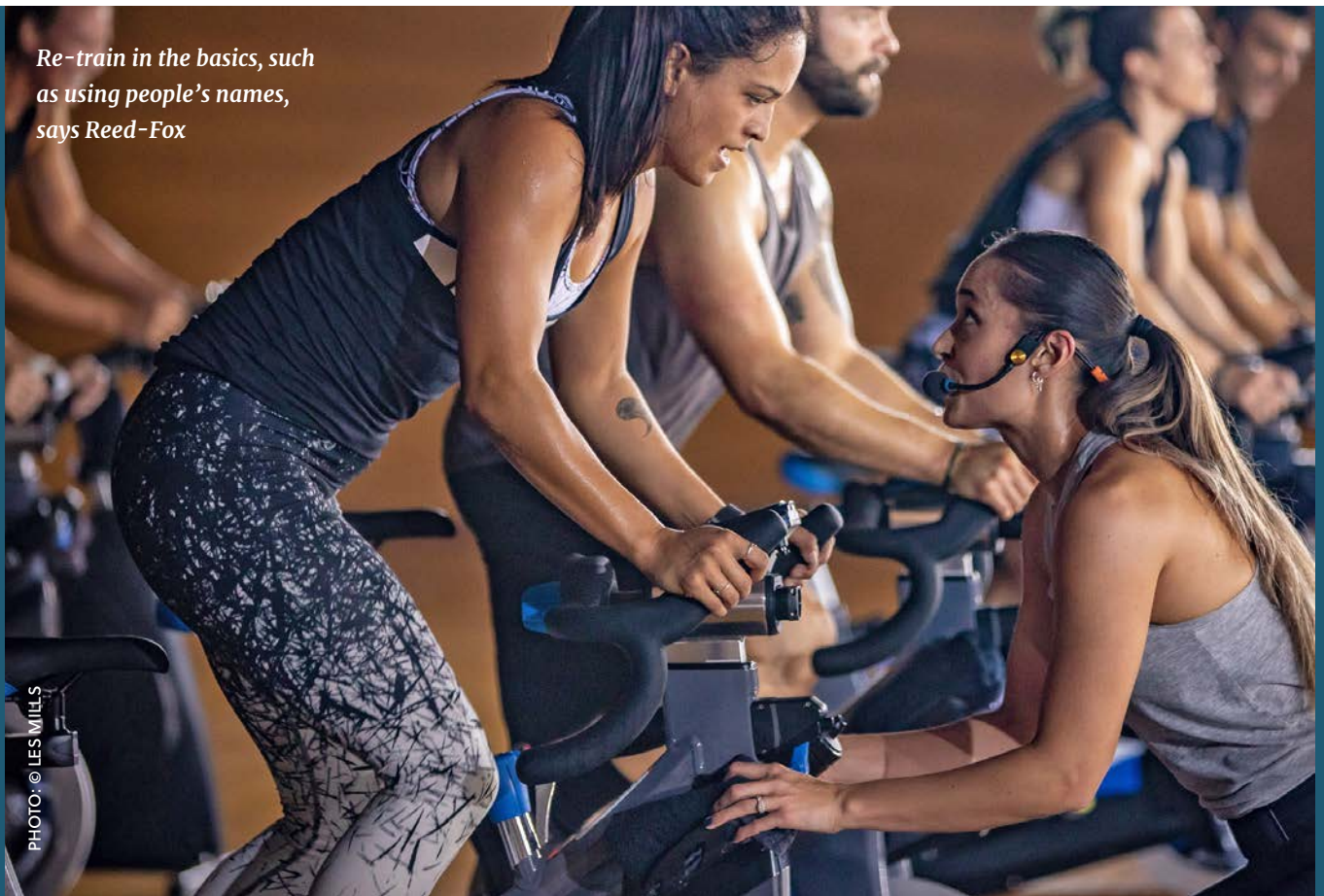
I believe the quickest, easiest way to upgrade a cycling studio experience is not through hardware, but through supporting instructors to improve their knowledge and skills.

Let's start with technology. With the growth in wearables, riders are now far more informed about their bodies' response to exercise. Instructors must upgrade their knowledge accordingly; weaving things like heart rate into a workout, boosting effectiveness for riders who have that tech, is easy to do without cluttering your instruction if you know how. The same goes for bikes with accurate power meters: instructors must upskill to design and deliver effective sessions.

Because 'effective' matters: people want fun, but they also want results, and just pedalling on a bike isn't guaranteed to deliver them. I spent 10 years as a nurse and met so many people who felt they'd tried everything and nothing had worked. Instructors must learn

*“I spent 10 years as a nurse and met so many people who felt they'd tried everything and nothing had worked. Instructors must learn to design sessions with specific goals rather than just filling 45 minutes.”*

*Re-train in the basics, such as using people's names, says Reed-Fox*



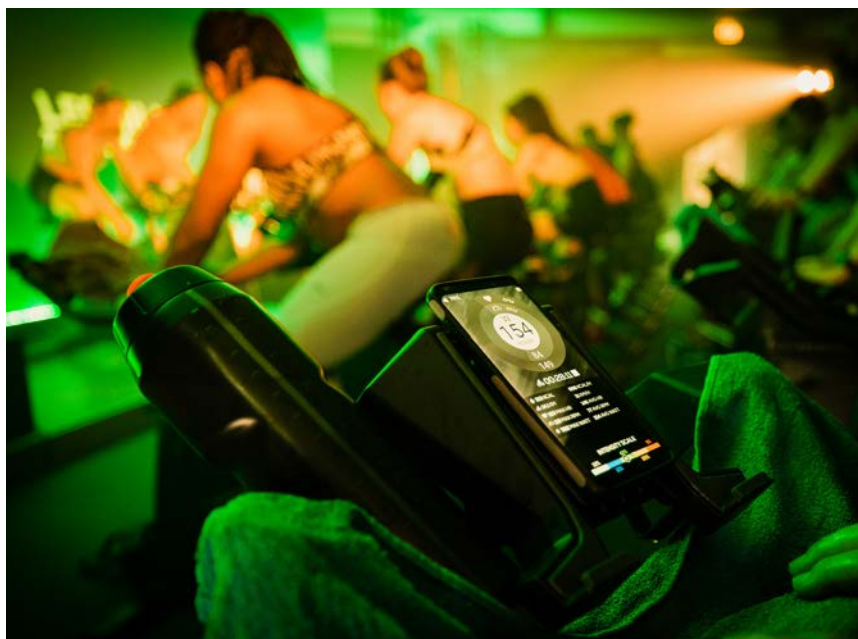
*Right: Riders are hi-tech these days; instructors must upgrade their knowledge too*

*Below: Cycling is accessible to all fitness levels, provided instructors coach appropriately*

to design and deliver sessions with specific goals rather than just filling 45 minutes, helping gyms build a reputation for quality.

With a growing incidence of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other lifestyle conditions, there must also be more emphasis on closing the gap between fitness and health. Done well, indoor cycling is safe and accessible for a large proportion of the population, so instructors must be trained to recognise this – and to instruct in a way that attracts, retains and boosts results for this wider cohort. This will include effective communication: nurturing, challenging and encouraging people rather than just shouting.

Safety is also key. I see the same mistakes being repeatedly made by instructors who don't understand – or have forgotten – the basics about resistance, cadence and the safe interplay between the two. That's a massive training issue and can

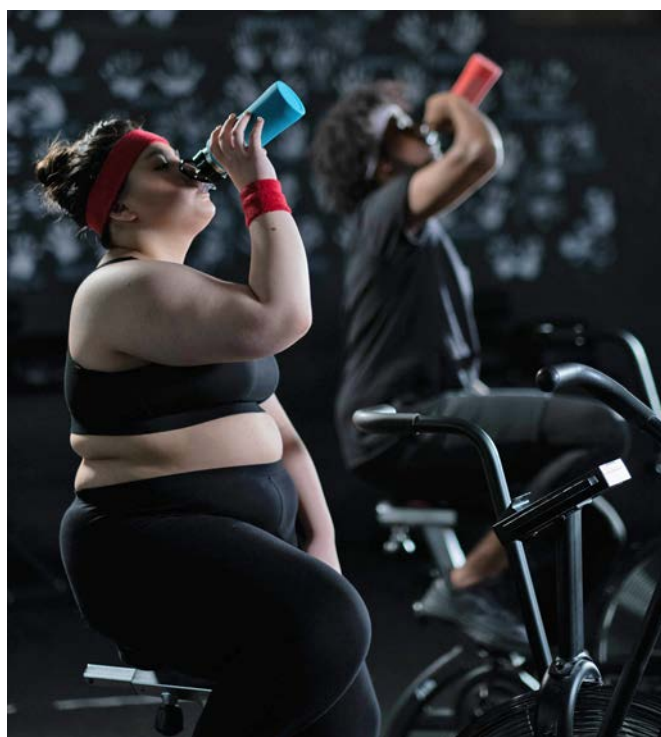


easily lead to (avoidable) injuries and even litigation. Instructors must be able to lead safely and spot unsafe cycling in class.

They must also remember – even be (re)trained in – the basics of customer service: arrive first, leave last, know names, address riders by them. As remote offerings proliferate, every gym must identify where they can excel over online and really go for it. Community and camaraderie will be crucial.

I also think there's a growing and overdue need for studio management and lead instructor training. It doesn't require much, but they should certainly know how to maintain safety and best practice, how to recruit and support instructors, what to keep an eye out for. As tech and bikes become more advanced, and riders come to expect more, this is becoming a discrete set of responsibilities that needs to be covered within training.

Finally, many instructors just want to excel at indoor cycling: the discipline is heading into its own space, and that's entirely right. I believe it's outdated to expect instructors to also have a certificate in gym instructing, PT or exercise to music. Cycling shouldn't be CPD on top of one of those qualifications. Rather, there should be regularly updated, indoor cycling CPD on top of a dedicated, entry-level indoor cycling certificate. ●



 @indoorcyclinginstitute



*Azemah & Bahar: "We felt Brunei was ready for a boutique experience"*

# SHINE BRUNEI

How many studios can say they have members who come every day, often more than once a day? Kate Cracknell talks to the team behind Shine Cycle and Shine X to discover the secrets of success at this community-focused studio.



*Her Royal Highness Princess Azemah Ni'matul Bolkiah & Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Muda Bahar*



## *Empowering a community*

Her Royal Highness Princess Azemah Ni'matul Bolkiah & Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Muda Bahar – Shine founders

### *Why did you create Shine?*

Boutique fitness is a global phenomenon, offering specialised, intimate spaces for working out and socialising. We used to live in London and took classes that were fun, inspiring and kept us fit.

We believe people are now more motivated than ever to improve their wellness and become physically active, and we felt Brunei was ready for this boutique experience.

We commissioned Barbara Chancey to guide us through the journey. Her team took our ideas and created two beautiful, functional spaces unlike anything in Brunei.

### *What was your vision?*

Shine is about empowering people to live life to their full potential. Our vision was to create high-end boutique fitness studios with top-quality instructors and facilities. ▶



- ▶ We wanted to build a brand that not only centres on a great workout but that also offers spaces that inspire people to adopt a positive, fun and energetic lifestyle.

### **How would you describe the studios?**

From the moment you walk through our doors, you'll forget about the outside world and feel the positive energy and passion that fuel both Shine Cycle and Shine X. Every aspect of our studios is designed with meticulous detail to brighten your life. From our friendly front desk staff to our internationally trained instructors, we offer a high level of fitness so you can experience a higher level of success.

We offer fun and inspiring classes – something you can enjoy daily and look forward to the next workout – as we want to encourage and motivate people to make fitness a lifestyle. Led by our amazing

instructors, our classes aim to make you feel as though you performed at your peak, with a little bit of euphoria that you can carry with you for the rest of your day.

We drew our inspiration from our own experiences of joining classes at other boutique fitness studios during our travels – from how uplifted and energised it made us feel. In those classes, we were pushed to our limits in a unique blend of fun, intensity and camaraderie.

We felt Shine would be the best way to translate our love for fitness, delivering happiness through exercise and empowering people to be their best selves.

### **What are you most proud of?**

What is particularly special is the community we have created. Incredible friendships have been forged that go beyond our studio walls. People bond through an unspoken support.

*Above: Shine X launched in June 2019, inspired by the boutique bootcamps*





*Top right: The founders remain involved and hands-on in the day-to-day operations at Shine*

*Bottom right: Shine has an incredibly strong community, with regular member events*



**“Incredible friendships have been forged that go beyond our studio walls. People bond through an unspoken support.”**

We are proud and grateful to be part of an incredible community where people of all fitness levels can come together to radiate positive vibes and become stronger together.

***How important is exercise to you?***

Very important! We both play polo competitively and we also play other sports such as tennis and golf. For us to stay on top of our game, we need to stay fit, flexible and work on specific movements to develop our strength and prevent injury. Exercise

is an integral part of our lives, benefiting us in our sports and in our health.

***What are your future plans for Shine?***

We believe in doing one thing extremely well and we specialise in coaching creativity, class programming and special events to keep momentum strong. We also host guest instructors from the US, UK and Asia.

We are exploring new ideas which are top secret for now, but many surprises are on the way. Stay tuned! ▶



## Spreading happiness

Aiman Abdullah – Studio manager

### **When and why was Shine created?**

When Shine Cycle opened its doors in February 2018, there was nothing else like it in Brunei. Even now, it's the only true cycling boutique in the country.

Shine was founded by Her Royal Highness Princess Azemah Ni'matul Bolkihah and Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Muda Bahar – Azemah and Bahar. The concept was theirs and they remain 100 per cent involved in the business every day, so only they can really elaborate on their vision for Shine. I do, however, know they enjoy this style of boutique training when they travel overseas and they wanted the Brunei population to be able to enjoy it too, raising the bar in our local fitness industry and supporting the health and wellbeing of the nation.

From the outset, Shine Cycle had two studios: Ride, which has 33 bikes; and Studio

B, where we run small group strength classes of up to eight people, based around TRX but also incorporating assault bikes, rowers, boxing, kettlebells and other weights.

A few months after launch, we also added yoga to the Studio B timetable, catering for a maximum of 11 people across three different styles of yoga. It means we can offer cardio, strength and flexibility all in one destination, with most members doing a bit of everything.

### **Tell us about your community.**

Shine Cycle is dedicated to helping its members achieve a healthy lifestyle through exercise and inspiration. It's about training your body, focusing your mind and finding a new radiance inside and out. It's about the power of positive energy: we believe that as your light shines brighter, you ignite that same power in others. ▶



Above: Shine Cycle is about the power of positive energy, and its world-class instructors lead the way

Right: Get a flavour of the workouts at Shine Cycle (video above) and Shine X (video below)

**“Shine Cycle is about positive energy. We believe that as your light shines brighter, you ignite that same power in others.”**



**CLICK ABOVE & BELOW TO PLAY**



► And we see this in our community of around 300 members. Our reception team provides a warm welcome, our instructors motivate everyone in class, our space allows people to escape the stresses of everyday life, our customer service is consistently excellent... but it's also our members who spur each other on to train regularly, making pacts to work out together the next day.

And members do attend very regularly: we run classes at 6:15am, 5:30pm and 6:45pm every day, plus some lunchtime classes, and many people come two or even three times a day, perhaps doing TRX in the morning and a cycle class in the afternoon.

The absolute minimum we see is one or two visits a week, but that's very rare. Generally it's at least four or five visits a week, and most people come at least once or twice a day – so much so that when a member is heading out, we don't say "goodbye". We say "see you later" or "see you tomorrow".

### ***Then you launched Shine X...***

Shine X launched in June 2019, once again inspired by the workouts our founders were enjoying overseas – in this case, boutique bootcamps. Combining treadmill running and strength, each day's workout focuses on a different body part: Monday



*Above: The lighting at Shine X was designed by rock concert specialists*

*Left: The Shine community regularly takes part in charity team events*



is legs and abs, Tuesday is chest and back, Wednesday is full body and abs, and so on.

We have capacity for 19 people in our Shine X studio, although the 19th is 'double tread' – you don't do weights. Some members want this, though, so we give them the option to specifically book that space.

Shine X is located just a few units away from Shine Cycle, and while some members just do Shine X, many combine Shine X and Shine Cycle, mixing and matching for a well-rounded workout routine.

Our Unlimited package covers Ride and Strength (TRX) only. You can also buy monthly Shine X-only packages. But if you want to do a bit of everything – Ride, Strength, Yoga and Shine X – you need to go for a Universal class package. ▶

**“Most people come at least once or twice a day, so we don't say 'goodbye' – we say 'see you later' or 'see you tomorrow'”**



► **What cycling classes do you offer?**

Set to a soundtrack of great music, ours are rhythm cycling classes, with most following our signature 45-minute Shine programme: joyful, high-intensity, low-impact cardio parties that strengthen mind, body and soul.

We do have 30-minute class formats, but these are only used occasionally, such as during fasting months. At other times, our members tend to prefer 45-minute classes.

We have a Tag Team class every Saturday night, too, with two instructors up on stage and a great party atmosphere. There's fancy dress, special themes and the rider of that week's 'lucky bike' – chosen at random via a lottery draw – wins a prize. Tag Team is incredibly popular and always waitlisted.

Then at least twice a month, we host a Custom Ride: a private class where the studio is rented out for a celebration such as a birthday ride. It's basically a healthy disco!

All our programmes are designed by us, with templates outlining the overall shape of the class as well as suggested movements for a safe workout; we don't go crazy in the saddle. But then we hand over to our instructors to bring their own style to each class. They're the ones in the room with our members. They see what our members enjoy. They know who are beginners and who are more experienced. We give them the flexibility to choreography accordingly.

We also ask our instructors to help shape the studio timetable, which changes slightly each week to incorporate what members have told our instructors they want.

**How do you train your instructors?**

Our original team of master trainers all went to the US to train, and every new instructor – we now have a team of eight – goes to London to experience the studios there. But it doesn't



Left: At Shine Cycle, Studio B offers yoga classes as well as small group strength workouts

Right: At Shine X, workouts are designed to train a different body part each day

Below: Don't you wish your club did this? The Shine community takes part in The Shine Games

**“The studio timetable changes slightly each week to incorporate what members have told our instructors they want”**



stop there, with regular visits to conferences and studios around the world, from London to Singapore, Malaysia to the Philippines.

We also invite guest instructors to come in from overseas. They instruct classes for our team and spend time with our instructors, sharing knowledge and ideas. From this, our instructors can take away the elements they know will work in Brunei culture.

Shine trains instructors in other markets, too: we recently sent a team to train instructors in Singapore, for example. Our view is that this helps our instructors as much as it helps the people learning from them, furthering their own development.

So, ours is a constant learning and development process, with our instructor team both supported and empowered. As a result, only two instructors have ever left Shine and it was pretty unavoidable: one joined the army and one moved to Australia! ▶

*Right: Shine regularly brings in guest instructors from overseas to continually coach and develop its own instructors*

► **Tell us about Shine's charity work.**

There's a strong social agenda at Shine, with a culture of giving to those in need and helping as much as we can.

Across the year, we host special classes that tie in with events like International Women's Day, Breast Cancer Day, World Autism Awareness Day and so on. All proceeds from these special classes – and sometimes that whole day of classes – are then donated to a relevant NGO. We also have donation boxes around the club, sometimes for money, other times for things like unused shoes that we can distribute to rural areas.

We also run Shine Community Challenges; we always try to get our members involved in our charity efforts rather than just making simple donations ourselves. Members form teams of two to four people and we set them challenges like 'most classes in a month'. There'll be a range of targets they can aim for, with Shine donating a set amount to charity for each target achieved. It's a win-win-win: members stay active and feel involved in the good work, Shine benefits from even more regular attendance, and the charities benefit from the donations.

**What plans for the future?**

We take all member and instructor feedback onboard and continually try to make what we do even better. We were thinking about introducing barre classes before COVID, for example, so we may well do this now.

In fact, our instructors are always coming up with new ideas: new equipment to keep things interesting in Studio B, for example. Our approach is to stay flexible and let our instructors take the lead: they know what our members want and they're also incentivised to ensure every class is great, with commission paid per class attendee on top of their basic class fee.



**“For us, success is asking our members what impact Shine has had on their life and hearing how happy it makes them”**





Would we open another studio or even a new concept? Maybe – we discuss lots of ideas– but probably not yet. We pride ourselves on our customer service and quality of our instructors, so we’d need a really strong team in place to guarantee those same standards at any new location, all without letting levels drop at our original studio. We’d never expand at the expense of quality, and would certainly never franchise Shine.

**What motivates you personally?**

I get a real buzz from seeing people coming out of class having worked hard

but also smiling and knowing they’ve achieved something. We’re helping people become better versions of themselves.

For us, success is asking our members what impact Shine has had on their life and hearing how happy it makes them, how much they look forward to coming back, how we help them escape their daily stresses and provide a space where they don’t feel judged.

I’m also inspired by our founders, who are constantly involved in the business, always looking for ways to make Shine an even better place not only for our members but for our team too. ▶



## Designing a brand

Barbara Chancey - Studio designer & consultant

### Light and dark

"Design is storytelling, and both Shine Cycle and Shine X create journeys full of adventure and curiosity, incorporating a mix of materials and influences that evoke two opposite moods.

"At Shine Cycle, the brief was to create a sense of radiant joy. A place where your inner light shines to inspire the light in others. It's a joyful and uplifting space: open and welcoming with touches of art deco modernism that nod to the client's affinity for art, travel, design and appreciation of quiet details.

"Shine X is the direct opposite in both attitude and design: it's the dark, mysterious, rebellious little sister that reflects the journey we all go on during a workout. From dark doubts to bright accomplishments, the design embraces both conflict and euphoria, incorporating

recycled materials and reclaimed wood indigenous to Brunei's rainforest."

### Lighting the way

"Shine's illumination is designed to evoke emotion at the touch of a button, from soft candlelit moments of reflection to high-energy, grand finale sprints to the finish line.

"Daryl Vaughan of Light Partners – a lighting designer who's worked with some of the biggest names in rock & roll, from Genesis and Paul McCartney to Sting, Pink Floyd and the Rolling Stones – created the lighting systems at Shine Cycle and Shine X.

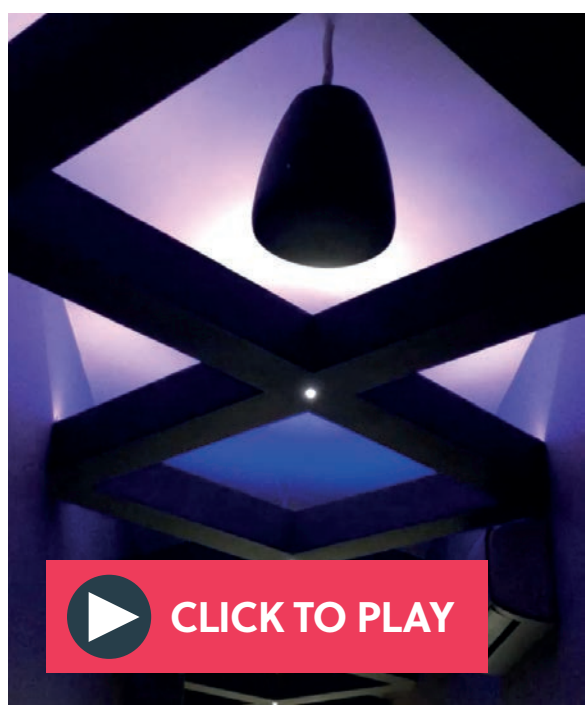
"The starting point was weaving the brand into the lighting and working with Shine instructors to identify specific points in class where lighting changes might bring a sense of drama, a magical

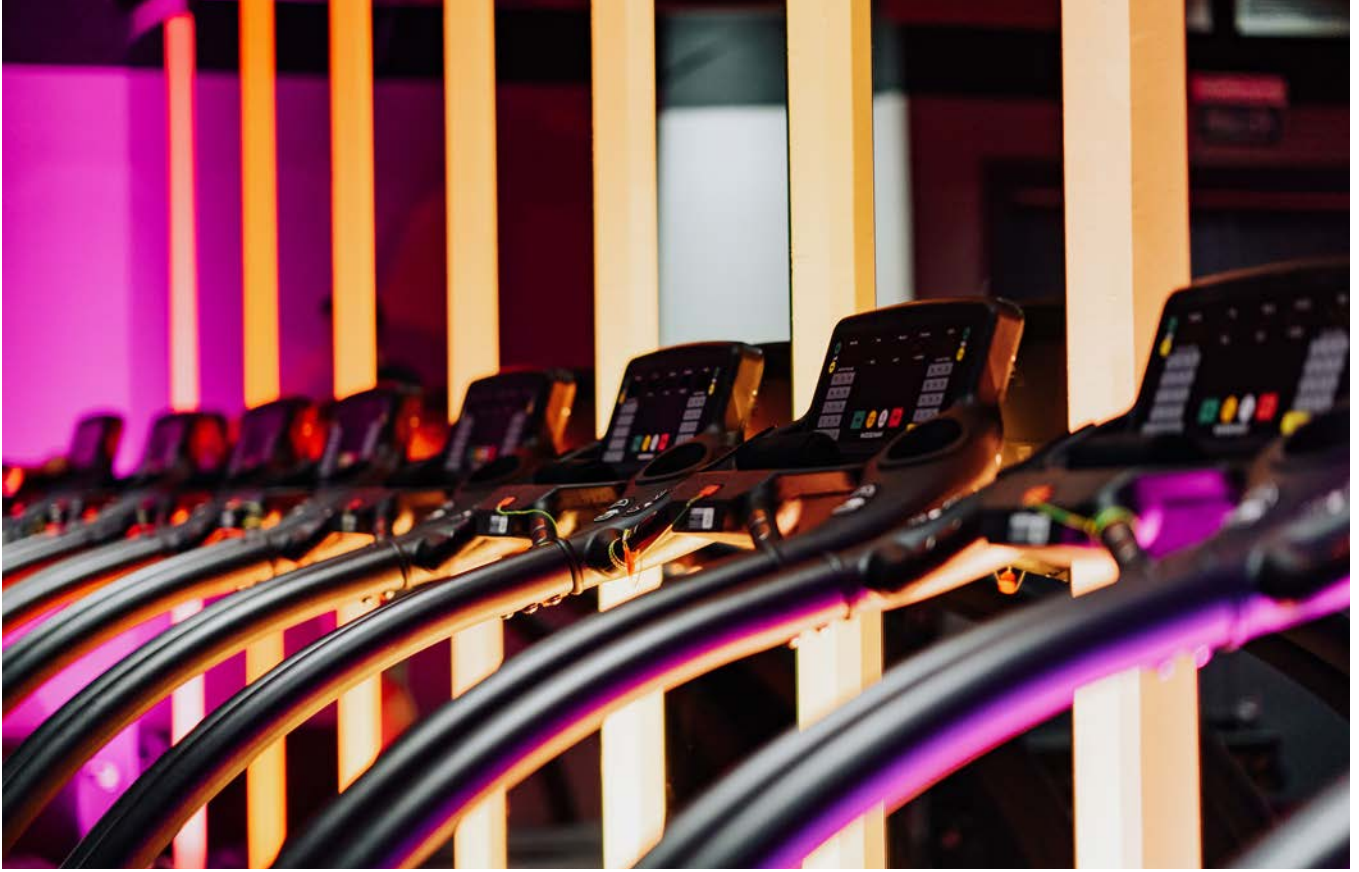


Above: Shine X “reflects the journey we all go on in a workout, from dark doubts to bright accomplishments”

Right: The ceiling of the Shine X corridor pulses light all along its length when a class is about to start

**“Shine Cycle is a joyful and uplifting space. Shine X is the dark, mysterious, rebellious little sister.”**





**“We developed a library of lighting effects to be used at just the right moment; the magic happens when everything is timed to perfection.”**

► moment, something unexpected. We then developed a library of special effects and themes to be used at just the right moment; the magic happens when everything is seamless and timed to perfection.

“Lighting is used creatively throughout the social spaces, too. The backlit, suspended X beams along the ceiling of the Shine X corridor are a personal favourite, where high-output LED fixtures produce slow pulses of light all along its length when class is about to start.”

### **Social interaction**

“In Brunei, there are no nightclubs or bars. Shine Cycle and Shine X fill this gap, providing healthy, fun entertainment.

“At Shine Cycle, there’s a juice bar and café for laughter and hanging out, as well as a selfie wall. At Shine X, recessed alcoves along a darkened corridor provide discreet seating for more intimate

conversations. In both cases, it’s about creating places to linger, social spaces that allow members to come early and stay late.

“All of a sudden, Shine Cycle and Shine X aren’t just about fitness. They’re about lifestyle. They’re about social interaction and the forging of friendships. And the resulting sense of community is evident when you look at events like the Shine Games, which perfectly illustrate the culture of kindness and joy that imbues everything at Shine.”

### **Flexible design**

“We don’t just design for today: we imagine the future and design spaces to hold fitness trends for the next 10 years.

“For example, Shine Cycle’s Studio B features a barre, built-in storage and reinforced walls and ceilings for anchoring equipment. It’s a versatile space that affords Shine total freedom to adapt to new trends, new instructors, new ideas.”

*Left: Shine X's bootcamp classes combine treadmill running with strength*

*Right: Lighting is used creatively throughout the social spaces, as well as in the studios*

### Natural talent

"Your instructors should be allowed to retain an aura of superstardom, so at Shine, we included a dedicated space for instructors to get ready for class. When they come out, their star persona is in place and they're ready to command the room and deliver.

"I've been amazed by the level of showmanship at Shine. I've never come across a more naturally talented group of instructors. Musicality is in their blood.

"Nor have I ever met a group of instructors who take what they do more seriously: they truly see it as a profession. We brought them to the US for training with Parker Williams, a legendary veteran of rhythm rides with 20 years' experience. He encouraged them to take it back to basics, focusing on technique, consistency in language and meeting their clientele where they were: at the beginning of a journey, having never known anything like rhythm cycling before."

### Spreading joy

"The princess is hugely creative, with an infectious sense of humour, and we had a lot of fun along the way. One great memory was developing names for the juice bar menu, with *Diplomatic Immunity* one of my favourites!

"Her generosity and gratitude epitomise the essence of Shine. This was a joyful project to work on, surrounded by some of the kindest people I've ever met." ●

 @shinecycle

 @shine\_xbn

 @barbarachanceydesign

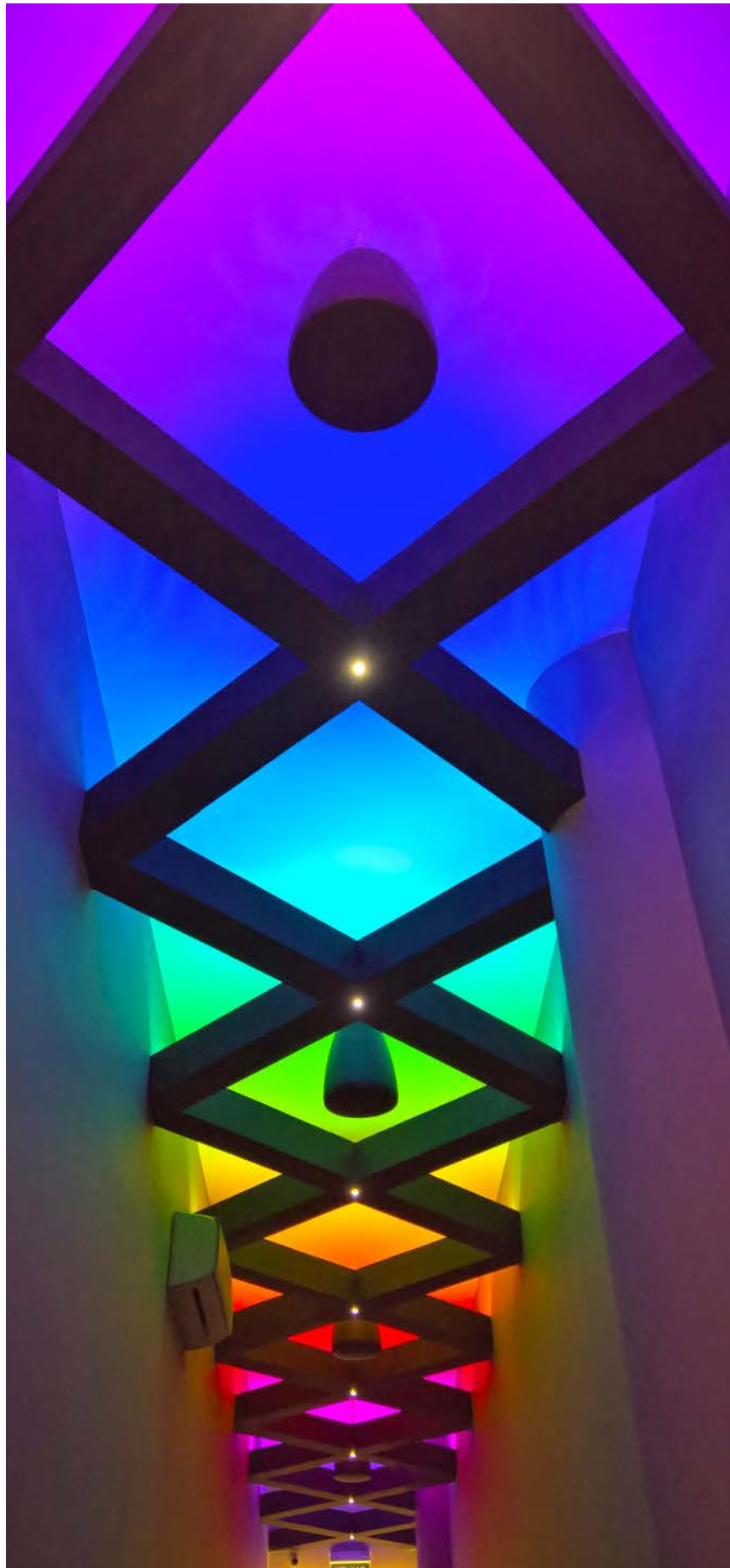




PHOTO: © FRISLEY FILM

# Tour de Force

Cycling is a way of life in Denmark, but the Tour de France had never started this far north – until this year. The city of Nyborg hosted in style, with a special ‘yellow jersey’ group cycling event among the many celebrations. Kate Cracknell reports.



# KENNETH MUHS

## Mayor, Nyborg City Council

### WHAT WAS NYBORG'S ROLE IN THE 2022 TOUR DE FRANCE?

The second leg of the Tour finished in Nyborg, so our city welcomed the riders as they crossed the line on 2 July, having cycled the 202km from Roskilde.

It was a huge honour for Nyborg: ours is a municipality of just 32,000 inhabitants, so to be involved in one of the world's greatest sporting events was exceptionally special for us.

And it wasn't just about us, either: it was about the whole of Denmark, with the country as a whole awarded this year's Grand Départ. As a result, five cities across Denmark hosted the first three stages of this year's Tour.

### WHY DID NYBORG WANT TO BE PART OF IT?

First of all, as I say, it was a great honour. Beyond this, however, there were – and will hopefully continue to be – very practical benefits of having been involved.

The boost to our local businesses, for example. We have a lot of accommodation in our city, and our hotels and campsites



*Above: Nyborg mayor Kenneth Muhs offers a warm welcome as the 2 July celebrations get underway*

*Below: Events included a special yellow jersey group cycling class*



PHOTO: © FRISLEV FILM





were in high demand from the moment our involvement in the Tour was announced in 2019. In turn, other local businesses – shops, restaurants, cafés and so on – also benefited.

Then there's the long-term impact on tourism. The Tour de France is aired in 190 countries around the world, which gave us a wonderful platform to present a 'postcard' of Nyborg – showing off our city, our history, our culture and hopefully tempting people to visit.

#### WHAT DID THE DAY INVOLVE?

It wasn't just about race day, in fact, or even just about cycling: there were lots of sporting, cultural and educational events in the lead-up to 2 July.

We had local schools learning about France, for example, and businesses putting yellow bikes all around the city. There was also a sold-out family-friendly event on 11 June where 16,000 amateur cyclists rode some or all of the Tour de France leg from Roskilde to Nyborg. ▶

*Above: "It wasn't just about race day," says Nyborg mayor Kenneth Muhs. "There were lots of sporting, cultural and educational events around the city in the lead-up to 2 July"*

***"The Tour de France is aired in 190 countries, giving us a wonderful platform to present a 'postcard' of Nyborg"***



PHOTO: © FRISLEV FILM



PHOTO: © FRISLEV FILM



## “We paid 10 million Danish Krone for the rights to be part of the Tour. Was it worth it? Absolutely.”

- ▶ But the day itself was of course very special, with Nyborg welcoming more than 80,000 visitors including HRH the Crown Prince of Denmark.

Obviously not everyone was able to stand at the finishing line, so we had 12 event zones across the city where people could watch the race on a big screen, enjoying music, food and activities too. We closed many of the roads in the city centre, turning it into a big festival.

We had cultural activities too: archery, for example, because ours is a historic city with a castle. And then in the evening we had a big party and concert.

All our council-organised events were free, but we also allocated space to local organisations to run their own events, which they could charge for if they wished. We had football clubs hosting fan-zones, for example, and a BODY BIKE group cycling class.

For us, these independent events were an important part of the story. We set the stage and supported them with some infrastructure, but the success of the day wasn't purely down to us: everyone came together to create

something very special, and it looked amazing when the TV helicopters flew overhead and saw it all happening.

### WHAT DID ALL THIS COST NYBORG?

We paid 10 million Danish Krone for the rights to be part of the Tour and spent a further 5.9 million on infrastructure and events across the city – so a total budget of 15.9 million Danish Krone (approximately €2.15m).

Was it worth it? Absolutely, even if you just look at the reach and impact of the publicity for our city. To reach an audience of that size, and in so many countries across the globe, we'd quickly have spent that much – and more – on commercials, brochures, PR and so on.

And that's without factoring in the immediate boost to local businesses or the sense of pride across our city, which is impossible to put a price on.

### HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?

It was the first time Nyborg had ever done something on this scale, but it proves that we can.



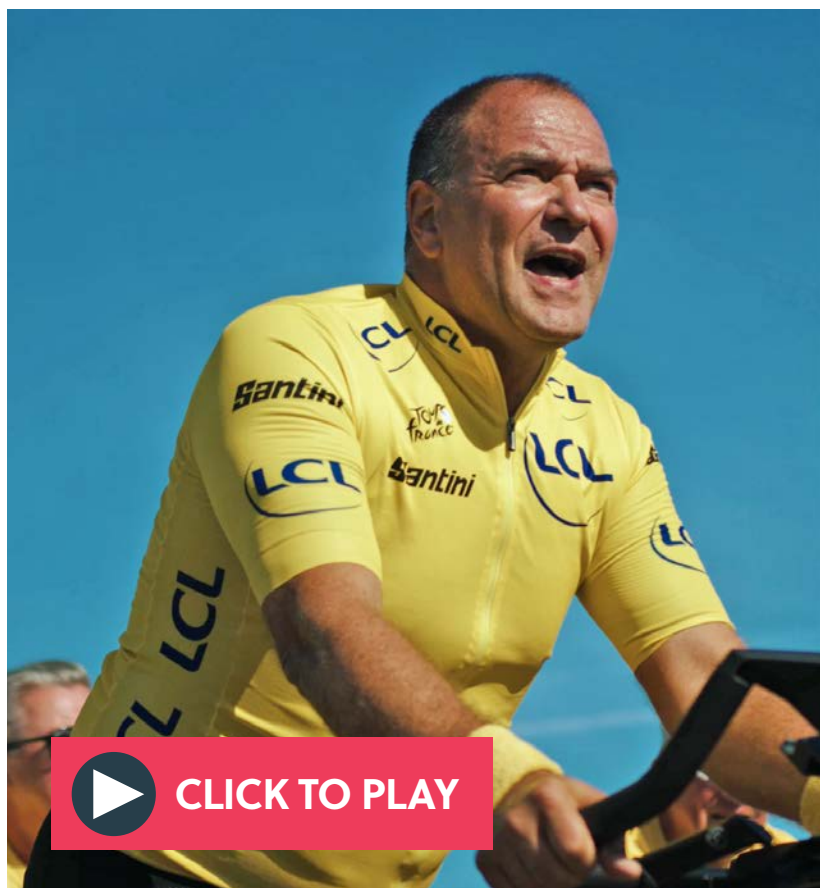
*Above: Nyborg organised Tour de France-themed events for citizens of all ages*

*Left: The group cycling class took place over seven hours, with friends sharing the ride so everyone got to enjoy it*

*Right: Experience the vibe of the yellow jersey group cycling event in this video!*

Whether cycling fans or not, we had strong support from residents across the city: there was a huge sense of pride and a powerful coming together, including a large number of volunteers who gave their time to show the world what great hosts we could be.

A key aspect of our Tour legacy will therefore be the learnings we've drawn and the foundations we now have in place to host similar events in the future. Nyborg may be a small city, but we have big ambitions! ▶



## EVENTS

Right: BODY BIKE and Fitness Engros provided the bikes for the special Tour de France group cycling class

Below: Jesper 'JAS' Sørensen wanted to get involved with the Tour as soon as he knew it was coming to Denmark



## JESPER 'JAS' SØRENSEN

### Co-organiser, BODY BIKE event

#### TELL US ABOUT YOUR EVENT...

As soon as I knew the Tour was coming to Denmark, I wanted to get involved. I have a long history of organising mass indoor cycling events, so I teamed up with Berit Kolding Wedel of Nyborg Family and Company Sport, a local NGO, to organise a seven-hour cycling event which took place just 300 metres from Nyborg's Tour de France finishing line.

We had seven hour-long slots, each with its own instructors, and then we had 'wingmen' on-stage next to them to create a strong presence: there were five or six people cycling on-stage at all times, all dressed in the famous Tour de France-style yellow jerseys.

The brief to all our instructors was simple: make it a party with great music and a great vibe. And don't make the workout



too hard, because quite a lot of people are going to be cycling the full seven hours!

We had a big screen in front of the bikes so participants could follow the Tour while they rode, but mostly people were absorbed in their own ride with our instructors. It was really only in the last hour or so of the race, when we could hear the helicopters following the Tour approaching the city, that people began to focus more on the screen.

#### **HOW MANY PEOPLE TOOK PART?**

We had 75 BODY BIKES and about 250 participants. Somewhere between 10 and 15 ▶

*“We had five or six people cycling on-stage at all times, all dressed in Tour de France-style yellow jerseys”*



*“I’ve organised a lot of cycling events in my life, but this really was a once-in-a-lifetime experience”*

- ▶ people did the full seven hours of cycling, but most people switched in and out with friends so everyone could enjoy an hour or two.

For the last two hours, we made it compulsory for all participants – as well as the instructors on-stage – to wear the yellow jerseys we provided as part of the ticket price.

#### **WHAT WAS THE ATMOSPHERE LIKE?**

It was incredible. Everyone was smiling, the weather was perfect – sunny but not too hot and with a lovely breeze – and the music was pumping. We were just one small part of a huge celebration across the city, but you could hear our event from kilometres away!

We could hear the shouting of the Tour supporters near the finishing line too, which added to the buzz.

The whole event was just so happy and positive. When we finished, participants told us – and continued to tell us on social media – that it was a historically great event. I’ve organised a lot of cycling events in my life, but this really was a one-off. Everyone was on a real high.

*Above: Co-organiser Berit Kolding Wedel joins Sørensen for a celebratory photo*

*Top right: The professional race was shown on a big screen during the class*

*Bottom right: Nyborg’s 2 July festivities ended with a big party and concert*





PHOTO: © NYBORG MUNICIPALITY




PHOTO: © NYBORG MUNICIPALITY

Thousands of people came to watch what we were doing throughout the seven hours, too, feeling the energy and following our progress. Local newspapers were taking photos. It was such a great advert for indoor cycling.

#### HOW WILL YOU LOOK BACK ON THIS?

Across Denmark, there was a massive focus on making the Tour de France one big party, with armies of volunteers coming together to make it a success. Support for the race itself was also huge, with around a third of the Danish population turning out on the Tour de France route to watch the race go past.

Running our cycling event as part of this... It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and just the most incredible experience. ●

A woman with a headset and microphone is leading a spin class. She is wearing a white tank top and has a tattoo on her left arm. The background shows other people on stationary bikes in a dimly lit room with blue lighting.

**“Instructors should log the TSS of every class they instruct, to build up an accurate picture of their chronic training load”**

*Instructors must learn to recognise their own limits if they're to avoid burn-out*



# RECOVERY AT WORK



Recovery has become something of a buzzword recently, but as an instructor, how do you strike that perfect balance between staying well and running all your scheduled classes? World-renowned endurance coach Hunter Allen explains the Training Stress Score.

## What is Training Stress Score?

Training Stress Score (TSS) is something I invented in 2002 in collaboration with Dr Andrew Coggan. It's a composite number that takes into account the duration and intensity of a workout to arrive at a single estimate of the overall training load and physiological stress created by that training session.

Put another way, it quantifies the training stress on your body after a workout and is applicable to power-based cycling or rowing. [For a briefing on power training, see *RIDE HIGH* issue 16.]

It was a measure I knew I needed to help my athletes accurately understand how hard each workout was compared to others. I also knew I could use this data to shape a plan to peak them at exactly the right moment for big events. Dr Coggan provided the science!

## Why is it important?

Before we invented TSS, kilojoules (kJ) – how much energy you burned – were used to quantify the stress of a ride. The problem with this was, it didn't acknowledge ride intensity: you can ride for longer at a lower intensity and burn the same kJ, but the physiological stress on your body will be nowhere near the same.

TSS gives a far more accurate picture of how much stress you can create. Most important of all, it lets you cumulatively track this stress, allowing you to build a picture of your chronic training load (the cumulation of everything you did between 15 days and six weeks ago, and with it your overall fitness) and acute training load (your workouts over the last two weeks, and with it your current fatigue) to understand the Training Stress Balance in your body today. ▶



PHOTO: © SIMON CONNELLAN

**“TSS lets you track the cumulative stress of each workout on your body to ensure you’re resting enough”**

*Above: TSS underpins training plans that peak athletes at exactly the right moment for big events*

*Above right: Instructors will sometimes need to ‘fake it’ in the saddle rather than hitting all the %FTPs in class*



PHOTO: © ØRBIKE

- ▶ This information, in particular the chronic training load, tells you exactly when you should push hard in training and when you should rest. It allows you to continually strike a good balance between fitness (which results from training stress) and freshness (which results from rest) to keep improving – and, where relevant, to hit top form for your event.

As an indoor cycling instructor, it allows you to track the cumulative stress of each workout on your body to ensure you're resting enough – most injuries are down to insufficient recovery – without losing fitness.

### **How do you calculate TSS?**

As I say, TSS takes into account both workout duration and intensity, with intensity based on the individual's FTP (functional threshold power).

The easiest way to understand TSS is that you score 100 points if you go as hard as you can – that is, if you cycle at your personal FTP – for an hour. From that benchmark, it's easy to relate it to other workouts.

Basing it on FTP makes it scaleable, too: Bradley Wiggins cycles at his super-high FTP for an hour and gets a score of 100. A deconditioned individual cycles at their 80-

**“After six weeks of instructing two cycling classes a day, your chronic training load could be 160: the same as a pro at the end of the Tour de France!”**

watt FTP for an hour and gets a score of 100. All you need is an accurate personal FTP.

Some software – such as TrainingPeaks, which you can download as an app – works out the TSS of each ride for you, and there are a few bikes that include this score on their console. If you don't have access to that, though, it isn't too hard to calculate the TSS of a ride yourself.

The equation is  $TSS = \{[(duration (s) \times normalized power (W)) \times IF] / (threshold power \times 3600 s)\} \times 100$  – but don't be put off by how it looks, as it isn't actually that complicated!

First, take the workout duration in seconds and multiply that by normalised power (which ▶

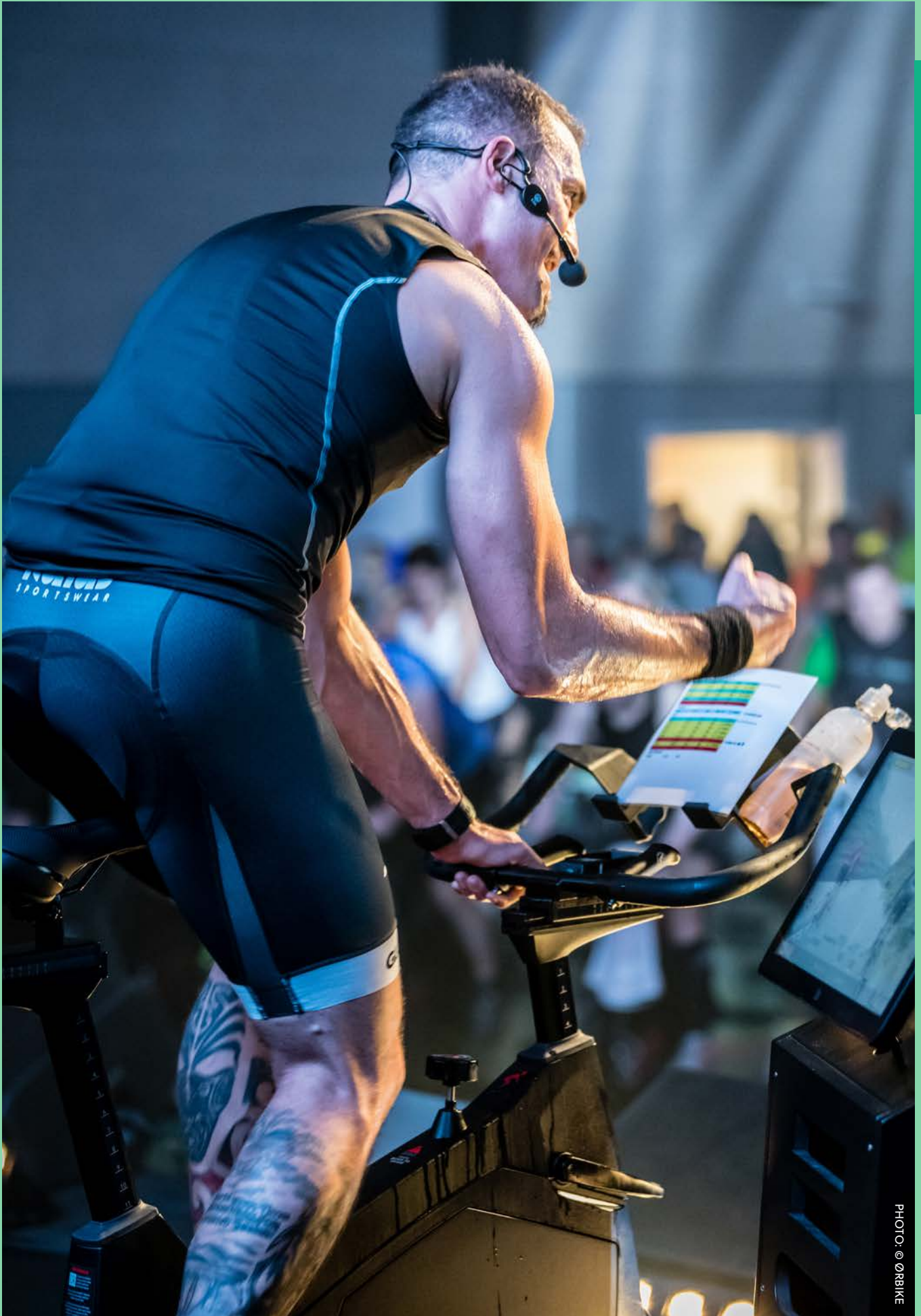


PHOTO © ØRBIKE

**“As a basic guideline, I’d advise that if your chronic training load hits 115, you need to rest. That could just mean taking it easy in class.”**

► in the context of studio cycling is almost always average wattage), then multiply all that by the intensity factor (see page 62, *What do we mean by intensity factor?*) This is the only bit of guesstimating you’ll need to do, as this figure won’t be in your bike. However, you can get a pretty good idea of the intensity factor simply by dividing your average power (wattage) throughout the class by your personal functional threshold power.

You then divide this figure by your personal FTP x 3600 (seconds, to get it up to an hour). Finally, multiply all that by 100 – just because we wanted to present scores as full numbers!

### **What does TSS mean in practice?**

If your score is less than 150, we categorise that as low stress – that is, it should be relatively easy to recover from that workout by the following day. Note that recovery is not the same as being totally fresh: you may still have sore muscles. However, it’s likely you could produce the same effort again the next day, or at least get very close to it. This is how we define recovery.

A score of 150–300 is medium stress: you should have recovered by the second day. High stress is TSS 300–450, where residual fatigue is likely to be around for a few days at least. And then epic is a TSS of more than 450, and here you’re looking at anything from a few days to a few weeks before you can get on the bike and do the same again. The muscular soreness



*Above: Hunter Allen is a world-leading endurance coach and power training expert*

*Left: Even just two classes a day, if cycled ‘properly’, can lead an instructor to max out and increase their risk of illness and injury*

might be gone, but your cardiovascular system still needs more time to recover.

### **You talk about cumulative load...**

Yes, and this is where TSS becomes really valuable. Let’s move away from elite road racing examples and focus purely on indoor cycling instructors to bring this to life.

Every single ride has its own TSS; a typical hour-long indoor cycling class – with its sprints and climbs but also its recovery sections – will have a score of around 65–90. So, let’s say TSS 80 as a rough average.

Now let’s assume an indoor cycling instructor teaches a class a day. Six weeks later, their chronic training load is 80. That’s ►

► do-able. Even TSS 100 a day is do-able. Your body adapts to training stress after all – it's how we get fitter – and a load of 80–100 is a moderate yet solid level of stress.

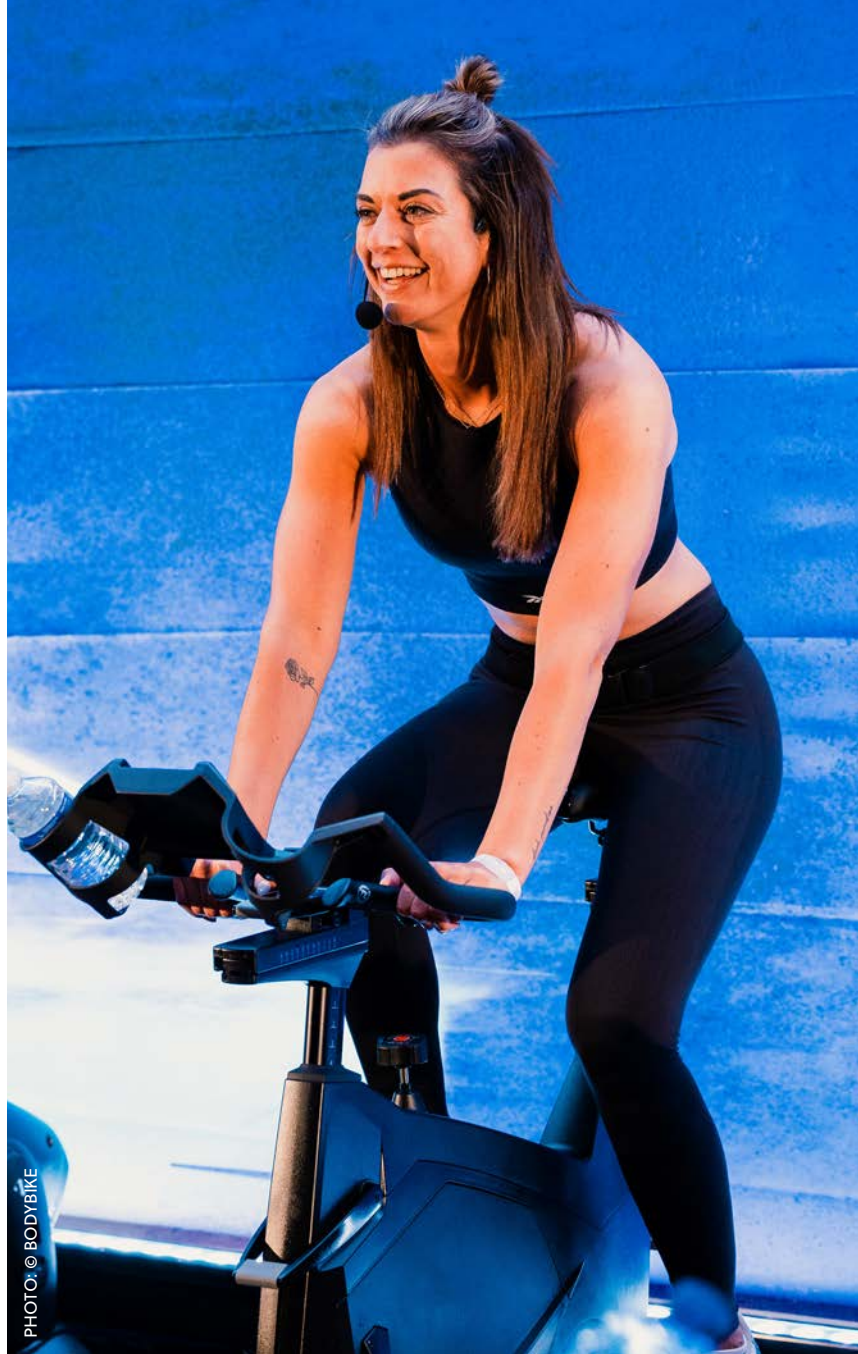
But what if they're instructing two cycling classes a day – not uncommon – and they're cycling them 'properly', by which I mean they're in the saddle hitting all the %FTPs they're telling the class to hit. Do that every day for six weeks and all of a sudden, chronic training load is 160 (plus any other workouts they happen to be doing).

Now let's consider that cycling pros, when they reach the end of the Tour de France, have a chronic training load of 160–180 – and then they rest!

Now we can begin to understand why indoor cycling instructors get injured or sick when they're doing too many classes, and why it doesn't actually take much for class load to tip over into being too much.

### *So, when does an instructor need to rest?*

First things first, as an instructor, you should absolutely be logging the TSS of every class you instruct, so you build up an accurate picture of your chronic training load (CTL). You then listen to your body and identify what your CTL is when you feel you can't perform any more. As soon as you see yourself approaching this number



## *What do we mean by intensity factor?*

**As a benchmark, one hour of cycling at your personal FTP has a TSS of 100 and an intensity factor of 1.0.**

- <0.75** Level 1 recovery rides
- 0.75-0.85** Level 2 endurance training sessions
- 0.85-0.95** Level 3 tempo rides, various aerobic and anaerobic interval workouts (work and rest periods combined), longer (>2.5 h) road races
- 0.95-1.05** Level 4 intervals (work period only), shorter (<2.5 h) road races, criteriums, circuit races, 40k TT (by definition)
- 1.05-1.15** Shorter (e.g., 15 km) TT, track points race
- >1.15** Level 5 intervals (work period only), prologue TT, track pursuit, track miss-and-out

*Above: Instructors must learn to rest, including taking it easier in the saddle during class*

*Right: TSS is scaleable, meaning pros like Bradley Wiggins will score 100 for an hour at FTP, the same as a deconditioned rider*



PHOTO: © SIMON CONNELLAN

in the future, you know you need to start thinking about building in some rest.

As a basic guideline, I'd advise that if your chronic training load hits 115 – if you add up the TSS of all your rides over the last six weeks, divide by 42 to get an average daily score, and that average is 115 or more – you need to rest.

(Note: Specialist software will weight more recent workouts higher than workouts six weeks ago. However, for the purposes of simplicity, calculating an average daily TSS as above will suffice.)

Rest could mean taking it easy in class, whether that's 'faking it' rather than actually cranking it up in the saddle, or getting off the bike and walking the studio floor to offer encouragement and motivation.

It could mean taking a break altogether, if schedules allow. But even here, remember that it's about chronic training load: one day off doesn't immediately undo the last six weeks of effort. ●

**“Remember it’s about chronic training load: one day off doesn’t immediately undo the last six weeks of effort”**

**Read more:** *Hunter's previous RIDE HIGH article – on why he believes indoor cycling classes should always be based on power – can be found [here](#).*

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# LEGEND HAS IT

How has indoor cycling evolved over the years, and what does the future hold? We caught up with industry legends Emma Barry and Steven Renata at BODY BIKE's recent 25th birthday celebrations



 **CLICK TO PLAY**

*Emma Barry and Steven Renata discuss indoor cycling past, present and future*





*Above: BODY BIKE celebrated its 25th birthday as part of the Mega event in the Netherlands earlier this year*

*Below: A team of master instructors take to the stage to inspire class participants*

**W**hen you have two group exercise legends in one room, well, it would have been rude not to have popped them in front of the camera to hear their recollections of the last 25 years of indoor cycling.


Clear your diary for the next seven and a half minutes and watch as Emma Barry and Steven Renata share not only their memories and anecdotes, but also their predictions for what happens next in the world of indoor cycling.

We're talking metaverse, data, the sport of fitness and the quest for joy.

That's quite some leap forward from the stories they share of wheeling bikes in and out of a multi-purpose aerobics studio.

Oh, and thanks to Steven for the shout-out for *RIDE HIGH*, now officially "the world's biggest cycle club". Love it! ▶



 @emmabarry\_gfa

 @bodybikeinternational





*The star instructor, the power of the bike, the thrill of the ride – this is what indoor cycling is all about*

TRENDS



*“Attending this event and now watching this video, it just brings it all home for me. This is what it’s all about. This is what sets indoor cycling apart. This is why the world needs to ride”*

*Uffe A Olesen, CEO, BODY BIKE International*

*Right: Emma Barry and Steven Renata take to the stage at the 25th birthday celebrations*

*Below: Soak in the vibe of the event and see why Uffe Olesen is buzzing in its aftermath*

*Above left: From set-up to wrap party, the event united a tribe of indoor cycling enthusiasts*

*Below left: Lights, music, teamwork, performance... It’s a recipe for a great class!*



# RIDE HIGH

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