



# USA CYCLING NEWS

## COACH'S CORNER

by Sam Callan



Sam Callan is the Science and Education Manager for USA Cycling. His department manages the coaching certification and education program. This column was not a coerced statement from the coaching community, but he now feels safer walking to his car after work.

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## How Hiring A Coach Pays Off

### Why Professional Coaching is Worth the Cost

You're a bike racer who spends thousands of dollars per year on equipment and racing. You've bought every training book out there and religiously read the online training sites. You listen intently to Bob Roll and Paul Sherwen during the VERSUS Tour broadcasts.

I spent a lot of money buying an SRM and I even put it on my bike.

*So why should you spend more money on a coach?*

With today's hectic schedules, when are you going to dedicate the time to develop your training plan and evaluate it as needed on a regular basis?

Chances are that for those of you with families or who have a life outside of bike racing and work, you don't spend the time needed to evaluate or plan your training. For each hour of the day, you have to decide "How am I going to spend this time?" Your options might include:

- Sleeping
- Spending time with the kids
- Spending time with your spouse or significant other
- Hanging out with friends
- Studying
- Reviewing your training plan and powermeter files

With each decision, you are forced to neglect something else. For so many of us who work 40+ hours per week (and travel as well) and then race on the weekends and do the Tuesday night world championships, we probably choose one of the family-oriented options or do not have the energy/desire to review powermeter files or organize our training for the next weeks.

This is where a coach can save you time (and maybe a marriage).

Yes, it will cost you some money to pay the coach monthly (as most coaches bill), but what is the opportunity cost of hiring a coach? In economics, an opportunity cost is the cost of something in relation to choosing an alternative. If you spend four hours per month on your training program, then that is four hours that you could have spent doing something else whether it be hanging out with the wife and kids or, for some people, working more to earn more money.

So while you may spend \$200 per month on a coach, you have freed up many hours during the month that can be used for some other purpose as the coach will review the powermeter files and adjust the training. The coach will re-work the training schedule following an illness or unexpected time off the bike. In short, your coach can free up your time while still ensuring that you get the best training.

Now if only Congress would allow a tax deduction for paying a coach...

