

PERIODIZATION PROBLEMS

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There have been many confusing ideas introduced to the theory of periodization since its introduction in the 1960's. As several of these ideas are not acceptable, it appears to be advisable to clarify some major points of the principles applicable to the structuring of a single or double periodized training year.

Let's start with the individual duration of the preparation cycle. In some cases this cycle has to be lengthened. In other cases it has to be shortened. This applies also to the duration of the general and specific conditioning phases. All have to lead to an optimal physical condition after the general phase and an optimal performance level during the specific phase.

If the traditional approach of dividing the preparation cycle into general and specific phases is employed, it should be twice as long as in the case where general and specific conditioning methods are combined and developed parallel. Consequently, there can be considerable individual differences in the duration of the preparation cycle in the year's training program. Such individual variations can range from two to eight months.

There are also several variations available in the designing of the preparation cycle. The distribution of the training loads, volumes and intensities can follow a wave-like, steady, or a combined pattern. In addition, it is common to base the first phase of the preparation cycle on the wave-like distribution, followed by a combined distribution in the second and steady one in the third phase.

Practical experience has shown that it is important to make changes to the structure of periodization from year to year, as the organism would otherwise adjust itself to a certain format. Such changes include an effective distribution of somewhat gradually increased training volume and intensity, as well as regular changes to the complex of the methods employed in each training cycle and phase. The methods used in the competition cycle should be changed every four weeks.

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