

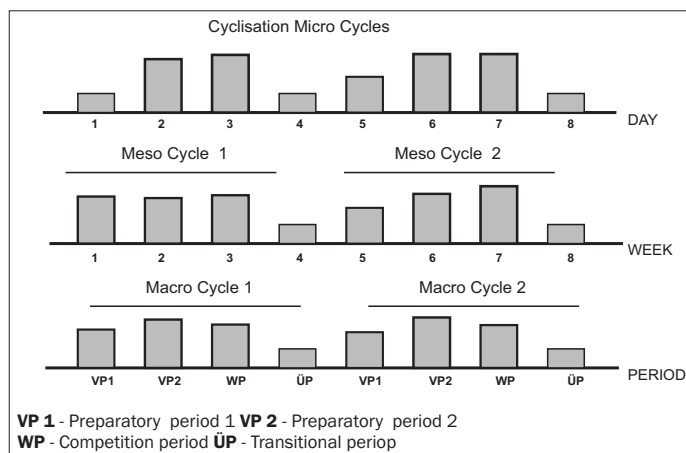
REGENERATION

A Foreign Concept in the World of Table Tennis?

After every soccer game in the Bundesliga something unusual can be observed. About 15-20 minutes after the final whistle the players come back on to the field to cool down. A TT player and/or coach must inevitably ask himself: What are they doing? And what for? Do they want to give the spectators 'more for their money'? I do not think so. The magic word for the soccer players is "regeneration". Have you, dear reader, ever seen anyone cool down after a TT game in the first league? Never ever!!! This only seems to confirm our motto: agabu (an Acronym in German for: with us everything is different)! What applies to soccer players could never apply to TT players! I personally think this merely reflects a certain ignorance on the part of TT players and coaches about the concept of "regeneration". In the fall of 2006, Timo Boll reported in the German Table Tennis Revue DTS about his experience in the Chinese Super league: "In Germany, our training programmes are designed to prepare us for the competitions and tournaments. The work-out and training loads are reduced right before the games. In China, coaches never make any exceptions. We often had two training sessions and weight training the day before a game. And that's exactly how I played. In seven weeks I didn't have a single day off." This is a lesson in how to destroy an athlete's physical condition and form. If this is what you are determined to do. We do not, however, want to make any presumptions about our Chinese colleagues. My advice to Timo Boll would be to not put himself through this type of martyrdom again before the next Olympic Season. Timo is aware of the importance of regeneration, and he made this clear in an Interview he gave in German Table Tennis Revue in 2007: "My illness at the beginning of the year was actually a blessing in disguise. After three weeks of rest, I was fresh and concentrated. At this time of the year I am usually completely worn out." This actually reflects the general ignorance of most people with regards to the concept of "regeneration". Instead of having a planned time of regeneration, an (unplanned) illness is necessary to help the body, mind, and psyche get what is rightfully theirs. This disregard for the importance of regeneration, however, is not only a problem in the world of Table Tennis. Last year the coach of the German National Soccer Team, Jay Goppingen (J. Klinsmann's pseudonym in the American Pro-League) showed us how it is done. Regeneration was made a priority. If you do not believe it, watch the locker-

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room scene after the game against Argentina in Sönke Wortmann's excellent documentary "Deutschland ein Sommermärchen" ('Germany - a Summer Fairy Tale'). Before leaving the locker-room, Klinsmann says that the only thing which is important now is: Regeneration! Many players and coaches think that "regeneration" is about kicking back and doing nothing or lazing around. Or having a day off. These, however, are merely excuses. Nothing else. Regeneration is, in fact, a specific and planned part of the training schedule. It is important to understand that regeneration also affects the psyche. Anyone who plays or has ever played knows that your head can feel quite empty after a difficult championship or tournament. While discussing this article on the phone with my colleague, Sigi Baumann, he mentioned that mental regeneration is usually not only grossly underestimated but, according to his experience, also takes much longer than physical regeneration. For this reason, regeneration times must be made a deliberate

part of short-term, medium-term and long-term training schedules.

According to training theory, short-term refers to how and in what order different training units are put together in one day. It is important to plan them in the right order: Pay attention to the right order:

The player should not already be tired before technique or tactic training

Weight and speed training before endurance training

Aerobic endurance training after anaerobic training (esp. laktazidem)

Anaerobic-laktazides endurance training after anaerobic- alaktazidem training

Negative Interferences:

If extensive anaerobic - laktazides training is followed by anaerobic alaktazides training

If extensive aerobic endurance training is followed by anaerobic-laktazide forms of training

If aerobic endurance training is followed by maximum strength training

Medium-term planning refers to weekly training schedules set up in 2:1 or 3:1 intervals. Two or three hard days should be followed by a day of regeneration. Long-term planning refers to the whole competition season. The graph gives an example of a rough scheme of how regenerative days, weeks and months are a part of

the training schedule.

Thanks to Jörg Roskopf, there is no need for us Table Tennis coaches to despair. He is a positive example. When asked in an interview in the German Table Tennis Revue DTS about his sudden increase in performance when he won the World Cup in 1998, his answer was:

"I think it paid off that for the first time in many years I took a break that summer. Afterwards, I focused on consistent and systematic endurance training for a long time."

So you see - it does work!

Dr. Wolfgang Friedrich