



**If you are an avid mountain biker, you should know how common serious injuries are in the sport.**

# TRAINING HARD AND TAKING NAPS

Pro rider and regular columnist **Erik Kleinhans** explains why injuries are part of the game and how he prefers to make sufficient rest a priority.

PHOTO BY OAKPICS

**W**ith the Cape Epic, one of the biggest goals of the year now behind us, it is quite an exciting time of the year for me with lots of fun races on the SA calendar as well as a lovely three months in Europe to join my Topeak Ergon teammates again for some racing and to make sure I get as much summer as possible for 2017!

I'm quite excited about doing a few different events this year. It always helps with the motivation if there is something new and exciting on the radar. In SA, I will race the Cederberg 100-miler before two new-ish stage races, the Gravel and Grape, and Thirsti Extreme. Without a teammate in SA and the difficulty to find a strong partner, I opted to skip Sani2c and add some social in the calendar joining Jan Braai for the inaugural Tour de Braai, so that there is some balance between racing and laughing before our National XCM Champs and setting off for Europe.

## THE INJURY ISSUE

It can happen going fast or slow, suddenly or you see it coming and you know that things will get real and painful very soon! Apart from crashing, injuries can also take time due to bad habits, bad positioning and overtraining.

left shoulder, recovering was for sure a tough task and there is always a goal on the horizon so you try pushing the limits for recovery and getting back on the bike. My advice however is to let it heal properly, do some light exercises when possible, but try to let your body heal the issue first. It ended up being quite the journey for me as an inflamed hip/glute, maybe rushing to get back on the bike, made racing hardly possible and had to end my season early and take a proper rest yet again.

Doing many, many, many revolutions of the cranks can also cause problems. Something simple as a faulty cleat position not concentrating when you sit in front of the TV changing to some fresh cleats can cause problems with a knee or hip if you do not rectify the problem very soon. So the advice is simple, prevent the issue and make sure you get a good and quality bike setup. There are so many options available these days, so definitely no excuse.

like the Cape Epic with a full-time job and loads of training and maybe a body not used to it, you can develop problems like tendonitis which leaves you in pain and uncomfortable to train. There is no real easy fix, except rest. Going to physiotherapy, dry-needling, massage and chiropractor can for sure speed up the recovery and it is highly recommended. I would however not train with painkillers as that might just worsen the situation so you do not realise you're causing more damage. Painkillers is a last resort maybe towards the end of a stage race just to make sure you get through it.

For all the above nutrition is always important and eating healthy with quality protein, vitamins and minerals can go a long way; it should in fact be a lifestyle habit for all aspects of life. There is also no substitute for rest, make sure you get more than enough sleep per night, the cliché recommended eight hours per night is not just a thumb-suck reason, even though you think you can function with less. And for sure also a short power-nap for the those with the luxury of a comfortable couch in their office. **fs**

**“I’VE BEEN FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO COME THROUGH TWENTY YEARS OF CYCLING RATHER UNSCATHED ...”**

I've been fortunate enough to come through twenty years of cycling rather unscathed, except for many roasties, bruises, uncomfortable sleeps and that one occasion on Charlie's Catwalk during the 2014 Sani2c where a chance at overall victory ended abruptly with me being transported to the hospital for surgery.

After my operation to attach all my AC-joint ligaments in my

To avoid injury like that there are only two solutions and skills lessons is number one! But it also comes with extra confidence, meaning extra speed and taking chances which at the end do not really solve the problem ... But at least you will know more how to handle yourself if something suddenly appears in your path. Solution number two is to perfect your tuck-and-roll!

Overtraining is often a difficult one. For many weekend warriors, probably not a word that really exist, but for those guys trying to do something

**Erik Kleinhans** has joined the specialist marathon racing team of Topeak Ergon, but that doesn't mean you'll be hearing any less from the Lion King. Follow him on Twitter: [@erikkleinhans](https://twitter.com/erikkleinhans), or visit [www.topeak-ergon-racing.com](http://www.topeak-ergon-racing.com).

