

THE TIME TO REFLECT



Regular contributor, pro and full time friend of *Full Sus*, Erik Kleinhans shares what he has up his sleeves for 2017.

I love this time of the year! After the last race for the season, which is normally the FNB Wines2Whales, it is a time to rest, to reflect and to plan for the upcoming season. Unfortunately, we were bowled a curve-ball three days before the start of the Wines2Whales when my teammate, James Reid had a training accident and fractured his clavicle, taking us out of competition to defend our title from last year. It was a crappy

end to James' season and maybe he will have to rest a little bit longer than planned, but these things are part of our game and it is only a bike race and you should always just be glad for every day you have! Luckily my friend Jaco Venter and SA road champ for team DiData was hanging around at his home in Somerset West and just started training again, so he got the call-up to enjoy one of the most fun events on the SA racing calendar with me. Jaco started off as

a MTB racer and raced two Cape Epic's, so there was no shortage of skill to keep the smiles on our faces. It for sure wasn't too bad to finish the year with a slightly more social ride around the Overberg, especially an event like Wines2Whales which is so well organised with great routes and such a chilled atmosphere. It kick-started three weeks of relaxing time for me, eating burgers, hiking in Jonkies, attending a few weddings, I still ride my bike, only for the fun and with



“ENJOY LOADING SOME SADDLE TIME AND ENJOY THE SUMMER TRAINING!”

friends for a beer and cake ;) With this relaxing period of the year, you also have a bit more time to think and plan everything for the upcoming season. I'm really excited for 2017, especially because I'm now well integrated in our Topeak Ergon racing team, but mostly because the Cape Epic is once again the major goal for the season for the team. And to take things more seriously, the team will visit Stellenbosch for a three-week training camp in January/February as well as participate in the Tankwa Trek stage race for preparation. The 2015 Cape Epic winner Kristian Hynek will even stay for three months in Stellenbosch with his family to enjoy the sunshine and training.

excited to put it to good work when I start my buildup early December for my goals. The first goal is always to have a successful December and January training block; it sets you up for the season and I always think it is crucial. On the racing and goals front, as mentioned before, the Cape Epic is top of the list for 2017 and races like Attakwas, Grabouw National Marathon, Tankwa Trek are important but even more so as building blocks towards the Epic. After that the TransAlps and some races in Europe before the end of the season stage races in SA. On my bucket list for next year however, is the Leadville 100-miler in the USA and the Legend of El Dorado stage race in Colombia. Let's hope I get there, but first I'm gonna enjoy loading some saddle time and enjoy the summer training! **fs**

With champions JB, Alban, Kristian and Sally in our team, I took plenty of knowledge, energy and motivation from them this year and I am

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, or visit www.topeak-ergon-racing.com.



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