

The state of AI in cycling training

October 2026 edition

25 developments from April 2025 to August 2026, each dated and each with its source.

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In short

Most AI in cycling training today does one of two things. Either a training platform's own model picks your next workout and adjusts your FTP, or a general chatbot reads your ride history and talks to you about it. TrainerRoad rebuilt its engine around in-house models in January 2026. Strava gave Claude read-only access to subscribers' files in June. Zwift now pushes workouts from third-party AI coaches straight into the game. Garmin, Strava and TrainingPeaks' new owner are tightening who can reach your data and on what terms. The evidence has not kept pace. The vendor figures are unaudited. The published studies of LLM-written plans cover strength training, running and clinical exercise, not power-based cycling, and they rate the plans as moderate at best. For now, testing these tools against your own ride files is still the only check you can trust.

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- ➔ The main platforms now sell AI as part of the subscription, not as an add-on: TrainerRoad bundles its AI at no extra charge, and Strava's Claude connector and Garmin's Active Intelligence are paid-tier perks.
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- ➔ Access to your ride data is consolidating. Strava bought Runna and The Breakaway, Garmin bought TrainingPeaks, and Strava now charges developers for API access and has dropped intermediary platforms.
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- ➔ General-purpose LLMs now have official routes to training data, but read-only: Strava's MCP connector cannot write workouts, and ChatGPT Health launched without Strava and excluded the UK.
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- ➔ No published peer-reviewed study has tested LLM-generated plans for power-based cycling. The nearest work, on strength and clinical exercise, finds moderate quality and inconsistent intensity prescription.
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- ➔ Vendor accuracy claims are unaudited: TrainerRoad's 33% lower failure rate and its 27% claim come from its own forum posts, with no published method or sample sizes.
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- ➔ In the WorldTour, AI is now used for pacing and nutrition modelling, but the published accuracy is modest: Visma's nutrition predictions are reported at 52% to 82%.
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The established platforms have moved from rule-based adaptive plans to their own models, and they report the results through their own channels. TrainerRoad has gone furthest. Garmin and Wahoo are adding AI features slowly, mostly behind subscriptions. None of the accuracy figures below has been independently checked.

12 Aug 2026

Wahoo relaunches its app with three subscription tiers

Wahoo's relaunched app adds Three-Dimensional Pace (3DP), a running version of its 4DP cycling profile, and splits pricing into Base (free with Wahoo hardware), Core (£4.99 a month) and Pro (£14.99 a month or £149.99 a year). Pro includes SYSTM, structured plans and 'personalised daily workout recommendations'. Wahoo does not say how those recommendations are generated.

Why it matters Wahoo is moving its training features behind subscription tiers rather than launching an AI coach. Riders who use 4DP should expect to pay Pro rates for plans and recommendations.

Source: endurance.biz

20 Apr 2026

Reviewer says Garmin's Active Intelligence 'continues to restate thin insights' after a year

A year after Garmin Connect+ launched at £6.99 a month or £69.99 a year, the5krunner judged that Active Intelligence's AI prompts at waking, after workouts and in the evening, built from sleep, HRV, training load and stress data, add little. The review rated AI-assisted nutrition logging as one of only two features that justify the subscription.

Why it matters If you ride with a Garmin, the paid AI layer does not yet do what intervals.icu plus a general LLM can do with the same files.

Source: [the5krunner](https://the5krunner.com) the5krunner.com

24 Feb 2026

Garmin Fitness Coach arrives on watches, with no Edge models listed

Garmin's Q1 2026 feature update adds Fitness Coach, which builds personalised workout plans from fitness level and activity history across more than 25 activity types, using heart-rate-based intensity targets. The compatibility list shown covers Fenix, Forerunner, vivoactive and Venu watches. No Edge cycling computers appear on it.

Why it matters Garmin's newest plan generator works on heart rate and runs on watches, so power-meter riders who train from an Edge are not the audience yet.

Source: [the5krunner](#) the5krunner.com

21 Jan 2026

TrainerRoad publishes its own metrics for the new AI FTP Detection

TrainerRoad's Nate Pearson said the rebuilt AI FTP Detection now targets a level 3 threshold workout completed in the expected zone. He reported a 2.0% failure rate in 'hard' zones, a 33% improvement on the old system, and failure rates about twice as high for athletes who ignore TrainerRoad AI's workout choices. Riders below level 3 see their FTP fall and those at level 7 or above see a large rise. The charts were posted as images, without sample sizes.

Why it matters Your TrainerRoad FTP may change because the reference point changed, not because your fitness did. Compare it with your own power-duration data before re-setting zones elsewhere.

Source: [TrainerRoad forum](#) trainerroad.com

5 Jan 2026

Garmin adds AI photo food logging to Connect+

Garmin announced nutrition tracking for Connect+ subscribers, with a food database, barcode scanning and AI image recognition from a phone camera. Calorie and macro targets adjust to logged workouts. It sits in the paid tier, with a 30-day trial for new users.

Why it matters This is the first time Garmin has fuelling data next to training load in one app, but only for subscribers. It is a logging aid, not fuelling advice.

Source: [Garmin](#) garmin.com

25 Dec 2025

TrainerRoad announces 'TrainerRoad AI', trained on tens of millions of rides

TrainerRoad's announcement said its new models, trained on 'tens of millions of rides', are '27% more likely to give you the right workout'. They simulate the plan whenever the calendar changes and show predicted FTP as you train. FTP and fatigue forecasting and a new approach to zone 2 were promised next. Staff said there would be no extra charge, and the post did not say what the 27% was measured against.

Why it matters This is the most ambitious AI from a cycling-specific platform so far, and it is included in the existing subscription. Its headline figure has no stated baseline.

Source: [TrainerRoad forum](#) trainerroad.com

The biggest change for self-coached riders is that you no longer have to export files and paste them into a chatbot. Official connectors now exist, but they are read-only and tied to a subscription. Platforms are also using API terms to control which third parties can pass your data to AI.

1 Jun 2026

Strava launches a read-only Claude connector for paying subscribers

Strava released a Model Context Protocol connector that lets Claude query a subscriber's full activity history, including per-second heart rate, cycling power, GPS and club data. It is read-only, can be revoked in settings, and has rate limits Strava has not published. Claude is the only supported client for now. Strava warned that Claude's figures may differ from those shown in the app.

Why it matters This is the first sanctioned way to put a general LLM over years of Strava power data. Because it cannot write workouts, you still need intervals.icu or a training app to act on the advice.

Source: [Marathon Handbook](https://marathonhandbook.com) marathonhandbook.com

1 Jun 2026

Strava drops API support for third-party intermediaries and introduces developer subscriptions

A Strava email to developers, posted on the intervals.icu forum, says apps that route Strava data through 'third-party intermediary platforms' are no longer supported. Existing Standard Tier developers need a Strava subscription from 30 June 2026. Forum write-ups put the developer fee at about \$11.99 a month and note that the 2024 ban on using API data in AI models remains.

Why it matters Unofficial AI coaching and MCP services that use Strava as their data source are the most exposed. Connecting your head unit or Zwift directly to intervals.icu is the safer route.

Source: [intervals.icu forum](https://forum.intervals.icu) forum.intervals.icu

8 Jan 2026

ChatGPT Health launches without Strava and excludes the UK

OpenAI began rolling out ChatGPT Health to a small group of early users, with connections to Apple Health, MyFitnessPal, Peloton, AllTrails and others. It was not available in the European Economic Area, Switzerland or the UK. OpenAI says Health chats are isolated and not used to train its models.

Why it matters For UK riders the official ChatGPT route to training data is closed for now. Strava and intervals.icu are not on its connector list.

Source: [GSMArena](https://gsmarena.com) gsmarena.com

21 May 2025

Strava uses a machine-learning model to remove 4.45 million leaderboard activities

Strava fast-tracked a machine-learning model that checks each activity against 57 factors, including speed and acceleration, and used it to reprocess the top 10 places on ride and run leaderboards. It removed 4.45 million activities. In the same update Strava added subscriber-only AI route suggestions built from its global heatmap.

Why it matters For riders who chase segments, this is the AI on Strava most likely to have changed a result you care about.

Source: [BikeRadar](https://www.bikeradar.com) bikeradar.com

Zwift is acting as a delivery channel for other companies' AI coaches while also building its own recommendation engine. For riders, the practical gain is that adaptive plans now land in Zwift's workout queue without manual exports.

6 May 2026

AI Endurance workouts now sync directly to Zwift

Zwift announced an integration that pushes AI Endurance's scheduled cycling and running workouts to the in-game 'Next Up' card and Zwift Companion. Completed rides sync back automatically. Edits, moves and skips made in AI Endurance carry over, but swim workouts and run sessions based on running power are not pushed.

Why it matters This is a second AI coach with a closed loop into Zwift, so you can trial adaptive planning indoors without building workouts by hand.

Source: [Zwift Forums](https://forums.zwift.com) forums.zwift.com

21 Apr 2026

Transition's AI coach integrates with Zwift, with two-way sync

Transition's founder announced that structured sessions appear on Zwift's home screen up to 48 hours ahead and that Zwift follows the exact power targets. Ride data, including RPE, flows back so the AI can adjust future training. A 30-day free trial is offered.

Why it matters Small AI coaching start-ups can now reach Zwift riders directly, which makes side-by-side trials against your current plan easier.

Source: [Zwift Forums](https://forums.zwift.com) forums.zwift.com

4 Sep 2025

Zwift announces AI-personalised ride recommendations, without periodisation

Zwift said AI recommendations would appear at the top of the home screen from November 2025. They suggest workouts, routes, RoboPacer rides and events based on goals, preferences and training load, including outdoor rides. Riders can tune suggestions by time and structure. The tool does not include training periodisation at launch.

Why it matters Zwift's own AI chooses today's session, not a plan. Riders following a third-party plan will see that plan take priority on the home screen.

Source: [BikeRadar](https://bikeradar.com) bikeradar.com

The companies that hold endurance athletes' data are buying the coaching layer. Strava bought a running coach and a cycling analysis app in two months. Garmin now owns the platform most UK coaches use. Investment is going into fewer, larger rounds.

12 Aug 2026

Fitness start-up funding rises to \$3.6bn in the first half of 2026

Value Add VC reports that fitness and wellness start-ups raised \$3.6bn in H1 2026, about a third more than 2025, which it calls the lowest year in at least six. The money is concentrated in fewer, larger rounds, led by Whoop's \$575m Series G, and is moving towards AI-enabled wearables. It cites Strava's Runna deal and Garmin's TrainingPeaks deal as evidence of consolidation.

Why it matters Investors are funding the data owners rather than standalone AI coaching apps, so expect more AI features bundled into existing subscriptions.

Source: [Value Add VC](https://valueaddvc.com) valueaddvc.com

22 Jul 2026

Garmin acquires TrainingPeaks and TrainHeroic

Garmin bought TrainingPeaks and TrainHeroic from Peaksware Holdings for an undisclosed sum, and 120 staff in Louisville, Colorado, are joining Garmin. Garmin said the deal expands its fitness ecosystem with customisable coaching tools.

Why it matters Garmin now owns the planning platform that many UK coaches and self-coached riders use. How it handles third-party access and AI on TrainingPeaks data matters to anyone who trains with a mixed set of devices.

Source: [PR Newswire](https://prnewswire.com) prnewswire.com

19 Sep 2025

Strava reportedly prepares a US listing at a \$2.2bn valuation

BikeRadar reported that Strava was preparing a US IPO, with a listing possible as early as early 2026, after a fundraising round in May 2025 valued it at \$2.2bn. Strava claims more than 150 million users in over 185 countries and says new-user numbers grew by more than 50% the previous year.

Why it matters A listed Strava will be under pressure to grow subscription revenue, and features such as the Claude connector are subscriber perks.

Source: [BikeRadar](https://bikeradar.com) bikeradar.com

22 May 2025

Strava buys The Breakaway cycling training app

Strava acquired The Breakaway, a Y Combinator-incubated app that analyses power data and gives next-step training advice, aggregating rides from Zwift, Garmin, Wahoo and others. Strava said its training features would come to Strava subscribers and that Breakaway users upload twice as many activities as other Strava cyclists.

Why it matters Power-based training analysis for cyclists is being folded into Strava's subscription rather than sold as a separate app.

Source: [BikeRadar](https://www.bikeradar.com) [bikeradar.com](https://www.bikeradar.com)

17 Apr 2025

Strava agrees to acquire London coaching app Runna

Strava agreed to buy Runna, a London running-coaching app founded in 2020 that had raised around £10m. Terms were not disclosed, and Dealroom estimated Runna's value at upwards of \$40m. More than 100 apps connect to Strava's API.

Why it matters This was the first move in Strava's push to own adaptive coaching rather than leave it to API partners. The Breakaway followed a month later.

Source: [UKTN](https://www.uktech.news) [uktech.news](https://www.uktech.news)

The academic evidence on LLM coaching is thin, and none of it covers power-based cycling. What exists rates generated plans as moderate and finds intensity, the variable cyclists care about most, the least consistent part. Evaluation methods are weak and no study has measured long-term performance outcomes.

13 Apr 2026

Preprint finds LLM exercise prescriptions vary most on intensity

A study generated 120 exercise prescriptions with Gemini 2.5 Flash, 20 each for six scenarios. The wording was highly consistent, with cosine similarity of 0.879 to 0.939, and frequency was stable, but quantitative elements, especially intensity, varied. Between 10% and 25% of resistance-training outputs contained intensity statements that could not be classified.

Why it matters If you ask the same model the same question twice you may get different zones. Pin intensity to your own FTP and power data rather than accepting it as generated.

Source: [arXiv](#) [arxiv.org](#)

14 Oct 2025

Scoping review calls evaluation of LLM health coaches 'fragmented and methodologically weak'

A JMIR review of 20 studies published between March 2023 and July 2025 found that 75% used ChatGPT models and 80% relied on human ratings. Only 40% used real user data, and the median rigour score was 2.5 out of 5. None measured long-term outcomes such as physical improvement.

Why it matters There is no trial evidence that following an LLM plan makes you faster. Your own before-and-after power data is the most relevant evidence available.

Source: [Journal of Medical Internet Research \(PMC\)](#) [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](#)

30 Sep 2025

Single-subject study uses an LLM as half-marathon coach for two months

One runner prepared for a half marathon with a general LLM acting as planner and explainer. They progressed from 2km at 7:54/km to 21.1km at 6:30/km. The author says causal attribution is limited without a control and lists gaps including no sensor integration and limited safety guardrails.

Why it matters This is the closest published test of conversational LLM coaching for endurance. It is a sample of one, a beginner and a runner, so it says little about trained cyclists.

Source: [arXiv](#) [arxiv.org](#)

26 Aug 2025

Coaches rate AI-generated strength plans as moderate quality

In *Biology of Sport*, 10 qualified coaches rated 16-week plans from GPT-3.5 (via ChatGPT and Copilot) and Gemini against 27 criteria. Overall quality was moderate and agreement between raters was low (Fleiss' kappa -0.051 to 0.001). The models were accessed in April 2024.

Why it matters Older models produced a usable starting framework that needed expert correction on intensity and individualisation, which are the same weak points to check in any cycling plan.

Source: [Biology of Sport \(PMC\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41888888/) [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41888888/)

WorldTour teams are signing AI partners and using models for pacing and fuelling. Most claims come from press releases and the published accuracy figures are modest. What filters down to amateurs is mainly the tools, such as Vekta, rather than the methods.

19 Jul 2026

BikeRadar maps the WorldTour AI race, with Vekta replacing TrainingPeaks at four teams

BikeRadar reports that Decathlon CMA CGM, Lidl-Trek, TotalEnergies and Jayco-AlUla use the Vekta AI coaching platform, having dropped TrainingPeaks. Visma's AI nutrition predictions are reported at 52% to 82% accuracy. Coach Frank Overton calls much of it 'smoke and mirrors' and says it is an 'illusion' that ChatGPT and Claude give good training advice.

Why it matters Even well-funded teams report modest accuracy from AI fuelling models, which is a useful benchmark for consumer claims.

Source: [BikeRadar](https://bikeradar.com) bikeradar.com

5 Jul 2026

Visma credits computer modelling for winning Tour team time trial pacing

Visma-Lease a Bike won the 19.6km opening team time trial of the 2026 Tour de France in Barcelona. Head of performance Mathieu Heijboer said the team ran many models, which consistently showed it should save its three lightest riders for the final two climbs while five others set the tempo on the flat.

Why it matters This is a concrete, public case of model-based pacing affecting a race result, and pacing models are directly relevant to time triallists.

Source: [Sporza](https://sporza.be) sporza.be

26 Feb 2026

Visma-Lease a Bike signs Mistral AI as technology partner

Visma-Lease a Bike named Mistral AI as a premium and technology partner, with branding on jerseys and vehicles from the Belgian classics. The two will work on performance projects covering data analysis and decision-making. Velora says it is unclear how deep the integration will go.

Why it matters Frontier-model companies now sponsor teams, but there is no published evidence yet of what the partnership does for performance.

Source: [Velora Cycling](https://veloracycling.com) veloracycling.com

What to watch next

↑ What Garmin does with TrainingPeaks

Garmin has not said whether TrainingPeaks will get an AI coach or what will happen to its third-party device and API access. Any move to favour Garmin hardware or restrict data export would matter to riders who use Wahoo or Hammerhead head units and analyse in intervals.icu.

↑ Strava's connector and intermediary rules

Strava says Claude is the only supported client 'for now' and has not defined what counts as an 'intermediary platform'. Whether ChatGPT or Gemini are added, and whether third-party MCP coaching services keep Strava data once the grace periods end, will decide which AI tools can read your rides.

↑ Independent validation of TrainerRoad AI

TrainerRoad's failure-rate and '27%' figures come from its own posts, without published sample sizes, and users report weaker FTP predictions for riders who train mostly outdoors. A published method or independent comparison against ramp tests or critical power would show whether the claims hold.

↑ A cycling-specific study of LLM coaching

No peer-reviewed study yet tests LLM-generated plans against power-based outcomes in trained cyclists. Until one appears, claims that a chatbot can replace a structured plan are untested, and riders should treat AI output as a draft to check against their own data.

↑ Strava's IPO

Strava confidentially filed for a US listing, but the expected spring 2026 date has passed without a set timetable. A listing would bring audited disclosures on subscribers and, probably, more AI features moved behind the paywall.

How this report was made

Every development here was found in a public source dated from April 2025 to August 2026: trade press, regulators, journals and company announcements. Each one names its source, so you can read the original.

All 25 source links were checked on 12 Oct 2026; 3 of those sites do not allow automated checking, so those links were not opened by the check. Nothing here is advice; it is a record of what happened.

The next edition, and the guides behind this one, are at aicycling.co.uk/report/