

PCH Randos 200k January 12th, 2008



The inaugural PCH Randos 200k started at 7:00 am, just when the morning was turning from chilly to something promising a warm day. This was very welcome after the rainy 200k in San Diego, the weekend before. A full day of riding in the sun, this early in the year, will be a good thing. For a new ride the turn out of

70 riders was quite good. Everything looked smooth at the start because of the work the organizers put into it. Having people pre-register is a smart idea.

We took off right at 7:00, with Greg Jones, in a pace car, leading us out of the parking lot and to the turn onto PCH, heading north. For anybody who has done the Grand Tour, put on by the LA Wheelmen, the rollers north out of Malibu, and the stretch after that to Port Hueneme, will be quite familiar. As usual, the rollers are easier at the beginning of the ride than the end. I got to the control at Port Hueneme, which was located on Park, just down the street from the Grand Tour SAG stop, in short order. A quick water stop, and we were on our way north. 35 miles down, with 29 left to reach the turn around on the south side of Carpinteria.





The section from Port Hueneme to Carpinteria is very scenic, and is also very good riding. Once past a few traffic lights, in Ventura, we were into and past Emma Wood State Beach. North of the park is a bike path, and north of that the road opens up, with nothing to slow you down before Carpinteria. Unfortunately a flat, on the 101, cost me a few minutes. The guy I was riding with, JV, mentioned

that he was pretty quick at fixing this sort of thing, so I let him take care of it. At the time I didn't think anything of it, but it was the first time ever somebody else fixed a flat for me. We got rolling in five minutes.

Something a little different was the route taking you on the back roads, up Rincon Hill, between Bates Road and Route 150, instead of taking us straight up the 101. It was a nice little climb, and then you looped around to the control.

Half the ride was done, we were making good time, and the weather was excellent. The sun was strong, but the breeze was cool, a good combination.



The route south of Carpinteria also had us take the back roads down to Bates Road. This time it was a fast blast down the hill, a quick turn, and then we were on the 101. On the ride up we had a bit of a head wind. Not surprisingly, that didn't turn into a tail wind, but rather sort of hit us from the side. That was ok, as long as it wasn't more head wind.

Once on the 101 the route back to Port Hueneme was the reverse of the last section. It was a quick run down the coast to Ventura, and then a few traffic lights before getting to the control. This time, while at the control, I had a “Bobbi Brownie” (baked by Bobbi the night before). Other than that, it was just refilling the bottles, and hitting the road.

South out of Port Hueneme the route is absolute flat, then rolls just a bit while on PCH, and then gets to the rollers returning to Malibu. Now the rollers are either a welcome site, because you know the end is near, or not, because somehow they have grown while you were gone. By now the sun was out strong, making it quite warm on the climbs. Still, they go fast, especially since the route has you making a right onto Malibu Road, before the last climb. You avoid the climb, and the traffic lights, by Pepperdine.

We check in at the end, and get our reward, which is a few slices of pizza. A nice ride, not too much climbing, a lot of people, and a good route, just the thing for getting the brevet season started.

Ron Smith



The author at the start of PBP