

Santa Cruz Mountain Challenge

By: David Voris

As I rolled up the parking lot at the finish line of the century with 70 miles showing on my Garmin, 2 flat tubes in my pocket, an empty patch kit box, and 40 pounds of pressure on a patched front tire with a boot bulging out the side, I have never been so happy to see my car.

So, from the beginning...



Saturday August 3, 2013
Scotts Valley
At the break of dawn

Will you be ready???

The 15th Annual

**Santa Cruz
Mountains
Challenge**

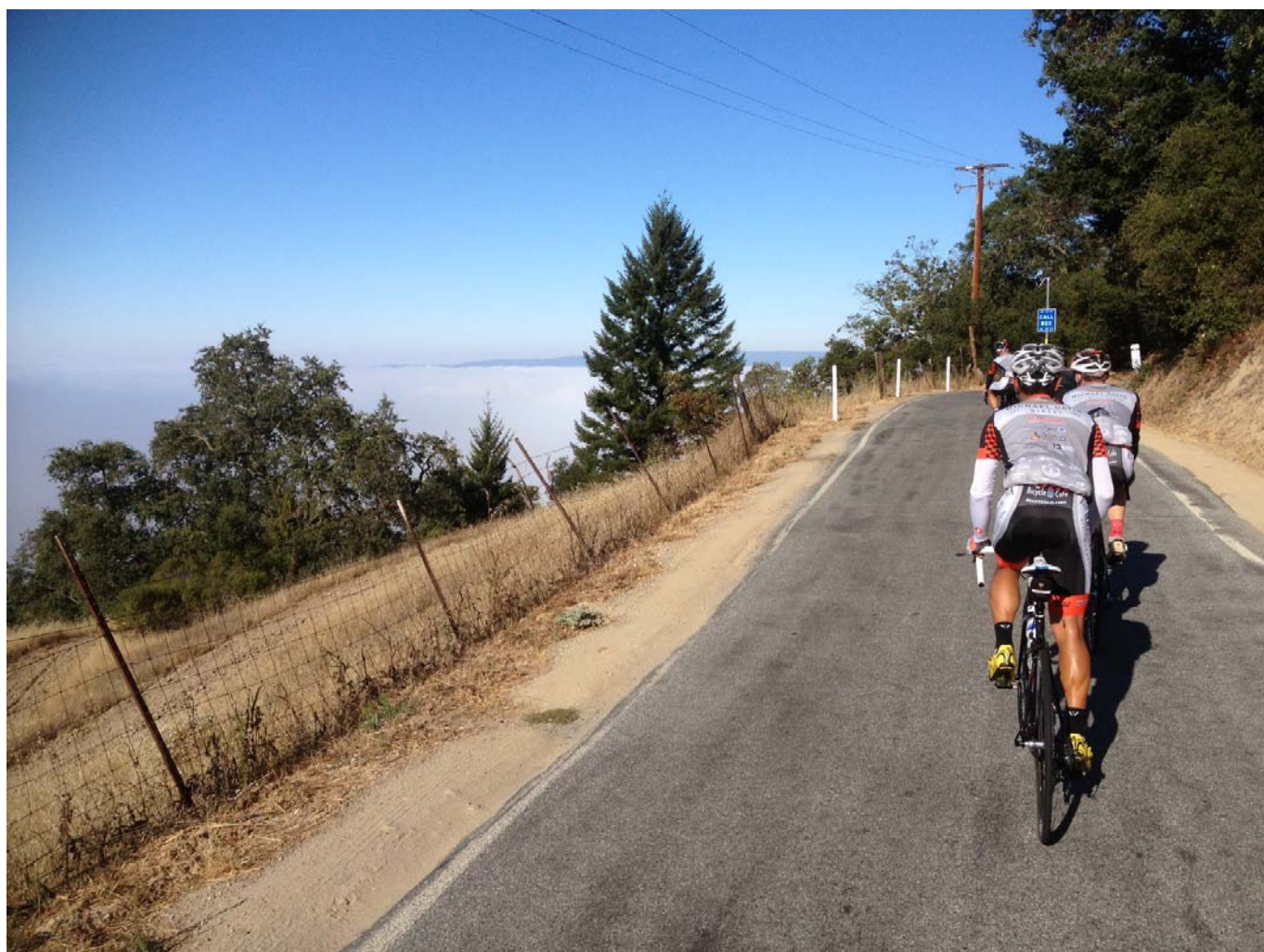
100K X 7,000'
100M X 10,000'
200K X 17,000'

*All routes include
The Jamison Hill Climb*

Online registration now open
www.santacruzcyclling.org/scmc



Ok, so it wasn't that bad. No crashes and no call to the wife for a pick up (from San Diego?). The first 40 miles were amazing, not a single car for the first 30 minutes on windy storybook roads in huge forests. I even managed to hook up with some good riders for social drafting. I had read about the grades on the 3 mile Jamison Creek Road grade and was fully aware that I was without my trusty triple geared Seven Ti. So I leisurely paced myself up to the 40 mile marker start of a Pine Creek-like climb in preservation mode.



I spent 2/3rds of the climb out of the saddle. I sat every moment the grade dropped below 13%, which wasn't that much. I was 1/3 the way up when I found a 10% section that allowed me to tighten my left shoe. It had

been wearing the skin of my ankle. I rarely put that kind of pressure in the standing position for such an extended period without relief. The last 2 miles were what we live for—true suffering.



Shortly after the top I found a first aid kit at a rest stop and rigged up a bandage taped covering that got me through the rest of the ride. I can't complain—had I not had the foot pain I probably would have been more aware of the pain of my tendons being ripped from my knees on the 20+ percenters.



Directional Arrows. How could I have missed any turns with these helping me?

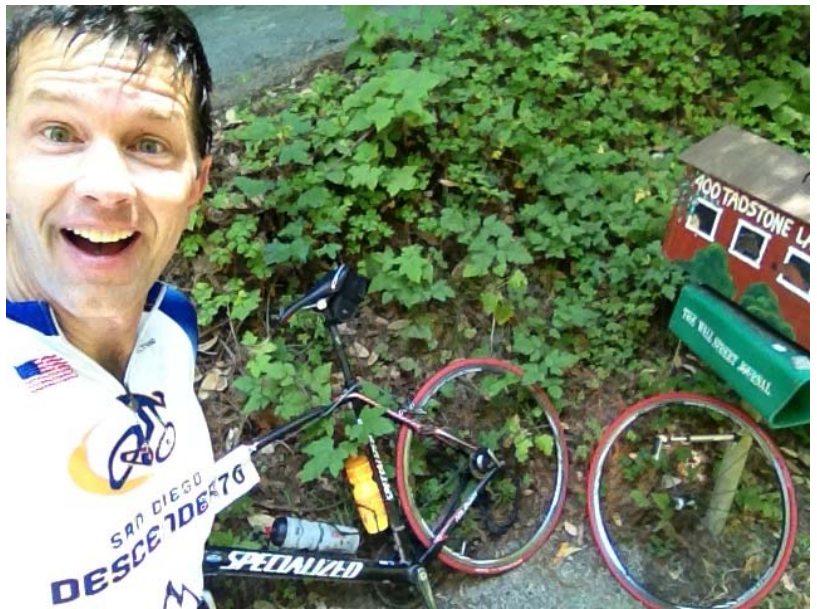
Then began my comedy of errors/misfortunes. I hit a bad bump and popped my water bottle out. I got to do a little hiking in the woods to get it. I then dropped my glasses (foggy) while reaching for a power-bar, and then later dropped a power bar reaching for a gel. Fred Alert! “Hi everyone, I proudly ride with the Descenders, a great club from San Diego. Hey, where did everyone go? Hello? Hello? Anybody—Hello?”

At mile 53, with all my shit gathered back up and crammed into my bulging pockets, I noticed that I hadn’t seen other cyclists for a while. I also noticed that the road I was on was not showing anywhere on my route sheet. And my iphone had no bars showing for a map. So I rode aimlessly until I finally found Directional yellow arrows (not the century route though). Surely they would get me back on course. At mile 65 I stopped at a light, to my delight I saw the 100 mile markers again. Hurray!, Everything is good now!

“Hey dude” said a local with a floor pump on the roadside. “You may want to check your tires, they did some trimming of sticker bushes”.

Both tires were loaded with bur-like thorns, and I had a nasty slit on the front tire. Fortunately I had two tubes and a boot kit.

“Well dude, it’s a good thing you flatted 1 mile from the finish. Not far from here. Glad I could help.”



Huh? I missed 33 miles of the century? Determined to hit my 100 mile milestone once I fixed the tires, I charted a course to get the rest of the distance. But all I could think about when I got started was “don’t flat, no tubes. don’t flat, no tubes”.

I have heard that you can telepathically create a flat if you think about it enough. And today I was at full power, as my next flat occurred 3 miles later. No tubes. But!, I found deep in my bag an old old patch with a little adhesion left. I gently applied it, and began to pump.

I then noticed the whites of the eyes of my tire boot popping out the side of the tire as I pumped. Stop. Get on the bike. Ride the short distance back to the car slow. Go Home!

I got to the car and discarded my flat tubes, my empty patch kit box, and my useless route sheet.

It was epic. You should have come.



