

2014 Southern Inyo Double Century Test Ride, April 5, 2014

Review by Peter Stark

Route Slip Distances Compared

This is from memory of what my bike computer read in comparison with the route slip. After further study and comparisons of the miles between points, it appears that my bike computer may be reading a little high. Please take that possibility into consideration

	Route Slip	My Bike Computer read:
Lee's Chevron	Mile 0	0
Coso Jct.	Mile 37.4	38.9 (1.5 miles more)
Jct. Hwy 190	Mile 54.1	57.1 (3 miles more)
Jct. 190/136	Mile 68.1	71.3
DV park sign	Mile 85.8	89.0
Jct. 190/136	Mile 103.3	106.8
Keeler	Mile 110.0	112.0 (gained a mile back?)
Lone Pine Jct.	Mile 120.2	122.3

(Note: I did not go to Lee's Frontier Chevron, I simply went left, south on 395, so then 6/10ths of a mile should be added to each of my bike computer numbers to adjust for that.)

Lubken Cyn Rd.	Mile 123.3	125.1
Horseshoe Rd.	Mile 126.5	128.4
Locked Gate	Mile 132.0	134.0
Whitney Portals	Mile 138.5	140.6
Hwy 395	Mile 141.5	144.3
Dow Villa Motel		144.5
Lee's Chevron	Mile 142.9	145.3
Keeler	Mile 157.1	159.0
Jct. 136/190	Mile 161.9	164.3
Hwy 395	Mile 176.0	178.9
Ranch House	Mile 176.3	179.2
Lee's Chevron	Mile 197.6	201.2

Water Stops and Check Points

Water stops were appropriate. With headwind conditions, two bottles are needed to get to the next water stop.

The Death Valley Sign and turn-around checkpoint at mile 89 might make for a good lunch stop. I ate my lunch while coasting on the long downhill heading back North after the Death Valley checkpoint. It might have been slightly early, but the downhill and flat riding back to Owens Lake and Lone Pine gave me ample time to digest my food before the climb up Lubken Canyon Road. I picked up additional food and water at mile 144 at the Dow Villa Motel to further fuel my last clockwise loop around the Owens Dry Lake.

Weather and Temperatures

Weatherbug forecasted a high temperature for the day at 62 degrees and the wind, 10 to 20 miles per hour from the North with gusts to 30 mph. I wore a windbreaker earlier in the day, and then left the arm warmers, knee warmers; toe covers and a medium light head cover on, for the rest of the ride.

While getting water at mile 54, a local resident commented, “it’s too bad that the wind picked up today” Apparently, there will be days with less or no wind.

There were strong headwinds going North on Hwy 395, East on Hwy 190, and North on Hwy 136. However, it should be noted as well, that these headwinds were tailwinds when going in the opposite direction.

The headwinds, being earlier on the ride was easier to manage than if they were later on the route. Later in the day, the tailwinds were welcome. I’m wondering if the wind direction (from the North) is common in the area for this time of year.

Terrain and Climbing

The one steep section (14% grade) on Lubken Canyon Road is not very long, and the rest of the uphill is not as steep. This climbing is only 9 miles of the 20 mi. Alabama Hills loop. I was using a 39x23 as my lowest gear without any difficulty.

Closing Comments

I would wholeheartedly recommend that this ride be included in the Triple Crown Double Centuries Schedule. The light traffic and good road surfaces on average are probably second to none. There are no traffic lights to speak of, simply a few stop signs. In addition, the route is such that someone having difficulty finishing can easily stop at mile 123 or 145. The scenic views of the Sierra Nevada mountain range and of the area near Death Valley are unique, and the location between Death Valley and Mount Whitney, the

lowest and the highest places in the United States gives bragging rights to those who complete this ride.

More Statistics

Start 6:15 am (Sunrise 6:35 am). Temperature was reported to be 43 degrees.

My finish: 6:53 pm (Sunset 7:18 pm)

Bike computer: 201.2 miles

Elapsed time: 12 hr. 38 min.

Ride Time: 11 hr. 57 min.

Average speed on the bike: 16.8 mph.

Max speed: 47.4 mph. on one downhill, southbound on 395 to Coso Junction with a tailwind.