

October 1998

Well, my time went so quickly, I went lickety splitly
Out to my Ol' 55

As I pulled away slowly, feeling so holy, God knows I was feeling alive
And now the sun's coming up, I'm riding with Lady Luck
Eagles, "Ol' 55"

Congratulations on being a Finisher in the 1998 California Triple Crown!! To remember it, enclosed is the beautiful Triple Crown patch that you earned!!

Looking back on this year's Double Series, I hope you had some moments on the rides where you were "feeling alive". Like for me seeing a beautiful tandem in the distance as I was climbing out of Lockwood Valley on the Heartbreak Double. Would there be a chance to "hitch a ride" at the top of the summit? You bet -- I was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time! Al and Maria Hall were kind enough to slow down for a second and allow me to couple my "coal car" to the back of their Santa Ana Tandem. I was the guest "coal car" on the Super Steam Locomotive booking 40-45 MPH on the 10 mile full throttle downhill, from Owl's Barn Summit to the Rest Stop at the Flying J. It was a Kodak moment as I was holding on for life, and they were breaking right into a major headwind on Frazier Mountain Park Road, passing single riders left and right. That was good fun!!

Or, very slowly descending down a "ladder from Heaven" on the Central Coast Double. Coming down the 3,000 Foot Nacimiento/Ferguson Road was a white knuckler experience for sure this year. The view of the magnificent California Coast from a sheer drop-off mountain was so out of this world, that you had to be REAL careful not to go over the cliff!!

Or, working in a most excellent paceline including the main man, Bill Oetinger, rocking and rolling into Calistoga on the Terrible Two. I thought we were going to smoke at 23 MPH forever. Later that day, I was overwhelmed climbing through some of the most beautiful country I've ever seen anywhere.

Lots of great memories for sure.

You are one of a very select group of 288 people completing the 1998 California Triple Crown. You should feel proud of your accomplishment!! Here are some statistics as shown on the enclosed Finishers Report:

- 4 Riders completed all 11 of the Double Centuries
- 3 Riders completed 10 of the Double Centuries
- 6 Riders completed 9 of the Double Centuries
- 7 Riders completed 8 of the Double Centuries
- 11 Riders completed 7 of the Double Centuries
- 17 Riders completed 6 of the Double Centuries
- 47 Riders completed 5 of the Double Centuries
- 43 Riders completed 4 of the Double Centuries
- 150 Riders completed 3 of the Double Centuries

In 1992, there were only 81 Finishers. In 1993:77 -- in 1994:174 -- in 1995:290 -- in 1996:271 -- in 1997:371, and in 1998 there were 288 Finishers.

An article regarding the California Triple Crown, including the enclosed comprehensive list of the finisher's names that has YOUR NAME ON IT is now on our web site at www.CalTripleCrown.com and is being submitted to *Bicycling Magazine*, *Bicyclist Magazine* and the Ultra Marathon Cycling Association (UMCA). In the July 1998 *Bicyclist Magazine*, there are some OUTSTANDING articles and photos on the Death Valley Double and the California Triple Crown. To subscribe, go to their Web Site at www.Bicyclist.com or call 1-800-544-6748 for reprints. These articles will also be available soon at www.CalTripleCrown.com.

The web site is becoming wildly popular!! On it, you can quickly find tons of interesting things such as: who were the 4 riders who completed all 11 Doubles this year, which clubs had the most Triple Crown Finishers this year or last year, and who finished the Triple Crown way back in 1992. Congratulations to the following California Clubs on the Leaderboard with the California Triple Crown:

- Davis Bike Club with 15 Finishers
- Fresno Cycling Club with 14 Finishers
- Orange County Wheelmen with 11 Finishers
- Santa Rosa Cycling Club with 10 Finishers
- Almaden Cycle Touring Club with 10 Finishers
- Bicycle Club of Irvine with 9 Finishers
- Los Angeles Wheelmen with 8 Finishers

It's one thing to complete Three Double Centuries in a year – it's a whole other matter to complete Five or more Doubles in a single year. This year there were 96 cyclists who rode at least One Thousand Miles in Doubles this year!! These select riders will have an additional banner added to their Custom Jersey / T-Shirt indicating "Thousand Mile Club".

There is also a competition on the Web Site for those riders who have ridden the most Doubles to date. Congratulations to Jim Von Tungeln who was the first person to ride 10,000 Miles in Double Centuries!!

There have been over 13,000 visits to the web site so far this year – it truly is the best way to keep in touch with all the latest that's happening. Just go to www.CalTripleCrown.com and then check out the "What's New on this Web Site?" page. Over the next year, I'll be making a ton of improvements and additions to this so stay tuned.

As most of you know, we started a California Triple Crown Stage Race in 1996 and enclosed are the final results from 1998. To compete in the Stage Race, all you had to do was complete the three most difficult Doubles: Central Coast, Heartbreak, and the Terrible Two. The Total Elapsed Time for all three rides was then computed and the rider with the fastest overall time was declared the finisher. Congratulations to Ray Plumhoff with a very close second to Paul Mc Kenzie. The competition was so close that these two guys came in with the same exact time on the Heartbreak Double with 10:47 after 200 Miles and over 12,400 Feet of Climbing!! The Stage Race will continue in 1999 but with a major change: The Devil Mountain Double with 18,000 Feet of Climbing will replace the Heartbreak Double with 13,650 Feet of Climbing. You don't have to do anything special to sign up for the Stage Race: In 1999, all you have to do is to sign up for and ride your heart out on the Devil Mountain Double, Central Coast Double, and the Terrible Two. Of course, that's much easier said than done!! Also, if you ride any Stage on a tandem, you must ride all three Stages on a tandem with the same partner.

The California Triple Crown lays down this challenge: be among the select few who are able to finish the Stage Race next year!!

One of my jobs is to keep track of those individuals completing the events by working with the

Ride Organizers. Another project that I've been working on has been to finalize the enclosed 1999 Flyer with Event Dates. Again, watch www.CalTripleCrown.com for updates to this.

This year we have a number of new California Triple Crown products available. Photos, detailed descriptions, and Frequently Asked Questions about these products can be found on the web site. If you can't get to our web site from home, work, or a relative's computer, you might want to try an "Internet Coffee Shop". If you don't want to have anything to do with computers, that's fine also -- just send me a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope and I'll send you a colored printout of the products with descriptions.

Back in April, I approached **Voler** Team Apparel about making us a fully sublimated California Triple Crown Jersey. After over 150 hours of designing a new Jersey, I am pleased to announce that Voler is producing 100 Jerseys for our initial order and they should be available for shipping to you the early part of November. This is a high quality Jersey made of Fieldsensor material that costs more but is really nice and can help keep you cool even on a tough Double Century. The design consists of a Brilliant Reflex Blue with a Bright Red Trim around a California State Flag and Bear with "California Triple Crown Finisher" and "3 or more Double Centuries". The California Triple Crown logo in 5 Brilliant Colors is on each sleeve. Even though this Jersey is not customized with the names of the rides you did, it will be a Jersey you will feel proud to wear for years to come. If I don't have your E-Mail address on file, I have concluded that you probably don't have access to the Internet, so I have enclosed a color sketch of this Jersey. The Reflex Blue is darker and deeper than the color sketch printout or what the Web Site shows. The Red Trim is a Brilliant Red. The sketch doesn't do it justice -- it has to be seen to be believed!! The Red, White, and Blue color combo is really, really nice. If there is enough interest in these Voler Jerseys based on how many of these are purchased and what suggestions I receive, I will consider building a new Voler design for say the year 2000 and beyond.

Back in June, I approached **Specialized** to see what it would take to build us some Customized California Triple Crown Water Bottles. After working with them, I am pleased to announce that I have 500 really nice looking Specialized Big Mouth, 24 Ounce Water Bottles in my garage. The screw on top makes it easy to mix your favorite drinks with ice. This is a White Water Bottle with a Black lid and the California Triple Crown Logo in 6 Brilliant Colors just like on the Home Page of the Web Site with the words "California Triple Crown Double Century Series" printed in Green Letters around the Logo. I am very pleased at how they came out -- and hope you like them as well.

Besides the new Voler and Specialized products, we are partnering with Charlie Irwin and his company, AFM Engineering, in the production of the Custom California Triple Crown products this year. Charlie has invested many, many hours in the design of a new way of manufacturing the Custom Jerseys using new and improved computer generated artwork. The **Custom Jersey** will be made using a new PACE material called Koolknit that is engineered to keep you cool. The Jersey will include a miniature Triple Crown logo with up to 5 lines of text underneath it on the Front in the Shirt Pocket area. Charlie and his company will also be building the **Custom Plaques** using the full color California Triple Crown logo surrounded by the names of the rides you did. New this year, Charlie will be making **Custom Mugs and Mouse Pads** using the same full color design. Don't forget to fill out the custom products form so you can specify the text and the position of the ride banners that will surround the Triple Crown logo. If you completed 5 or more Doubles, you should use one of the lines to specify "Thousand Mile Club".

Hugh Murphy continues to be a big time contributor to the California Triple Crown. Since the new manufacturing technique used to produce the Custom Jerseys only prints on polyester, it would only produce a polyester T-Shirt which I don't feel most people would like. Therefore, Hugh has offered to build the **Custom Cotton T-Shirts** this year as in past years as well as offering a brand new

Triple Crown **Bandana**. If you completed 5 or more Doubles, the T-Shirt will signify "Thousand Mile Club".

All of these new products are on the Order Form and have taken a long time to design and build. This is one of the reasons why this letter and order form is arriving so late in the year. I hope you feel that these products were worth the wait. And don't forget to pass on your thanks to Hugh and Charlie who have worked hard on making this all happen!!

Here's an idea for your Triple Crown patch: order a spare and attach it to the back of your Camelbak. Carol, my better half, used a glue gun to attach mine to my Hunchbak cover. I suggested this last year and it was great to see some Triple Crown patches on the back of those Camelbak's -- looking good!! I ordered over 200 extra patches this year, so there will be plenty for additional orders.

In 1999, I am considering not ordering the California Triple Crown patches. They are expensive and if the majority of folks don't want them anymore, I think we should consider not including them. **Please let me know how you feel about this by voting for or against the continuation of the patches on the Order Form – even if you're not ordering any products, at least fill out this portion and mail it in.**

If you like the Triple Crown patch, you'll love the Triple Crown Jerseys and T-Shirts!! Many of you told me clearly that you had worked hard many years to be able to wear one of these Jerseys -- so we decided to leave the traditional design in tact -- including the customization. Last year, we used a yellow Pace Jersey. This year, we're going back to a white Pace Jersey since the yellow jerseys are no longer available. Also, the colors of the Triple Crown logo look better on a white jersey.

Many folks ask us, "How can we help make the California Triple Crown continue?" One way that you can help is to order and wear some of the products. So if you're a finisher for the second, third, or seventh time, place an order for a Jersey this year. Then wear your Jersey or T-Shirt with pride and tell everyone that will listen to what the Triple Crown is all about. Now that you're a Triple Crown Finisher, other riders who never dreamed of doing a Double, let alone three of them in one year, will be looking up to you for advice and leadership!!

Why are Double Centuries so successful in California? Why are Doubles continuing in popularity here but becoming less popular in other places? There are many reasons I'm sure, but one is the fact that I see so many excited volunteers at these rides who help in a big way to make these challenges much more possible. Please think seriously about giving back to our sport: Volunteer for at least one Double next year!! You can make a difference!! Get creative with food, music, location, have fun and make a difference for a lot of other riders!!

I'd like to also recognize those California Triple Crown Finishers who are over 55 years of age. If you want to meet some present day heroes, ride with some of these folks and you'll quickly be in awe at their positive mental attitude and their outstanding physical conditioning. I can only hope to be in such good shape down the road!! Special congrats to seniors. As Neil Young says, "Long may you run."

Thanks for all of the comments on the back of the Registration forms. Feel free to E-mail me your thoughts on any of the Triple Crown issues at CBRams@aol.com. Tell me what you like and don't like about this year's products. As I mentioned, the Triple Crown doesn't have any funds to allow me to call you back but I'll do my best to respond in writing.

FUTURE GOALS

There's lots of room for improvement in the California Triple Crown series of Doubles. For example, training with a coach can bring a huge improvement in speed and climbing power. There are plenty of ways to improve on comfort making these rides more fun. Of course, none of these Doubles are ever easy but that's the challenge of them -- each one provides a Personal Growth Experience. When you're ready, consider stepping up to the harder rides in the Triple Crown for even more challenge and a deeper sense of accomplishment. Since these harder rides are among the most difficult Doubles anywhere on this planet surface, you've always got room for improvement right in the California Triple Crown Series of Double Centuries!!

How about riding from coast to coast -- all the way across America -- using only a 3 week Vacation? I've ridden two full Pacific - Atlantic - Cycling (PAC) Tours with long distance cycling legends, Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo. I can not say enough good things about these Cycling Expeditions Across America. I highly recommend them: I still wake up in the middle of the night dreaming of riding endless Roller Coasters!! For more info, send a SASE to: Lon Haldeman, PAC Tour, P.O. Box 303 Prairie Pedal Lane, Sharon, Wisconsin 53585. Or check out the info on the web on my Favorite Sites page at www.CalTripleCrown.com. Completing future Triple Crowns can provide those "Personal Growth Experiences" to get you ready to roll!!! It's amazing what you can accomplish -- and Lon and Susan are the true wizards at helping you turn your dream into a reality!!

How about completing Paris - Brest - Paris in 1999? The Davis Bike Club and Hugh Murphy Productions are preparing two series of Brevet training rides to qualify you for these MAJOR CHALLENGES!! Completing future Triple Crowns can serve as the cornerstone of your training program!!

How about the ultimate challenge: the Furnace Creek 508 followed by the Race Across America? Impossible? No way--just ask the many Triple Crown Finishers who have now gone on to compete very successfully in the ultimate long distance race. My hat's off to all of the Triple Crown finisher's who went on and completed any part of RAAM this year. Call Chris Kostman at 800-388-6497 for more info on the 508!! Or check out the 508 and RAAM on the web on my Favorite Sites page at www.CalTripleCrown.com. Completing future Triple Crowns can serve as the launch pad for your really long rides!!

CONCLUSION

In the newspaper about a couple of years ago, I read an article about George Sheehan, a 74 Year Old Marathon Runner, dying from Cancer. George said, "Life is not a spectator sport. We were born to be active. I'm not sure why we were placed on earth, but I know it wasn't to make a living!!"

"No matter how old I get, the race remains one of life's most rewarding experiences. In a race, age changes only place and time.....But the experience of the race is unchanged: each race a drama, each race a challenge, each race telling me more about myself and others. The answer to the big question in running [or in cycling] is the same as the answer to the big questions in life:

Do the best with what you've got.!!"

Perhaps the saddest hard-luck story of this year's California Triple Crown Stage Race belongs to the tandem team of Rich Boettner and Chuck Doyle. They had been having a great season, tearing up Double courses all over the state, and they were ranked third heading into The Terrible Two final stage. Unfortunately, on the most remote part of the Terrible Two Course with miles from any help, they stripped out the rear hub on their tandem. Sag wagons offered to haul them in, but they refused to quit. When I came upon them, they were walking their tandem down Highway 1. In fact, they rode their

tandem down any descent possible, walked it on the climbs including the brutal Fort Ross Climb, and one legged paddled it on the flats for well over 30 miles before they simply ran out of time and had to abandon, just a few miles from the finish.

Terrible Two Ride Organizer Bill Oetinger said it best, "That never-say-die determination of Rich and Chuck is the same fierce fire that burns in the heart of every rider who attempts such a challenging feat. We're proud to be associated with such a group of people."

Likewise, each of you have had to struggle to complete these Doubles this year. My hat is off to you for your accomplishments!!

Riding 3 Double Centuries in a year is ONE BIG TIME, MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT!! You have taken the most simple belief that you have in yourself and have translated it into results by dedication. **In 1998, YOU were a California Triple Crown Finisher!! Congratulations!!**

The Triple Crown ride organizers and I congratulate you. We hope to see you going for the gold again in 1999!!

In the Heartbreak Double, Heartbreak Hill is at Mile 124. There are Mile 124's in everyone's life. Some come earlier in the race. Some later. But wherever you find them, you can overcome them. Completing a Double Century is not about winning the race against 100 or 1500 other cyclists. It's about winning the race against yourself.

To improve. Against your best self. There is a Hindu proverb that says, "True superiority is not how a man measures up to another but how he measures up to his prior self."

To do the very best with what you've got.

From the Deserts, to the Mountains, to the Ocean, the California Triple Crown rides provide a lot of awesome cycling adventures, challenges, beautiful scenery, great memories, and fun for each of us!!

I'm already planning how I'm going to improve on my next Double!!

See ya next year!!

Chuck Bramwell
Executive Director
California Triple Crown

Lord knows Dreams are hard to follow, But don't let anyone Tear them away

Hold on There will be tomorrow, In time you'll find the way

It's a long road ...

And then a hero comes along, With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside, And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone, Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth:

That a Hero Lies In You!!
"Hero" by Mariah Carey

There is nothing a good day of cycling won't cure.
Bumper Sticker

Jonathon Boyer said in the 1985 Race Across America, "Even though the Ultra-Marathon cyclist can do the Race they're doing, they're not considered real athletes as far as racing athletes or someone who does something on a competitive level. My main competition I think is the clock. They're not many other riders that can even conceive of doing what I want to do."

In the 1986 Race Across America, Pete Penseyres responded with, **"It's always bothered me that the cycling world, as small as it is, can't be more of a family."** On the same course as the 1985 Race but with much more difficult conditions, Pete finished the Race in 8 Days, 9 Hours, 47 Minutes. 16 Hours Faster than Jonathon Boyer the year before!!"

Pete Penseyres, 1986 Race Across America, ABC Wide World of Sports

Excellence ... The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.

Vince Lombardi

I Think

Therefore I Am, I Think

There you go my bright little star,

Face piles of trials with smiles,

It riles them to believe that you perceive the web they weave,

And keep on thinking free.

"On The Threshold of a Dream" by The Moody Blues

06/29/98

1998 California Triple Crown Stage Race

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Rank	Name	Age	Home Town	Central Coast	Heart Break	Terrible Two	Total Time	Time Back
1	PLUMHOFF, RAY	43	OAKLAND	11:49	10:47	11:36	34:12	0:00
2	MC KENZIE, PAUL	43	RICHMOND	12:35	10:47	12:22	35:44	1:32
3	CHESTER, MICHAEL	43	OCEANSIDE	13:19	11:38	12:55	37:52	3:40

4	CASTELLI, EMILIO	42	SEBASTOPOL	13:37	12:00	12:48	38:25	4:13
5	SCHUMANN, JAY	46	SAN FRANCISCO	13:45	12:10	12:43	38:38	4:26
6	PERVIER, FENN	44	FAIRFAX	13:34	12:12	13:06	38:52	4:40
7	PECKHAM, DEAN	40	SACRAMENTO	13:50	12:27	12:43	39:00	4:48
8	WOO, JONATHON	27	SAN DIMAS	13:45	12:20	13:07	39:12	5:00
9	HRISTOV, LUBIMOR	39	TUSTIN	13:44	12:35	13:43	40:02	5:50
10	POP, PETER	48	MALIBU	14:41	11:53	13:41	40:15	6:03
11	PELZAR, ROBERT	40	WOODSIDE	13:53	13:09	13:23	40:25	6:13
12	TIKKANEN, WAYNE	43	S. PASADENA	14:09	13:01	13:20	40:30	6:18
13	ROBERTSON, CRAIG	40	LOS ALTOS	15:12	12:28	13:09	40:49	6:37
14	NAKAI, DAVID	42	FALLBROOK	14:47	13:11	13:54	41:52	7:40
15	BRAMWELL, CHUCK	46	IRVINE	14:42	13:11	14:25	42:18	8:06
16	HOLLOWAY, KEN	45	SAN JOSE	15:17	13:29	14:12	42:58	8:46
17	CRAIN, DAN	53	IRVINE	15:45	14:10	14:38	44:33	10:21
18	MACLEOD, RORY	45	VACAVILLE	15:15	14:14	15:26	44:55	10:43
19	ERWIN, MIKE	57	MADERA	16:13	13:59	15:26	45:38	11:26
20	OETINGER, BILL	51	SEBASTOPOL	16:19	14:35	14:52	45:46	11:34
21	DICKINSON, RICHARD	45	SANTA MONICA	16:30	13:44	15:38	45:52	11:40
22	COOK, WAYNE	37	SAN LUIS OBIS	16:16	14:55	15:44	46:55	12:43
23	LEHLE, WALTER	51	SAN FRANCISCO	16:57	14:25	15:41	47:03	12:51
24	JOE, MICHAEL	31	SAN FRANCISCO	16:48	14:45	16:02	47:35	13:23
25	HOENIGMAN, JOHN	33	GOLETA	17:31	14:48	15:38	47:57	13:45
26	BARNETT, JEANIE	41	MARTINEZ	18:24	15:45	15:50	49:59	15:47
27	BARTHOLIC, KEN	58	IRVINE	18:36	14:53	17:16	50:45	16:33
28	ROBBINS, JOHN	57	REDONDO BEACH	19:16	14:53	16:42	50:51	16:39
29	CAMPBELL, KEN	41	COSTA MESA	17:59	15:44	17:28	51:11	16:59
30	KOPIT, PAUL	55	SUNLAND	18:41	18:49	17:46	55:16	21:04

P.S. The guy in 15th place is looking for a new, improved, bigger, faster, and better engine because that's all the horsepower he can produce with his current drive train!! :) :)

This year I had little chance to win. Pantani was on another planet. When he attacks the mountains, no one can match him.

No matter what happened here, it was my dream. Different things come about and try to mess with you. But it's the strong people that persevere and don't let it bother them. I'm very proud right now.

Bobby Julich, 1998 Tour de France Third Place Finisher
 First American since Greg LeMond to stand on the podium

“It's the strong people that persevere.”