

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company....an organization....a school....a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable.

The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude.

**I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it.**

And so it is with you .... we are in charge of our attitudes.

**Positive Attitude, accept no substitute!!"**

Charles Swindoll

Congratulations on being a Finisher in the 1999 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 have some great memories. Like for me seeing a beautiful tandem in the distance as I was climbing before Lunch on the Tour of Two Forests Double. I was lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time! Like last year, 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 Tandem booking 40-45 MPH. It was great fun holding on for life behind these folks. Yet, what was most memorable was watching them fearlessly cut through the S Curves on the downhill at full throttle!! I slowed way down but could see them in the distance ... I remember saying to myself, "They are tilting their tandem over so far, the sides of their rims are going to hit the asphalt". The Halls taught me a big lesson in fearless descending and total faith in themselves and their equipment!!

And talk about a Positive Attitude!!

"Whether you believe you can, or whether you believe you can't, you're absolutely right."

Henry Ford

"That's why you fail: don't doubt for a minute!! Don't try--do it!! That's what it's all about!! Stuff yourself with doing!!"

Yoda, Star Wars: Empire Strikes Back

You are one of a very select group of 332 people completing the 1999 California Triple Crown. You should feel proud of your accomplishment!! Here are some statistics as shown on the enclosed Winners Report:

4 Riders completed all 11 of the Double Centuries  
2 Riders completed 10 of the Double Centuries  
4 Riders completed 9 of the Double Centuries  
8 Riders completed 8 of the Double Centuries  
9 Riders completed 7 of the Double Centuries  
23 Riders completed 6 of the Double Centuries  
43 Riders completed 5 of the Double Centuries  
58 Riders completed 4 of the Double Centuries  
181 Riders completed 3 of the Double Centuries

In 1992, there were only 81 Winners. In 1993:77 -- in 1994:174 -- in 1995:290 - in 1996:271 - in 1997:371 - in 1998: 332, and in 1999 there were 332 Winners.

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](http://www.CalTripleCrown.com) and is being submitted to Bicycling Magazine and the Ultra Marathon Cycling Association (UMCA).

### **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN THOUSAND MILE CLUB**

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 93 cyclists who rode at least One Thousand Miles in Doubles this year!! These select riders will have an additional ribbon 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.

## CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN STAGE RACE

"People are like bags of tea. You don't know how strong they are until they get into hot water."  
Anonymous

As most of you know, we started a California Triple Crown Stage Race in 1996 and the 1999 results are below. To compete in the Stage Race, all you had to do was complete the three most difficult Doubles: Devil Mountain, Central Coast, 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 Winner.

The competition was indeed fierce this year. In his first year at competing in the California Triple Crown Stage Race, **Tim Coleman** from Fresno won the Stage Race. 37 Minutes back, **Rich Boettner** came in Second Place thanks to a most impressive time at the Devil Mountain Double where he set a new course record!! Only 1 Minute behind was **Ray Plumhoff** in 3rd Place. Ray was the Winner of the Stage Race last year and nearly pulled into 2nd Place by an incredible time on the Terrible Two where he came in First Place!!

You don't have to do anything special to sign up for the Stage Race: In 2000, 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 Top 3 Finishers in the Stage Race, Tim, Rich, and Ray, will receive a Custom California Triple Crown Plaque. In order to encourage more Women to compete in the Stage Race in 2000, we will be setting up a separate Women's Division with the Top 3 Women Finisher's also receiving a Custom California Triple Crown Plaque starting next year.

The California Triple Crown lays down this challenge: be among the select few who are able to finish the Stage Race in the year 2000!!

10/27/99		1999 California Triple Crown Stage Race					
Rank	Name	Age	Home Town	Devil Mountain	Central Coast	Terrible Two	Time Back
1	COLEMAN, TIM	34	FRESNO	13:07	11:02	11:34	0:00
2	BOETTNER, RICHARD	32	FREMONT	12:53	11:50	11:37	0:37
3	PLUMHOFF, RAY	44	OAKLAND	14:00	10:54	11:27	0:38
4	DODGE, DARYN	39	DAVIS	13:56	11:22	11:37	1:12
5	MILLER, BENJAMIN	40	LA JOLLA	13:52	11:50	12:25	2:24
6	FRINK, JIM	36	SACRAMENTO	14:49	11:53	12:13	3:12
7	SHADOAN, DAN	52	DAVIS	14:49	12:12	12:53	4:11
8	FALLORINA, DAN	42	WATSONVILLE	14:46	14:00	12:53	5:56
9	PERVIER, FENN	45	FAIRFAX	15:55	12:12	14:40	7:04
10	BEAL, SAM	47	MOUNTAIN VIEW	16:51	13:23	13:06	7:37
11	LEUTY, PAUL	51	SAN JOSE	16:24	14:02	13:58	8:41
12	PEDRICK, FRANK	49	NEVADA CITY	17:03	14:05	13:19	8:44
13	WOODSIDE, WAYNE	52	SACRAMENTO	16:51	13:21	14:44	9:13
14	COBLE, BOB	47	CONCORD	17:45	14:37	14:36	11:15
15	DENIES, PAUL	43	MILPITAS	18:00	14:34	14:41	11:32
16	KOZERA, JIM	53	CLOVIS	18:00	15:34	15:14	13:05
17	GRIFFICE, CHARLES	50	ORANGE	19:52	14:47	14:50	13:46
18	GARCIA, GABRIEL	37	ANTELOPE	19:18	14:31	15:53	13:59
19	SIMON, CURT	50	SAN RAFAEL	19:28	14:51	16:10	14:46
20	JOE, MICHAEL	32	SAN FRANCISCO	19:51	16:11	15:47	16:06
21	ROSE, MICHAEL	54	ORANGEVALE	19:45	17:25	14:44	16:11
22	ABERG, MIKE	33	PALO ALTO	21:24	14:59	15:44	16:24
23	CRAIN, DAN	54	IRVINE	21:52	15:39	14:44	16:32
24	WONG, FELIX	23	FREMONT	18:34	16:44	17:50	17:25
25	DICKINSON, RICHARD	46	SANTA MONICA	23:01	14:47	15:41	17:46
26	KOPIT, PAUL	56	SUNLAND	20:20	17:24	16:09	18:10
27	ROBBINS, JOHN	58	REDONDO BEACH	21:20	17:34	17:50	21:01
28	LOCK, KEVIN	37	EL CERRITO	21:49	17:08	17:50	21:04
29	PATTERSON, DOUG		ORANGE	23:40	16:58	17:07	23:02

## **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN CLUB COMPETITION**

Congratulations to the following California Clubs on the 1999 Leaderboard with the California Triple Crown:

Fresno Cycling Club with 18 Winners  
Davis Bike Club with 16 Winners  
Orange County Wheelmen with 14 Winners  
Almaden Cycle Touring Club with 9 Winners  
Bicycle Club of Irvine with 9 Winners  
Marin Cyclists with 7 Winners  
Western Wheelers with 7 Winners

## **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN HALL OF FAME**

"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

The California Triple Crown Hall of Fame was started in June of 1999 to recognize those who have accomplished a significant milestone in the Double Century Series by riding over 10,000 Miles of these rides!! These select few cyclists have completed over 50 Double Centuries!! New Hall of Fame web pages will contain Resumes for each of the people inducted in the Hall of Fame.

These select few who are in the Hall of Fame have demonstrated a huge commitment to long distance cycling ... indeed, they have shown a commitment to excellence that very few cyclists have demonstrated anywhere in the world. Future inductees into the Hall of Fame may also include Ride Organizers and Support Volunteers who have demonstrated a huge commitment to the California Triple Crown Double Century Series as well.

**Jim Von Tungeln** was the first cyclist to be inducted into the California Triple Crown Hall of Fame. He completed his 50th Double Century in the California Triple Crown Series with the 1998 Grand Tour. Jim's Cycling Achievements are most impressive and are explained on the web page along with a great photo of him and a graphic of the Hall of Fame Plaque which was awarded to Jim.

**Paul Kopit** was the second cyclist to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. He completed his 50th Double Century in the California Triple Crown Series with the 1999 Central Coast Double. As of the end of the 1999 season, Paul has completed 55 Double Centuries!! Paul's Cycling Achievements are also impressive and are explained on the web page. There is a great photo of Paul hanging over Bryce Canyon and a graphic of the Hall of Fame Plaque which was awarded to Paul. Of particular interest is a prized and rare photo of "King Kopit's Throne" which you have to see to believe!!

## **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN WEB SITE**

"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

Arthur C. Clarke

There have been over 27,000 visits to the web site so far this year which is over twice what it was in 1998!! It truly is the best way to keep in touch with all the latest that's happening. Just go to [www.CalTripleCrown.com](http://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.

On the Web Site, you can quickly find lots of interesting things such as: who were the 4 riders who completed all 11 Doubles this year, which clubs had the most Triple Crown Winners this year or last year, and who finished the Triple Crown way back in 1992.

If you don't have access to the Internet yet, check it out at a friend or family member's house, or Internet Coffee Shop near you!! Warning: you'll need at least an hour because there's so much to look at!!

## **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN 2000**

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 2000 Flyer with Event Dates. At the Eastern Sierra Double Breakfast, I asked who would be interested in having some Doubles in the Fall Season (September, October, November). I think everyone in the room raised their hands. It was a very strong showing of support for the concept.

Hugh Murphy has decided to test the concept this year by putting on three Double Centuries in the fall. The Year 2000 Schedule started September 18, 1999 and runs until July 15, 2000 ... kind of like the School season. These Doubles will help us keep in shape the year round ... one of the many advantages of the great weather we enjoy in California!!

There are two Death Valley Doubles on the schedule because it was a huge event in 1999 and overloaded the Hotels ... so this will allow the area to handle the large number of cyclists. If you complete both the Death Valley Double on 11/20/99 and on 2/26/00, you will get credit for two Doubles in the year 2000 season.

In the year 2000, George Pinney will offer a Double Metric option on the Devil Mountain Double. This option will give you a good introduction to "The Devil" ... even though it won't count towards the Triple Crown. George reports: "Hope without work is just dreaming - labor without dreams is drudgery - but dreams coupled with work is DESTINY!"

In the year 2000, the Terrible Two will celebrate it's 25<sup>th</sup> Silver Anniversary. Bill Oetinger has announced that there will be a special, one-time-only Terrible Two T-Shirt just for Year 2000!!

### CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN PRODUCTS

"I've got new shoes on today, so watch out!!"  
Frederic Moncassin

We don't have new shoes for sale, but we're getting there!! Again this year, we have a number of great new California Triple Crown products available. I've been working with Voler, Charlie Irwin, and Hugh Murphy on these new California Triple Crown Products ... and then building the new web pages. Photos, detailed descriptions, and Frequently Asked Questions about these products can be found on the web site. 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.

I decided to work through the many product issues and get those web pages completed before finishing this letter. This has allowed some of you to place your orders for your products so we can get them to you as soon as possible.

When you see the new 1999 California Triple Crown products, I hope you'll agree with me that they were worth the wait!! Here are some highlights of the changes:

- **Voler** Short Sleeve Jersey enhanced!!
- New **Voler** Long Sleeve Jersey added!! This will be a one time opportunity which won't be repeated in the future ... so place your order now for a Jersey that you're sure to always treasure!!
- Custom **PACE** Jersey has been redesigned with new Ribbons on the Back Pockets and CTC Logo on the Sleeves!!
- Price on the **Specialized** Water Bottles has been drastically reduced!!
- New **Voler** Gloves added!! These babies make your hands look really great as you fly by those other guys in the paceline!!
- Custom **Plaque** is looking better than ever this year!!
- New Custom **Ceramic Mug** added by popular demand!! This is just a beautiful thing and will be a major upgrade to your desk!!
- **Plastic Coffee Mug and Mouse Pad** enhanced with new Purple Text!!
- Also, I totally redesigned the Order Form to include a **Check List** so you can get your stuff as soon as possible.
- New for this year, we can also accept your **MasterCard / Visa**!!
- Last but not least, I also updated the **Frequently Asked Questions** page.

The Order Form is enclosed and is on the Web Site ... so send me those orders!! If you've already placed an order, you can always place another one!!

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.

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 the 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!! Another idea: attach one to the back of your Seat Bag ... I did that and had it in place for 750 Miles on Paris-Brest-Paris this summer. I ordered over 100 extra patches this year, so there will be plenty for additional orders.

### **CALIFORNIA TRIPLE CROWN VOLUNTEERS**

"The opportunity for giving is what gives us meaning in our life."  
A Very Wise Person

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 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. One reason is 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, atmosphere, have fun and make a difference for a lot of other riders!!

I have created some "Volunteer Reports" on the Web Site which track the Doubles you or your family members volunteer to support. This information is based on your input on the Registration Form. These rides can only continue if volunteers (spelled Y-O-U) jump in and help. We are considering changing the rules next year so that you will have to support at least one Double in order to be a member of the Thousand Mile Club. It's not enough to just ride the rides because if that's all everyone does, these major adventures will go the way of the dinosaurs!! It's not easy running Rest Stops 200+ Miles from nowhere so each of these rides need YOUR help.

Which of these Doubles need your help? All of them!! You and your family can have fun and make a difference: call the ride organizer and tell them you want to help. Put on your thinking cap and make that Rest Stop a great memory for all who drop by!!

I'd like to recognize the Triple Crown Ride Organizers: Hugh Murphy for the Death Valley Double, Solvang Double, Butterfield Double, Classic TOTF, and Eastern Sierra Double. Jim Watrous for the Hemet D.C. George Pinney for the Devil Mountain Double. Brian Stark for the Central Coast Double. Dan Shadoan and the Davis Bike Club for the Davis Double. Bill Oetinger and the Santa Rosa Cycling Club for the Terrible Two. Lisa Shelley and the L.A. Wheelmen Bike Club for the Grand Tour. These folks give tons of time and energy to keep these Doubles continuing. It's easy to tell these folks what you don't like about their events but don't forget to praise them for all of the good things they do as well!!

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@CalTripleCrown.com. Tell me what you like and don't like about this year's products and rides. 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.

## REALLY BIG FUTURE GOALS AND ADVENTURES

"Go as far as you can see and when you get there, you will always be able to see farther.  
The largest room in the world is the room for improvement."

Harvey Mackay

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 the planet surface**, you'll always have room for improvement right in the California Triple Crown Series of Double Centuries!!

**Eric Norris** is the first rider to complete 10 Consecutive California Triple Crown Wins!! Yet, talk about improvement: he set a new Personal Record for the Davis Double this year!! The message is don't give up -- there's lots of room for improvement in the California Triple Crown!!

"Conditions are never just right. People who delay action until all factors are favorable, do nothing."  
William Feather

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](http://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 the ultimate challenge: the Furnace Creek 508 followed by the Race Across America? Impossible? No way--just ask the many Triple Crown Winners 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](http://www.CalTripleCrown.com). I was on a 508 Team in October of this year and had a fun experience. I will be adding my photos and ride report to the web site in coming months. Completing future Triple Crowns can serve as the launch pad for your really long rides!!

How about completing Paris - Brest - Paris in 2003? The Bramwell Family had a fantastic trip to France in August and I'm still reeling over how great PBP was!! Here's a piece of my ride report ... "I was so pumped when I got the finish that I nearly passed out!! Certainly, this was heaven.

I will go to my grave remembering my wife, Carol, and sons, Adam and Alex, being there for me at the finish. It was 12:30 A.M. Friday Morning when I arrived and they had watched my ride step by step from the Start Line on the Minitel computer system that allowed them to see when I made it through each of the controls. It meant everything in the world to me for them to be there at the finish. To hear them congratulate me even before I could see them was something I'll long remember. We decided early on that I would ride PBP without them supporting me at the controls. I hadn't seen them for 3 days but it seemed like 3 years in many ways.

They had been overwhelmed by the beauty of Versailles and the Louvre. I had been overwhelmed by the beauty of Mortagne, Villaines, Fougères, Tinteniac, Loudeac, Carhaix, Brest and a network of a thousand little villages on small country roads. We were all overwhelmed. It was just a case of brain overload.

So many memories. PBP changed me. Big time. Deep down inside I now have a deeper passion for cycling. I didn't think that was possible. But it's very true."

These and many more memories along with 150 photos taken on the bike will be coming to the Triple Crown Web Site in the coming months. Completing future Triple Crowns can serve as the cornerstone of your training program!!

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

"Start by doing what's necessary, then what's possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible."  
St. Francis of Assisi

I'd like to also recognize those California Triple Crown Winners 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."

When you're looking for incredible comeback stories, you don't have to look further than some amazing people who completed the 1999 California Triple Crown series!!

**Dr. Bob Nagy** is a Psychiatrist in Santa Barbara ... he is also a diabetic. He was entering new medical territory this year when he completed his first Triple Crown with 5 Doubles: he was measuring his blood sugar and making constant adjustments to stay "in the zone". Bob's message: anything is possible ... **Diabetes is no barrier!!**

"I take nothing for granted  
I now have only good days or great days."  
Lance Armstrong

**Dave Evans** rode his first Grand Tour Double Century way back in 1978. In 1998, Dave was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. Two weeks after the 1998 Solvang Double, Dave had surgery. His recover was nothing short of remarkable. He was back on the bike in less than a month doing short local rides even during his Cancer Treatments!! His rides gradually increased in length and intensity. In September, Dave and several friends did an unsupported Angeles Crest Century!! Talk about a comeback: In 1999, Dave completed 9 Doubles plus the Grand Tour Highland Triple ... missing only Death Valley and the Terrible Two. We are mighty glad to have "Big Ring" Dave back in the Triple Crown Peloton. If you don't know Dave, you might recognize him by his amazing love of climbing Really Big Mountains!! Dave's message: anything is possible ... **Cancer is no barrier!!**

"We found anything is possible - you can too!!"  
Poster signed by every Astronaut given to Christopher Reeve  
After he was paralyzed in a Horse Back Riding Accident

It was on Valentine's Day in 1998 when tragedy struck **Tom Miller**. On a rain slicked road a couple of miles from his house in Oceanside, Tom was completing a training ride. Tom was travelling at 30 MPH when a car skidded out of control and hit him at about 45 MPH in a near head-on collision. Later, the paramedics told his wife: "The good news is that your husband is alive. The bad news is that it looks like he'll lose his leg." Great news on Valentine's Day!

Tom later wrote, "In fact the guy's left front bumper impacted just above my left ankle with my foot in the six o'clock position at a relative speed of approximately 50-60 mph. This shattered the bone in my leg, nearly tearing my foot off, and nearly tearing the bottom bracket from the seat tube of my Trek 5200 bike." If Tom's accident would have occurred five years ago, even the best doctors would have had to amputate his leg. Thanks to the miracles of modern medicine, it wasn't necessary. He had a triple compound fracture. The photos of Tom's bike shattered in a dozen pieces have to be seen to be believed.

Talk about a comeback: Tom has been on the long road to recovery ever since his accident ... and in fact, completed 4 Double Centuries in February to May of 1999. He then topped it off with a 350 mile ride in the Iowa 24 Hour World Championships held in September with a Titanium rod in his tibia (lower leg)! We're talking a major comeback here.

The icing on the cake was for Tom was to organize and complete the Team Furnace Creek 508 this year. I was fortunate enough to be recruited as a team member. From my ride report: "At the next rider rotation at Stovepipe Wells, Tom passes the imaginary baton to Mark Newsome. As Tom gets back into the van with me, he has a grin from cheek to cheek. He loved it ... as he loved the entire 508 mile adventure that weekend. We all did. Later that night, Tom Miller and Mark Newsome took us through Death Valley at a steady 20-21 Miles Per Hour!! As I sat in the back seat of the van, I was so impressed. I was witnessing two comebacks that I had heard about but didn't fully understand until now." Tom's message: anything is possible ... **Catastrophic Accidents are no barrier!!**

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 1999, 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 2000!!

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  
California Triple Crown Guy  
New E-Mail Address: CBrams@CalTripleCrown.com  
"There is nothing a good day of cycling won't cure."

> "The only thing that you can do is to **try to find out where**  
> **your limitations** are, try to learn to ride just below that effort,  
> and get as fit as you can so that you'll go faster at that level."

"Excellent advice. I think one reason I keep coming back is just my wanting **to test what I've learned about my limitations.** Hope springs eternal..."

Ben Miller's reply to Jeff Bell on Ultra Cycling Forum, 10/1/97

Editor's Note: Ben placed a most impressive 5<sup>th</sup> on the 1999 CTC Stage Race!!

"Oo ... let's go riding ... **Cruisin' down an open road**

We can put the top down, Listen to the radio

Big old Buick and a **BIG OLD SKY**

**Wheels on fire and I'll tell you why: I got a Hot Rod Heart!!**

Got a red lined engine and I'm rearing to go

**Put the pedal to the metal** ... If you wanna ride, let's go!!"

John Fogerty, Hot Rod Heart (His Blue Moon Swamp Album is Highly Recommended)

"I thought of that while riding my bike."  
**Albert Einstein**, on the Theory of Relativity

"I wore the Yellow Jersey onto the Champs Elysées today but my responsibility for that was equal to just about the zipper. The rest of the body, the sleeves, the collar were there because of **my team, the support staff and my family.**"  
**Lance Armstrong**, Winner of the 1999 Tour de France ... referring to his U.S. Postal Team