

2021 California Triple Crown Virtual Double Centuries

The California Triple Crown has brought each of us some fantastic memories. We have been fortunate to see places that we never knew existed, and able to meet some of the best people we've ever known. While enjoying exceptional rides, we have been able to challenge ourselves to do things we didn't know we could do. Along the way, we have been helped by many others.

We are hopeful and are looking forward to the COVID pandemic subsiding in 2021. The California Triple Crown Double Centuries have always been about riding outdoors with other riders with the same BIG goal of riding their bikes 200 Miles in One Day. As soon as it is possible, we want to get back to riding the Double Centuries on their epic courses throughout California as real events with large groups of riders as they have always been since 1990.

There are new California Triple Crown Riders in 2020 who have ridden 5 Doubles on their Indoor Trainers or on their own courses, not speaking or meeting another CTC rider. This has meant that they have been unable to learn from other riders or feel any sense of camaraderie, teamwork, drafting, competition, or tips on how to improve!! The California Triple Crown is all about these kinds of exceptional experiences with others in our community and it is our hope that we can return to those adventures in 2021.

We understand that the Virtual Double Centuries have been a blessing for many of us because they have given us challenges which have helped us keep our sanity through this COVID pandemic. They have also been a blessing for the Ride Organizers to help them stay in business.

However, we firmly believe that riding a Double Century in the CTC is a WHOLE lot more than just cranking out 200 miles on a perfect weather day, with an optimized route minimizing headwinds and with perfectly situated Rest Stops. Being out there on a specific day is very different from saying "hey, I've got great weather, I think I'm going to go ride 200 miles."

We rode a bunch of the Virtual Doubles this year and we're sick of riding alone! They were great exercise, for sure, but they were in NO WAY an "event." We can't wait for the actual events to start up again so that we can ride with friends and make new memories. We have zero memories of the Virtual Double Centuries we have ridden other than we rode our bikes.

In the meantime, we understand that there may be a need to allow Virtual Double Centuries like we allowed in 2020. We learned a lot from those experiences and have found that we need some revised guidelines for the Virtual Double Centuries in 2021 until they can be phased out later this year.

2021 Ride Schedule

We announced the following to the CTC Ride Organizers on 12/11/20:

“We have decided to freeze the California Triple Crown for 2021 with no more Doubles to be added. You can see the dates at

http://caltriplecrown.org/CTC_Calendar.aspx/Default.aspx which has been previously agreed to. If you would like to produce new events, you are free to do so but know that they will not be added to the 2021 California Triple Crown Series.”

Actual vs Virtual

We also believe that Virtual Double Centuries are not a replacement for actually hosting an event. The default option for every event is to be hosted live. When actual events are not allowed by state and local ordinances, virtual equivalents will be authorized to gain CTC credit. Virtual Double Centuries are allowed only to mirror actual events. No new Virtual Double Centuries will be added to the California Triple Crown.

Virtual Double Centuries need to start and end at the same location ... 200 miles of tailwind is not allowed.

In 2020, Virtual routes needed to be 200 miles even when the actual route was less. In 2021, Virtual routes ridden on the same course as the Actual route can be less than 200 miles. If the Virtual route is not on the same course as the Actual route, the Virtual route must be 200 miles.

Climbing

In 2020, the required climbing for each virtual double was arbitrary in some cases. That was inconsistent with the actual event it was supposed to mimic. In 2021, the Feet of Climbing required on the Virtual Double Centuries will be based on the Ride with GPS (RWGPS) of the actual Double Century course on which it was last ridden (2019 in most cases). This will then be a more accurate reproduction of the difficulty of riding the actual Double Century. Since we have found that GPS units vary by +/- 10%, the California Triple Crown will accept for credit Virtual Double Centuries showing as low as the Ride with GPS Feet of Climbing of the actual Double Century course on which it was last ridden less 10%.

The more difficult Double Centuries have a long and fabled history for their difficulty. We believe that any Virtual Double Centuries need to replicate that difficulty in order for riders to join the ranks of those few who can accomplish them. With that said, many riders live in areas where mountains are not easy to get to. To help riders participate in these challenging events, virtual doubles will have a cap of 12,000' of elevation gain required to fulfill the climbing requirement. So, for any actual events which have greater than 12,000' of climbing, only 12,000' will be required on the corresponding virtual double century. This is a concession with respect to the actual event, but is still significant enough to create a difficult ride.

We are very much aware that riders have lost a lot of fitness during this pandemic. As a result, we are open to allowing new "Lowland Options" for actual events but not for virtual events. These new "Lowland Options" for actual events will help to encourage new riders to try a Double Century, which is a very good thing.

Waivers and Insurance

All riders will need to sign a waiver BEFORE they ride a Virtual Double Century. If riders don't sign the waiver BEFORE the ride, they should not be given credit for completing the ride. All Ride Organizers must provide insurance for the California Triple Crown on Actual and Virtual Double Centuries. Proof of insurance will be required prior to allowing Triple Crown credit, as has been the case in past years.

Ride Dates

Riding a Double Century when you get to choose the day with perfect conditions goes against the philosophy of what these Double Century challenges are all about. Often, the weather is a far larger obstacle than the course!!

In 2020, we learned that allowing for a 4 week spread on the ride dates makes it far more difficult for the Ride Organizers to stay well organized.

In 2021, the Virtual Double Centuries will need to be ridden between one week before and one week after the Actual Event was planned for, or is being ridden as an Actual Event on the California Triple Crown Schedule. In addition, the rider should declare the date he or she will be riding the Virtual Double when they register for it. If the rider doesn't ride it on the day they committed to, they should not get credit for the ride.

For example, the Hemet D.C. is scheduled for 4/17/21. If Jim Watrous, the Ride Organizer, decides to allow Virtual Double Centuries for the Hemet D.C., they will need to be ridden between 4/10/21 (one week before) and 4/24/21 (one week after).

Worker's Rides

Volunteers are the lifeblood of hosting cycling events. No events, including CTC events, could exist without the selfless work done by volunteers. Worker's rides have always been a perk for riders who want to volunteer and who also want to ride the event. That model makes perfect sense and is welcomed.

Virtual events are not the same thing. There is no longer a Ride Organizer who needs help running an event. Riders are all on their own to devise their route, plan for its services' availability, and then ride the route. As such, there is no such thing as a "worker's ride" for virtual events. Anyone who wants to ride their course must do so on the event date, as discussed above.

Proof of Ride Completion

The ride instructions and waiver need to detail that it's the rider's responsibility to record the ride and to upload it to Strava. If the rider can't do that, they should not be given ride credit. Strava reports with "Manual Entries" which allow a rider to just enter the miles they rode are not to be given ride credit because that is no proof at all of completing 200 miles. The Strava Report must be an upload from a bike computer that includes the map of the route ridden, miles, and feet of climbing. The Ride Organizer will need to include the web address of the Strava report of the Virtual Double Century along with the ride results to the California Triple Crown.

Deadline to Submit Ride Results to the Ride Organizer

Riders must submit their ride data to the Ride Organizer within 48 hours of the event date. Late ride submissions will not be accepted by the California Triple Crown. This needs to be stated in the rider's registration/waiver so that they know they signed up for this requirement. If a rider submits ride results after the deadline, the Ride Organizer must explain to the rider why they are not receiving CTC credit.

Deadline to Submit Ride Results to the California Triple Crown

Ride Organizers must submit the results to the CTC within 2 weeks of the event using the format specified below. Late ride submissions will not be accepted.

We saw a significant increase in errors in the data sent to the CTC for processing for the Virtual Doubles last year. These deadlines are being instituted to help mitigate some of the ongoing, and unacceptable, issues

- 1) It is the responsibility of the riders to get the organizers their ride verification quickly so that it's easier for the organizers to organize and collate that information.

- 2) It is then the organizers' responsibility to send this information to the CTC for further processing. These results need to be in this specific format:
- 3) **First Last City State email Gender Age Phone Strava**
- 4) Since riders are required to submit results within 48 hours, there should be no trickling-in of data over the course of months.

Indoor Ride Credit

The goal of the Triple Crown is for riders to be out there riding their bikes, but 2021 is starting out with a vengeance. With vaccines being rolled out, there is hope for a brighter future. If the Ride Organizer decides to allow Indoor Virtual Rides to be accepted for his/her event, Indoor Virtual rides will be accepted for CTC credit until events are being run outdoors. This follows the same philosophy as described in the Actual vs Virtual section above. When the Virtual Doubles are phased out later this year, indoor ride credit will also be phased out.

Consequences for Violations

Any Ride Organizer who fails to respect and abide by these rules will be restricted from hosting any more Virtual Double Centuries in the California Triple Crown Series.

It's the Ride Organizer's responsibility to review all virtual activities to ensure the entry satisfies the mileage and climbing requirements. If the entry is inadequate regarding mileage and climbing requirements, the Ride Organizer must DQ the rider and not submit that rider's results. Upon spot checking, if CTC finds rider activities that do not comply, the rider will be removed from results and the Ride Organizer will be restricted from hosting further virtual events.

Summary

The California Triple Crown and the Ride Organizers are in a symbiotic relationship. Each needs the other to flourish. We need to work together effectively in order to minimize each of our workloads for the ongoing sustainability of the California Triple Crown, and these magnificent Double Centuries that we have all grown to love.

Change is always difficult, but change is often necessary. We were all forced into an unknown situation by the pandemic. We now have had a year of experience in the realities of offering, validating, collating and migrating rider results. With that experience, a lot was learned. The new guidelines presented here are a result of looking back at areas that didn't work well and then formulating a plan going forward to mitigate the issues. This, too, will be a learning experience. We are not opposed to change so long as it makes sense for all involved.

Thank you for your attention and please feel free to share your thoughts with us.

Full Speed Ahead into 2021!!

Chuck Bramwell, California Triple Crown Guy

Charlie Irwin, California Triple Crown Software Guy

Roland Hoffman, California Triple Crown History Guy

Lynn Katano, California Triple Crown Social Director

Mike Sturgill, California Triple Crown Assistant Data Guy

Tony Musoraftie, California Triple Crown Assistant Data Guy