



2009 San Diego Century

By Sami Zaki



Members of the Covina Cycle Club before starting the Century

As I waited in the empty, nearly pitch black parking lot with my wife nearly asleep in the driver's seat, I was a little nervous at first. Even though we have all done this ride many times, there is always something special about doing a century. There was no turning back now since I made my wife get up at 4:00 am for this ride. Whether as a group or alone, I was committed for her lack of sleep. To my relief other riders showed up 20 minutes later. We started off the ride with 20 riders. This year's San Diego Century was as good as it gets. We had been promoting this ride to our new riders as well as the old members. You never know who will attend as each of us battle the little voice in our head telling us that sleep is much better than riding in the cold dark early hours of the morning.

The dark morning started off with a cool breeze followed by a beautiful sunrise breaking through the fog to welcome the perfect day ahead. The weather that day peaked at a perfect 78 degrees. As the sun started to dominate the sky during the day, the ocean would battle back by sending a layer of fog to cool us like a gift from the cycling gods. These are the kind of rides that made me take up cycling in the first place. As the ride progressed in the morning, Manny, Carlos and his son Charles caught up with us bringing the ride total to an impressive 24. This was in stark contrast compared to several years ago when we finished the century with only 3 riders.

The group that showed up included the usual suspects along with some first time century goers. Congratulations to Ben, Rueben, Wendell, and Ken for completing their first century. Honorable mentions to Julie and Jessica for completing 65 miles to Oceanside, impressive considering they just took up cycling only a few weeks before.

The most intriguing mystery rider that showed up was "Mountain Man". Mountain Man showed up to do this ride on an old steel frame Trek Mountain bike (hence the nick-name). He wore a t-shirt, sweat pants, tennis shoes, and a back pack in tow. I took one look at him, thinking to myself that he was going to collapse 10 miles into the ride. I was wrong. Not only was he able to complete the century, but he rode at the front of the pack the entire time, occasionally looking back at us with a little grin on his face mocking us for mocking him. I felt foolish considering what we spend on our high-tech bikes and the technical fabrics that we wear as I tell my self it makes me a better rider, even though in the mirror I look like Spider Man addicted to Vegas buffets. I later found out his name is Rueben. The elusive Mountain Man is welcome to ride with us whenever he wants.



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2009 San Diego Century continued from page 1

Our first official rest stop came 25 miles into the ride at a Starbucks. As we pulled in the parking lot, Ben's son Carlos set up in the street and took pictures of us riding as we approached. This became a common occurrence the entire day throughout the ride. Carlos would be shooting us in between parked cars, sometimes from a median in the road. At one point he even took photos of us while hanging out of a moving truck. With all this attention, we all felt like pros riding the Tour De France and these photos are for the pages of *L'Equipe* Magazine. Many thanks to Carlos for more than 300 great action photos. Once we arrived at Starbucks, we had a great selection of snacks and drinks provided by Ben and his wife. This was a nice upgrade from the smashed sweat soaked energy bars that are stashed in our jersey pockets. After a nice break we continued our ride. Thanks to Carole and Win, we had great Sag support to bring up the rear. The Amtrak Century organizers informed everyone that Camp Pendleton would be closed to all cyclists. We were determined



The first rest stop 25 miles into the ride

to ride through the base this year. I rode to the gate and explained to the heavily armed Marine Guard that I was not part of the Amtrak event and if I could ride through and he agreed. After he agreed, I did some more fast talking to see if I can have permission for my other 23 close friends, just as the rest of the pack pedaled up. He smiled and opened the draw arm of the gate. We had the entire base to ourselves as we rode through. Machine gun fire echoed in the distance to remind us that we are on an active Military base.

Our lunch break came at a perfect time after 65 miles into the ride as we pulled into Carlsbad. The Sandwich from Submarina Sub Shop was a welcomed relief to my growling stomach. By the time we got down to the Del Mar area, our pack of 24 riders started to splinter into smaller groups. The aqua blue of the ocean and the salted misty air took my mind off my tired legs as we pedaled on. At mile number 83 we were all greeted by the infamous Torrey Pines that had been looming in the back of our minds. We all grinded up the steep hill at our own individual pace. Once the misery was over, we were treated to popsicles care of the Amtrak event tent.

About the Covina Cycle Club

We are a group of enthusiastic cyclists who ride for fun, camaraderie and exercise. All skill levels are accepted and no one is left behind on a ride. Our annual membership dues are only \$20. for more information on our club, please visit:

www.covinacycleclub.org



The Covina Cycle Club as they ride through Camp Pendleton

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2009 San Diego Century continued from page 2

We all regrouped at the top of Torrey Pines and pushed off for the last 12 miles. We stayed together as a group and did this last stretch at a leisurely pace until we reached our final destination at the Rockin' Baja Lobster in Old Town San Diego. We were greeted by our family, friends, and spouses. We shared cold drinks and stories of our ride while we basked in the warm September sun on the patio of the Rockin' Baja Lobster. These are the reasons why I enjoy cycling so much. To be able to get out and enjoy the world and to savor every moment on the bike. This was the type of ride that becomes memorable especially during our busy schedules of work, family, and the other realities of life.



Riders rejoice at the Rockin' Baja Lobster at the end of the Century.

CCC kicks off Sunday rides

Due to popular demand, the Covina Cycle club has started a Sunday ride option. Ana Wilson has become the Ride Coordinator for the Sunday schedule. "There was a need for a Sunday ride option for those that can't ride on Saturday" explains Ana. Thanks to Ana's commitment, the Covina Cycle Club will have an organized and pre-scheduled option. Many club members have gotten together unofficially in the past to do a variation of a Sunday ride. This will be the first time in many years where riders will have the an official Sunday ride.

The Newport Circle ride kicked off the fist Sunday ride. The weather was cool and sunny with a nice rider turn out. The first ride was even "baptized" by mother nature as a bird made target practice on Gary Tran's helmet at the start of the ride. For future ride suggestions please contact Ana Wilson.

Member Spotlight



Pedaling through the streets of Dana Point during the Century



ROBERT "ORBBIE" REYNOLDS
RAYTHEON ENGINEER
RIDING FOR WEIGHT LOSS
CALFEE TECTRA PRO



JESSICA MEZA
CALIFORNIA CIVIL SERVANT
RIDING FOR FITNESS
CANNONDALE CAAD 9



JULIE MENDOZA
SCHOOL TEACHER
RIDING FOR FITNESS
CANNONDALE CAAD 9



Saturday, October 17th

Club Picnic - Ben's Carne Asada & Charro Beans

7:15 am from Ben's House, 48 miles **1/2

8:15 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 29 miles **

Sunday, October 18th

Pasadena Passion, #49

7:30 am from Covina Park, Covina, 63 miles ***1/2

9:50 am from San Dimas Canyon Park, San Dimas, 40 miles ***

11:00 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 18 miles **

Saturday, October 24th

Monrovia Canyon Park & Sawpit Dam, #42 (NEW RIDE!)

7:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 39 miles ***1/2

7:45 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 25 miles ***

Sunday, October 25th

Monrovia Canyon Park & Sawpit Dam, #42 (NEW RIDE!)

7:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 39 miles ***1/2

7:45 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 25 miles ***

Saturday, October 31st

Bronson Caves, #12

7:30 am from Lacy Park, San Marino, 54 miles *****

7:30 am from Lacy Park, San Marino, 30 miles (option) ***

9:00 am from Travel Town, Griffith Park, 24 miles **

Sunday, November 1st

Farnsworth Park, Altadena, #30

7:30 am from Covina Park, Covina, 46 miles ***

8:00 am from Royal Oaks Park, Duarte, 32 miles **1/2

Saturday, November 7th

Flo's, #31

8:00 am from Creekside Park, Walnut, 51 miles ***

9:00 am from Ganesha Park, Pomona, 33 miles **

Sunday November 8th

Flo's, #31

8:00 am from Creekside Park, Walnut, 51 miles ***

9:00 am from Ganesha Park, Pomona, 33 miles **

Saturday, November 14th

Alta Loma, #1

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 44 miles ***1/2

9:15 am from Cahuilla Park, Claremont, 22 miles **1/2

Sunday, November 15th

Alta Loma, #1

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 44 miles ***1/2

9:15 am from Cahuilla Park, Claremont, 22 miles **1/2

Saturday, November 21st

Carbon Canyon, East to West, #17

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 53 miles ****

8:40 am from Creekside Park, Walnut, 36 miles ***1/4

9:15 am from Heritage Park, Diamond Bar, 25 miles ***

Sunday, November 22nd

Carbon Canyon, East to West, #17

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 53 miles ****

8:40 am from Creekside Park, Walnut, 36 miles ***1/4

9:15 am from Heritage Park, Diamond Bar, 25 miles ***

Saturday, November 28th

Valley Venture, #77

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 41 miles ***

9:15 am from Finkbinder Park, Glendora, 29 miles **1/2

Sunday, November 29th

Valley Venture, #77

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 41 miles ***

9:15 am from Finkbinder Park, Glendora, 29 miles **1/2

Saturday, December 5th

Heritage Square Museum, #28 (NEW RIDE!!!)

7:30 am from Covina Park, Covina, 67 miles ***1/2

8:10 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 53 miles ***

8:40 am from Foothills Middle School, Sierra Madre, 41 miles

Sunday, December 6th

Heritage Square Museum, #28 (NEW RIDE!!!)

7:30 am from Covina Park, Covina, 67 miles ***1/2

8:10 am from Encanto Park, Duarte, 53 miles ***

8:40 am from Foothills Middle School, Sierra Madre, 41 miles ***

Saturday, December 12th

Homestyle Cafe, #35

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 44 miles ***

Sunday, December 13th

Homestyle Cafe, #35

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 44 miles ***

Saturday, December 19th

San Dimas Country Club, #26

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 38 miles ****

Sunday, December 20th

San Dimas Country Club, #26

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 38 miles ****

Saturday, December 26th

Mission Inn De Ja Vu, #72 (Year ending ride)

7:30 am from Calle San Marcos Park, Chino Hills, 69 miles ***1/2

8:00 am from Ruben S. Ayala Community Park, Chino, 59 miles ***

9:20 am from Laramore Park & Arena, Mira Loma, 34 miles **

Saturday, December 27th

The Three Heights, #67B

8:00 am from Covina Park, Covina, 46 miles ***

8:30 am from Clearwater Bagels, Walnut, 39 miles ***

9:00 am from Heritage Park, Diamond Bar, 39 miles ***

