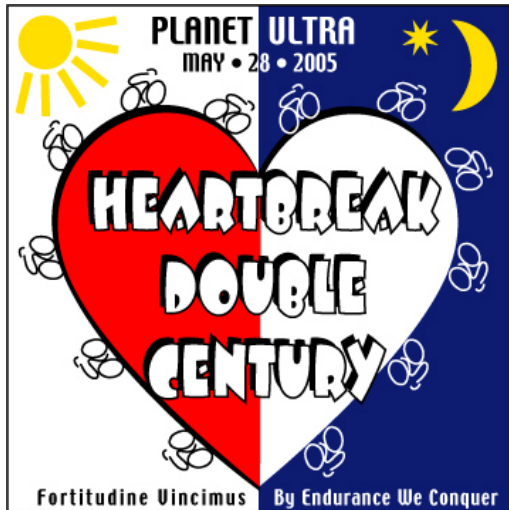


Heartbreak Double Century

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by

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The Heartbreak Double Century has about 15,500' of elevation gain. This spectacular course showcases some of the most quiet, beautiful, dramatic, and unknown regions of California, as well as some of the toughest climbing I have ever done.

The first section of the course to Three Points was fast and fever pitched with the front paceline pushing constant 20+ pace. After

Gorman, a short quick climb to Tejon Pass gave way to a short descent into Frazier Park. As we made the left turn at the Flying J, the legs were starting to complain about the climbing we had already done. But this was only a warm-up!!!! We looked up the road as the climbing began in earnest. The next 30 miles was mostly uphill, many time as we rounded the next corner, I thought I saw the top, just my imagination!! As we climbed toward the summit of Mt. Pinos the scenery here was truly beautiful, as the high desert gave way to alpine forests and gently sloping mountain meadows. We continued to climb up to apache saddle, finally the TOP!!!! At this point I had only climbed about half the 15,500' of climbing. We descended down apache saddle thinking that it was going to be a nice 20 mile decent down the ridgeline, that was the worst lie that I had read in the brochure!!!! The road would drop you down only to make you climb back up again!! This continued for about 10 miles, then finally descended for about 10 miles.

We continued on toward Ventucopa where lunch and ice-cream awaited. When I finally arrived I no longer had the energy to eat, just sat for a while till the screaming pain in the legs subsided. At this point the hardest climb was still ahead, the infamous heartbreak.

Heartbreak starts out as a slight grade that you hardly notice, but the grade continues to increase every mile until the top some 9 miles later with a 15-20% grade at times.

Finally reaching the TOP, I looked forward for a nice decent, a descent that would not come for some 10 miles later. At the top it would drop down and make you climb more and more and more until you would swear that you would never do this ride again in your entire life!!!!!!

Finally some 9 miles later we reached a very nice decent that took us to the next rest stop. At this point we still had over 2,000 feet of climbing left to do, some that was steep enough that I had to climb out of the saddle stomping all of my weight and power just to turn the pedals at a 30 rpm. Finally the town of Palmdale approached, a sight that made my heart jump for joy. Pulling into the motel parking lot and handing my bike off knowing that the ride was over....priceless. And by the way, I will be back next year.