



Davis Double

Davis Double: "Easy" first double? Or one to blister for the books.

By: Curtis Taylor with Scott McKinney

It was a superb day in the saddle. I felt like we "raced" all day and I never did hit a major wall. But as I said then, "I'm sure glad it's not the Davis Triple."

STATS:

Total time: 11:08

Ride time: 10:15

Distance: 203

Climbing: ~8,500

Average: 19.8 MPH

Curtis and I worked together all day and often had 2 to 15 other riders to share the load (some guys we knew from other rides). The first 40 miles are always a scream because the pace lines grow to 30 or 40 riders. That breaks up instantly on the climb to Berryessa.

We skipped Rest Stop 1. #2 was still crowded. Skipped #3. By #4 (and the rest of the day) we had the stops (including bathrooms, water jugs, snacks and volunteers) to ourselves.

They extended the route this year by 4 miles due to a washed out road. This "Cobb Mountain" detour also added 800 feet of climbing (totaling ~8,500). At 199 miles (standard DC distance) we were ahead of my time from last year by 3-4 minutes.

Other than a few spits during lunch, we were dry all day. Had a 10 MPH south-westerly wind in the last 60 miles (alternately head wind and cross-tail wind). In the head-wind, Curtis rotated at the front of a group of about 15 guys and drilled it. Whenever a car came by, the echelon had to flatten to the side of the road, which quickly split the group. It was tough work just to hang on. The last 30 miles across the valley are on farm roads that alternate between south and eastbound. On the eastbound legs the cross tail wind helped the 4 riders who stayed in front push at 25 - 28 MPH.

Lessons Learned

Since Scott provided such a good summary I will share the lessons of the day: (After-all, to learn is the reason for doing.)

- 1) Sometimes you don't feel good until 120 miles are done.

- 2) While the effort at the front is usually greater than the effort in the pack, the effort at the back can be worse than expected. Especially when there is wind involved.
- 3) V-8 juice keeps the stomach processes rolling and likely is the reason I felt better after 120 miles.
- 4) Getting koodoos from RAAM (winners?) boosts the mph.
- 5) There is always next year.

I asked the studd who was taking the huge (like longer than 10 minute) pulls what his name was since he had a RAAM jersey and Devil Mountain Double socks. I think he said Rob, who, according to the RAAM web site is a 3 time winner, most RAAM entries, had to quit last year because of pneumonia. Though it does not say it his resume should list "Flipping STUDD."

Of course, McKinney rocks too. He was one of the humble four pushing the pace to 26 mph for the last 20 miles and by far, one of the strong men doing all the work in every group we found.

For me, it's hard to judge the success of Saturday given the change in course. The original goal, to beat my 1992 PR when I was 21, receives a question mark in the success category. I figured the course to be about 2 miles longer than usual with 800 or so feet extra climbing. So, I'm giving this year an extra 12 minutes leway due to the course change. According to the clock I missed my PR by 18 minutes total time and 15 minutes of riding time. That means, I missed my PR by about 3-5 minutes.