

Santa Cruz Randonneurs

LA HONDA RAMBLE Permanent Route #7

A Permanent Populaire Brevet of 154 km	Time Limit: 10 hours, 16 minutes
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Pre-ride Information—please read carefully

Unlike the other events of the Santa Cruz Randonneurs, this brevet is a “permanent populaire”. Being a “permanent” means it is a self-conducted ride with a date and starting time of the rider’s choice, and “populaire” means it is less than 200 kilometers in length. This brevet is sanctioned by Randonneurs USA, and can count toward its Distance Awards once per year for a rider’s kilometer total. If you are thinking of trying a 200k event, the Pescadero Ramble is also an excellent training run to prepare for that.

Route Description: This ride goes north from Santa Cruz along the coast highway and uses some of the best cycling roads in California. You’ll experience fine riding along the Pacific coastline for much of the brevet, as well as in the beautiful redwood forests that lie inland. There is a route section north of Davenport that takes in charming Swanton Road going outbound; on the return you stay on the coast highway. Overall, this route would be called moderately hilly. There is nothing extremely difficult in terms of climbing except Haskins Hill before La Honda, but there is a fair amount of altitude change from the numerous short climbs. The average randonneur will be happy they brought a triple crankset along; by the end of the ride entrants will have gained about 6,300 vertical feet of climbing.

Services: To buy food and drink along the route, you’ll find stores in Davenport (mile 10), Gazos Creek (mile 27), Loma Mar, (mile 40), La Honda (mile 47), San Gregorio (mile 56), Pescadero (mile 63), Gazos Creek (71), and Davenport (mile 85). Most of these places open about 8 AM and close around 6-8 PM; none are open all night. There is a 24-hour 7-11 store at the start/finish. There are also many state beaches and parks along the route with pit toilets that are easily accessible during the brevet.

Start/Finish Location: This brevet begins and ends at the corner of Mission and Swift streets in Santa Cruz. (Mission Street becomes the coast highway once you leave town.) There is a 7-11 convenience store at the start/finish. You’ll need receipts from the start and the finish; the time imprint on each receipt is your verification or “control”. The ride organizer might also meet you there to send you off. If so, you need not buy something at the start. This will be pre-arranged with your entry.

Recommended Start Times: This brevet can be ridden any time of the year. Summer temperatures won’t be too hot and winter rarely sees freezing temperatures. (Inland from the coast and often damp in winter, Gazos Creek and Pescadero Roads will require caution if the mercury is below freezing.) Rain can be a factor from December through March, so keep an eye on the weather forecasts. Remember, though, once you register you **must** use that start time and date. There is no entry refund for bad weather.

The best times to start the ride are probably between 6 AM and 10 AM. Most days from March through early November will have a strong northwest wind along the coast, and it usually starts to blow by mid-morning. If you can get 27 miles up to the turn at sheltered Gazos Creek Road before then, you’ll enjoy the northbound ride more than if you battled the headwinds all the way from Santa Cruz. Also, if you start this ride late in the day, you might find some stores are closed by the time you get there. (The Pescadero mini-mart stays open pretty late.)

This brevet can be done as a night ride, but you’ll need to carry food to sustain you for the entire distance, and getting water won’t be easy. (Try the elementary school drinking fountains in Pescadero at mile 63.) If you want to do this brevet as a night ride, remember that a full moon will make it much more enjoyable; check the calendar before you send in your entry.

Control Procedures: You’ll need to mail postcards with your arrival time in La Honda and San Gregorio since the stores there have unreliable time stamps on their receipts. You will be supplied with stamped

postcards, but be sure to bring a pen. In addition, you'll need the aforementioned store receipts from the start/finish in Santa Cruz.

Be aware that there may also be secret controls during this brevet, so stay on the route. If you should get lost, backtrack to where you got off-course, otherwise you might miss a secret control. Failure to sign in at a secret control means disqualification from the brevet. If there are any secret controls, they will be in plain sight and impossible to miss.

In your application, be sure to specify the start time and date you want. You **must** begin your ride at that time, and any secret control opening and closing times will be based upon the start time you select.

Control Opening and Closing Times

Mile 47--La Honda: opens 02:34 after start; closes 05:08 after start

Mile 56--San Gregorio: opens 03:00 after the start; closes 06:00 after the start

Mile 95—Finish: opens 05:08 after start; closes 10:16 after start

After the brevet, be sure you return your brevet card and receipts to the ride organizer. The easiest way is to just ride over to the home of the organizers as soon as you're finished. (Going via King Street to Miramar is slightly longer but much nicer than battling the cars on busy Mission street while trying to make a left onto Miramar at the Valero station.) Or, put it in the mail right after finishing. In either case, be sure and sign the correct space on the back of the brevet card for the rider's signature before your turn it in at ride's end. (Don't worry about computing the ride time for the space on the back, we'll take care of that.)

In case you should DNS ("did not start") or DNF ("did not finish"), please contact the ride organizer since there are still RUSA insurance matters we need to attend to. There are no "rain checks" or refunds if you do not use your start time and date, or stop the ride for some reason.

Regulations: During your ride, all the normal rules of randonneuring apply. You should also review the various other pages of the Santa Cruz Randonneurs web site to familiarize yourself with randonneuring if this type of cycling is new to you.

Good luck, and good riding! ☺