

Some of you know that Joe Burton, Robert Baldino and I rode the Mulholland Double on Saturday out of Calabasas, just off Highway 101 north of Los Angeles. Normally a threesome of good pals would have enjoyed a very good day. However, forces conspired against us and produced something less than a memorable outing. Following are a few paragraphs and photos to illustrate. You know it's difficult for me, but I *will* keep this short...

Our morning started at about 4:40 with hot coffee and great spirits (in this case, *great spirits* means a very confident mood, not outstanding booze) Not that Joe or Robert would have argued against the latter...



We talked about it later, and no one could ask for a more beautiful course. The route is spectacular, and we agreed that we'd definitely come back and do it again.



The climbing comes early and often, as you would expect on a 202-mile course with 16,500 feet of elevation gain. There may be no lengthy sustained climbs like Mt. Diablo or Mt. Hamilton, but there are several 1,000-to-1,500-foot climbs spread over several miles. Said simply, you work long and often and are rewarded with stunning scenery, landscapes, and ocean views. Definitely worth the effort.



Unfortunately for Robert and Joe, sometimes life gets in the way of living. Robert's knee began acting up again early in the day, and by mid-morning Joe was paid a visit by his old friend, Mr. Sore Achilles. Sometime near noon, and not long after the heat ratcheted up to something approaching 95 degrees, both of them decided - independently - that pedaling another hundred miles in acute pain was not worth the price of admission, so they took a bail-out option and pedaled back to our motel room...

...where they found me lying on a bed and watching the Masters on television.

I don't know what it is with me and descending on roads I've never seen. You'd think that a guy who has done this a time or two would know how to be cautious enough to avoid mishaps. But there I was, 53.7 miles into a very good day for me, coming around an S-turn like I pedaled this road every day. One thing led to another, and I went sailing off the asphalt and into the gully.

I sat there in the rocks and dirt behind a concrete drainage culvert wall, stunned, and thinking "I hope I'm ok and can finish the ride!" A few cyclists stopped to assist me, and we pulled my bike and stuff back up onto the road. It turns out that the bike wasn't ok - the fork was sheered clean off.



A gentleman helped me remove my helmet.

I suppose I'll have to replace it, too.



Interestingly, as I sat there on that culvert wall for 45 minutes waiting for the SAG wagon, I watched *dozens and dozens* of riders come around that S-turn. Two of them *nearly* made the same mistake I did. One woman in particular breached the white fog line and was shouting to herself "Keep it! Keep it... No! No!..."

and she *barely* made the turn and continued past me.

Like many roads, this one is graded so that it slopes *away* from you and toward the mountain. If it sounds like I'm grasping for an excuse...I am ;-)



Soooo...

I'm beat up, but will recover. Gonna have to pass on DMD in two weeks, though :-)

I'll find out this week if my Orca frame can be resurrected, but I'm not holding my breath there. Worse comes to worst, I can strip the frame and move most of the hardware to an Indy Fab frame hanging in my garage.

You all be safe out there.

Curtis