

Pacific Pete Hits The Road

2000 miles down Highway 101

- [What](#)
- [How](#)
- [Where](#)
- [Why](#)

Posted by: **pacificpete** | October 16, 2008

Done!

2100 miles, border to border.



[4 Comments](#)

Posted in [absentia](#).

Posted by: **pacificpete** | October 14, 2008

All over but the shouting.

We briefly discussed going to legoland today, but the \$59.95 price tag changed our minds. Instead, we biked 33 miles to the hostel, and then went to the beach. Tomorrow we bike to the border, snap some pictures, and come back. A local bike shop will box up the bikes and ship them.

The hostel is actually pretty cute, and one of the worker bees agreed to get up at 6:30 to make coffee and pancake batter:-)

The pictures are of the hostel's front, main room, and the dorm room where we'll be staying (I have the back upper bunk on the left. Plenty of room for me to wiggle my toes off the edge.)







[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **pacifipete** | October 14, 2008

[Last big day](#)

Very difficult getting going today!

The hotel was quite comfortable, the wind was blowing again, and Sally was even taking about possibly bailing to a hotel if we couldn't get the mileage in.

This was the wind that greeted us outside the hotel. A gust of wind on a bridge a mile further blew us into the guardrail and made it VERY difficult to get across. A local who had watched us struggle across the bridge stopped to give us aid, and worriedly asked us how far we were going. "About a half mile more if this keeps up," was our response.

Nonetheless, we persevered, and eventually the wind, while not dying down, moved mainly to the side. It continued the rest of the afternoon, but was manageable.

I thought one of the high points today was going to be a 16 mile jaunt through a marine base. Alas, the only uniforms we saw were at the entrance gate, and the roads were mostly empty. The sound of an approaching vehicle did occur at one point. Would it be a humvee? A halftrack? A tank? It was...a volkswagon bug. The only people we talked to the whole time were two cheerful 7yos on a swingset.



There are fires burning all over California. This is the view from our campsite.



Everyone suffers equally for the wind, but people take different approaches to the sun. The first picture shows Mike (Lawrence) and John (the shiek). The second shows three of our women (Sally, Nita, and Laura) taking a different approach.



[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [absentia](#).

Posted by: **pacifipete** | October 13, 2008

Panic to...nirvana?

The day started last night, in this innocent-seeming setting, high above the beach at the Malibu RV park :-). They charged an exorbitant amount for a small plot of dirt, supposedly good for 4 people each. Fine, we set up our tents to make the best of it.

However, it turns out that there was another restriction: 2 tents per square of dirt. We came up with some possible solutions, e.g. run a bungee cord between two tents and call it one. In the end, however, we just got stubborn and eventually they found someone else to harass.

Just before settling in, some kind soul mentioned that the weather report called for 60 mph gusts of wind. We pounded our stakes a bit deeper and went to sleep...but not for long. The wind howled all night: gusts that felt like they'd flatten the tents coupled with dirt from the site. Basically, we were sand-blasted all night long. This wasn't just outside; small particles of dirt/sand went through our tent mesh at will. When I finally got up, at my usual time of about six, the top of my sleeping bag, my hair, etc. all had a crusting of dirt.

The campsite was even more fun. Bikes blown over, group supplies blown away. Others had it worse. Several sites had been abandoned by people, presumably to sleep in their cars. Lucky all our tents held, as we had no cars to go to.

However, the wind was still blowing when we awoke. Worse, it was blowing from the south, meaning a head wind. Sally, our tour leader, feared a debacle and tried to shove us out on the road as soon as possible. She was even talking about alternate destinations if the 58 miles was too much in a headwind.

So the rabbits (John, Nita, and I) hit the road at 7:06. The first hour was indeed tough, but then a funny thing happened. It turned into a beautiful, calm day. It basically turned into a long beach cruise (Malibu, Hermosa Beach, Venice Beach, Long Beach, etc). More fancy cars than I can ever recall seeing. We rolled into our destination (a hotel!) to spend our first night in over a month in some place other than our tents. The rooms have very nice showers, soft clean sheets, and the 40 minutes I spent in the pool/hot tub were just bliss.

Time is getting short now. We have a long day tomorrow, followed by two short days to the border. Only one more night spent in our trusty tents. Less than a week, before I'm finally home.



Sailing ship dating to 1810, originally chartered as a privateer (Redondo Beach)



Pelican at he fish-cleaning table.



Essential nourishment.



The ubiquitous fishermen do, evidently catch fish.



[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **pacificpete** | October 12, 2008

[Malibu](#)

Tonight we're in the Malibu Beach RV park. Doesn't that sound like an oxymoron?

Today we had a fierce tailwind (great when riding, not so great if trying to sit on a beach) and a short route at 44 miles, so I was of a mind to take it easy. For the most part, we did. However, that fell apart when The Rabbit Clan (John, Nita, me, and usually Bill) got passed by one of the local posers, acting all casual, and then his girlfriend. Nita waited until a hill was coming, and then took off. I laughed, ready to enjoy the show, until John shouts, "She's our girl, we gotta support her!" and tears off as well. Sigh. John and I almost caught her before she whipped past the locals and then waited at the top for us. This sort of silliness makes us happy 😊

Wind gusts are supposed to hit 60 mph over the next couple days, but sunshine will continue. Getting close!

Bill does his best Slim Pickens imitation.



Setting up in the dust above malibu.



[No Comments yet...](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: [pacificpete](#) | October 11, 2008

[Cruising to a layover day](#)

Thusday was a wee 60-ish day without much climbing. Basically, the hard climbing days are over, what's left is to bike through LA and San Diego and get to the border.



This guy fancies himself a philosopher, and it's certainly true that his tasty dogs saved us today. Soon thereafter, we made a wrong turn and ended up spening an hour eating gellato (dark chocolate for me) in a cafe in Ventura.



Beautiful pier jutting out from Ventura. Surfers everywhere; next time I'm going to try this myself.



[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [absentia](#).

Posted by: **pacificpete** | October 9, 2008

[80 miles in the heat](#)

Today was another absolute scorcher, and also easily the longest day at 80 miles. 80 miles on a loaded touring bike climbing hills on a 90-degree day!

I actually woke up late today (6:23), having had kind of a miserable night because of a cold. John and Nita had to wait at least 15 minutes, so I was shocked to learn that it was still only 7:35 when we pulled out, having breakfasted, made lunch (only pb&j was left), and broken camp.

My sleep was also broken by the sound of two other tourers we have repeatedly encountered talking, and another animal raid. I awoke to a very low, loud growl a couple feet from my head. Then some critter hit my tent, hit John's a few feet away, and then we heard sounds scampering away and the night quieted. Next day, I learned a few things: 1) Nita had been coming back from the bathroom and had seen 4 very large racoons running away 2) Jeff had been waking up Ayel for the walk to the bathroom, because he had been told by the camp host nonto walk alone at night, 3) the reason for the above was that the camp had had mountain lions spotted recently, and 4) I found a BIG pawprint. Now, you may think I'm jumping to conclusions, but it's my blog, and therefore a mountain lion definitely threw a racoon at my tent last night.



Just climbed the “Harris Grade”, a notoriously (we were warned about it the day before by another tourer) 900 foot hill, and not happy. Parts of this hill were ridiculously steep, the sun was beating down, and I was moving so slowly that some of the flies stayed with me for a while. One (I called him Fred) landed on my arm, leg, buzzed around some more, and then landed on the tip of my nose.



The last two miles today were to be a 2.5 mile bike path. Unfortunately, it was closed. However, we were able to squeeze past, so we did (we are “Adventure” cyclists). Unfortunately, the other end was more secure. However, I spotted a rip in the fence, so we were able to drag our bikes up and over some rails to the highway beyond. Most of the others got to this point and turned around, though Bill, the ex-marine, was able to lift his loaded bike over the 6-foot fence at the end and proceed directly.



[3 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **pacificpete** | October 8, 2008

[Heat!](#)

We're definately in SoCal now: today we biked 60 miles through 95 degree heat in absolutely miserable winds. The most alarming part is that tomorrow we have a 75-mile day, potentially in the same conditions.

The anticipation of the end is starting to mount. We touch the Mexican border in a week. I'll be incredibly happy to see my family again, but there's no denying that there will be quite a bit of sadness mixed in with the triumph.

John and Nita head out in this morning. We go from 40's at night to 90's in daytime.



Me in some borrowed shades. Off-camera while this was taken, a 20yo kid came up to Nita and said, "Hey, maybe you and I should kick it tonight."



[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

Posted by: **pacifipete** | October 6, 2008

[Big Sur](#)

(two days without cell service, more later)

Today was Big Sur, the biggest climbing day on the itinerary at 60 miles and 9500 feet up. My computer measured about half that, but as I've said before, I think that my computer intentionally smooths out the small stuff. At 4800 feet measured, it's still the biggest so far.

if you've been out here, there isn't much to say: Big Sur is just gorgeous. On top of that, we had a brilliant day to ride: flawless blue sky and only a hit of smoke from the fires evidently raging over the hills.

The day's highlights included i) watching the helicopters come fill their waterbags in the pacific and then release high on the hill, ii) the views, iii) having condors fly maybe 50 feet over our heads (2) and viewing one through a scope good enough to let me read it's tag number (298), iv) a beautiful sunset and moonrise over the pacific, and v) seeing two whales spout (and their backs).

Lowlights include being delayed 15 minutes because of a shoot for a new audi model, and the lack of potable water and showers at our campground (the one we're supposed to use is being used by firefighters).

By the way, we saw "Burn Before Reading" during the layover day: it should have been better than it was.





[1 Comment](#)

Posted in [absentia](#).

Posted by: [pacificpete](#) | October 5, 2008

[Monterey](#)

Saturday was a layover day in Monterey, coinciding with our first rain of the tour. However, it was all gone by 11 or so, so no worries. Layover days are a bit odd in that, while absolutely necessary to recover after a lot of riding, they're a bit boring.

I think this is because of the lack of structure and forward momentum. We're used to having a daily mileage goal. Though most of us aren't really looking forward to the end yet, the goal of going border to border is important to all of us. Any mileage northwards is bad, any mileage to the south is good. Layover days mess all that up.

That said, today wasn't bad. Most of us did laundry and then headed to the Monterey aquarium, surely one of the most spectacular in the world. The pictures show the jellies, of course, but also a diver who was feeding the fish (including small sharks) in the kelp forest while keeping up a running conversation with the audience through a microphone in his wetsuit.

Tomorrow we hit it, the biggest climbing day of the tour: about 70 miles and 9000 feet in and through Big Sur.





[2 Comments](#)

Posted in [Uncategorized](#)

[Older Posts »](#)

Categories

- [absentia.](#)
- [Uncategorized](#)

October 2008

M T W T F S S

[1](#) [2](#) 3 4 [5](#)

[6](#) 7 [8](#) [9](#) 10 [11](#) [12](#)

[13](#) [14](#) 15 [16](#) 17 18 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

27 28 29 30 31

[« Sep](#)

Recent Posts

- [Done!](#)
- [All over but the shouting.](#)
- [Last big day](#)
- [Panic to...nirvana?](#)
- [Malibu](#)

Progress

2094 of 2200 miles
100399 feet climbing



[Blog at WordPress.com.](#) | Theme: Ocean Mist by [Ed Merritt](#)

☺