

Santa Cruz Randonneurs

KING CITY RAMBLE Permanent Route #115

A Permanent Brevet of 228k

Maximum time allowance: 15 hours, 12 minutes

Pre-ride information—please read carefully

Route Description: This ride is a big loop in central California. It is a scenic region and several of John Steinbeck's tales were situated hereabouts. (Check out *The Long Valley*, among others.) The route features a mixture of flat farm roads, easy-to-moderate hills, and one long climb up bumpy San Juan Grade at the end of the brevet. The climb to Bitterwater Summit before King City will get your attention, but it is only about a mile long. Few of the uphill are steep but there is a fair bit of altitude gain during the brevet; stronger riders will want a 39x25 or 27 low gear, while the typical entrant will be happy he or she brought a triple crankset along. More importantly, this ride has some long sections between food & water supply; please study the route sheet and this info sheet carefully and be sure you carry enough to avoid getting stranded. Some of the roads are very lightly traveled and it might be a long while until someone comes along to help you out. Be smart and carry more food and drink than you think you'll need.

Weather: Be prepared for anything! Summer temperatures can be quite hot, so be advised to carry a lot of water, and perhaps even ride in the evening after things cool down. On the other hand, nighttime temps can get cold, even after a hot day, so bring layers. In summer the low temperature around dawn might be below 50 degrees. Winter temps are often around freezing at dawn. Going north in the Salinas Valley in the afternoon is usually into a headwind, especially from March through October, so be mentally prepared to battle a strong wind in the second half of the ride. Even with the long days of summer, you may want to carry lights in case you are delayed by the wind and must finish in the dark. In winter, be prepared for anything since you'll be out a long time and the weather could change. You might get caught a long way from warm shelter.

Randonneuring Regulations: Brevets are not casual affairs; be sure you are familiar with RUSA's "Rules for Riders" before you start the event. Among other things, an approved helmet must be worn while you are cycling. You must follow all applicable state road laws too. Go to www.rusa.org to learn more about the rules governing this brevet, or read them in your RUSA handbook. The section on permanents will also be useful if this is a new style of cycling for you. You must be a RUSA member in order to enter any permanent brevet.

Start/Finish: This brevet starts and ends in the quaint town of San Juan Bautista, or "SJB" as it is frequently called. The official start/finish is located in the Windmill market shopping center, by the Alameda & Highway 156. This is where the SJB post office is located if you need a landmark. There is on-street car parking across the Alameda on Nyland Drive, by the elementary school. There are public toilets in two city parks on Second Street, in the vicinity of the old mission. (Alert movie-goers will recognize the mission as a setting from Alfred Hitchcock's "Vertigo".) There are several good restaurants and cafés in town for breakfast and dinner, or the Windmill market has a good selection of food and drink, along with a delicatessen if you want to take a sandwich on the ride.

At the Start: You will need to get a store or café receipt, or other proof of passage in SJB before you start your ride. It may be difficult to obtain one if you begin before 7 AM or after 10 PM, but a bank ATM receipt should be available.

When you choose your start time and day, be advised that the businesses in Gonzales close by midnight, so starting after noon is probably not going to work unless you are an unusually speedy rider. In terms of road usage by motor vehicles, Sunday is usually the least busy day in the bustling Salinas Valley farming region, but this route will be enjoyed any day of the week. Most of the roads are lightly traveled all week long (unless there is some harvesting going on in the Salinas Valley.)

Note: Per normal regulations, you MUST use the start time and date you chose when you signed up; there are no "rain-checks" for another time or date for any reason.

At the Finish: Be sure you have receipts for each of the controls and you have recorded your time in the appropriate spots inside the brevet card. Sign the line on the back of the brevet card for the rider, then put everything into the enclosed envelope and mail it to the organizer for processing. When you get home, you might like to e-mail that you finished so that we'll know to be expecting your packet in the mail. If you should DNF or DNS (did not start) please contact us too; we have RUSA matters to attend to.

Route Sheets and Course Markings: Please study the route sheet carefully so that you are familiar with the course **before** you begin the brevet—you might like to highlight a map also. Riders will supply their own map. (A good one is the Krebs Cycle Products "South San Francisco Bay & Monterey Bay Areas" bicycle touring map, 2003 edition.) AAA

also provides useful maps to its members. Get the "Monterey Bay" regional map—it shows the entire route in good detail.

Brevet Procedures: Unlike a century ride or personal tour, during a brevet all participants must stop at each "control" point if they want to receive official ride credit. These places are marked on your route sheet and on your brevet card. Follow the instructions on your route sheet and brevet card for each control. Mainly this will mean getting some proof of passage, such as a store receipt that shows the town and time. Be sure to bring a pen or pencil and a wristwatch; **you will need to write your time of passage (in 24-hour format) onto your brevet card at each stop.** Keep track of all your store receipts and the brevet card; keep them dry too. Anyone missing any of their paperwork will not be counted as a finisher despite having ridden the distance.

NOTE: *If you are doing this ride with a group, so long as everyone stays together, the group just needs one store receipt/bank ATM receipt per control. When done, everyone should submit their route cards together with the receipts. If the group splits up, then each smaller group or individual will need to get their own proof of passage in each control town. They can then send in their materials as in the finishing group or individual; we'll coordinate things on this end afterward.*

Controls:

#1—START—San Juan Bautista @ The Windmill market shopping center. Get some proof of passage, such as a store receipt, shortly before the start at some local business. A bank ATM receipt works fine if it is too early for regular businesses to open. (Compared to making a withdrawal, most ATMs do not charge a fee if you are just checking your account balance.) You cannot start earlier than your chosen start time, but if you are late the clock is running nonetheless.

#2—King City 7-11 convenience store at the corner of Broadway & Canal Streets; **Mile 70.** Get a store receipt or something else to show your time of passage; mark time on brevet card. Opens 3h46m/Closes 7h32m after start. (If you want a sit-down meal in King City somewhere other than the 7-11, that is fine so long as the receipt shows the town and time to prove your passage.)

#3—Gonzales—Any business near the Freeway 101 over-crossing on Fifth Street; **Mile 109.** Opens 5h50m/Closes 11h40m after start. Be sure the proof of passage shows the time and town to prove when you went through. [These places tend to close around midnight; if you pass through Gonzales after that, send a post card with your time of passage.]

#4—FINISH—San Juan Bautista. Same procedures as at the start. Opens 7h36m/Closes 15h12m after start. [If you arrive in the wee hours and nothing is open, try to get a bank ATM slip.]

Secret Controls: There might be one or more secret controls on this brevet, so be sure to stay on the official route. If you get lost, retrace your path and return to the point where you got off track; don't make any shortcuts to get back on course because you could miss a secret control. Failure to sign in at any secret control will result in your disqualification. The location(s) will be very obvious so if you don't encounter one along the route, you can relax.

When you are done: send your receipts and completed brevet card to the organizer in the enclosed envelope; don't forget to sign your name on the back of the brevet card in the space for the rider. (We'll do the rest on the back.)

Notes on Food & Water (and Personal Support): Be sure to carry enough food and drink to cycle a long way without refueling. As you go south on Hwy 25, in either Tres Pinos (mile 17) or Pacines (mile 22) be sure you are "topped off". The next 50-mile section has nothing until you get to King City on the route at mile 70. However, do note that the **Pinnacles Campground near mile 41** has food and water on the weekend days. Look for the right turn on Hwy 146 into the Pinnacles National Monument. The campground store is another two easy miles off the route if you need food and water. Do note that the store (at this writing) is open only on the weekends. If you are doing this ride Monday through Friday, you'll be out of luck (but there are water fountains at the campground.) Also, this may be iffy in the winter season when few campers are around.

Heading north in the second half of the ride, be sure to fill your bottles and pockets as you leave **Gonzales**. There are no more stores on the route until you finish in SJB. Though the distance is "only" 33 miles, you might be going into a strong headwind and then up the 5-mile climb of San Juan Grade. Thus, your speed could be slow and you'll take an unusually long time to cover that section of the route. Be sure you have enough food and water to see you through twice the distance.

Be sure to come with a determined attitude to finish. If you quit you will need to find your own way back to the start. Also, there are no shortcuts to get you back to the finish early if you discover that you are having a bad day. The

route is split lengthwise by a mountain range that divides the Salinas Valley from lonely Hwy 25. You will have to either turn around in the first half of the ride, or continue onward once you reach the top of Bitterwater Summit. (If things are really bad, you could get a motel for the night in King City, Greenfield, or Gonzales and resume your ride the next day.) There is also bus service to SJB from various towns in the Salinas Valley once you get to King City. Some of these towns are also large enough to have rental cars.

Also remember that randonneurs are expected to be self-sufficient. Per normal randonneuring regulations, if you should bring a personal support crew, you can only receive their assistance at each control, and nowhere in-between. Be sure your crew leapfrogs past you immediately after each control and waits for you at the next one; they may not follow you in any manner. Failure to comply will result in disqualification. Anyone using a personal support crew must register them in advance with the organizers during the entry process or risk disqualification. Better yet, do the ride unsupported like everyone else does.

Night Riding: If you are riding at night on this brevet, you **MUST** have the required reflective vest, sash, or Sam Browne belt on your torso as well as a reflective ankle band on each leg. (Recumbent riders can put something on the rear of their machine instead of their back, and they must have some reflective material on either the front of their torso or machine.) You **MUST** be using proper head- and taillights on your bicycle too. Failure to do so can result in your immediate disqualification from the brevet. Bring along spare lamp bulbs or back-up lights too; riding in the dark due to equipment failure is not an excuse. Be sure to test your lights (and their mounts) thoroughly before the brevet. Ride officials might be patrolling the route at night to be sure riders are following the regulations. Failure to comply with their instructions to "light up" could result in your immediate disqualification from the event. Or, if you are stopped for riding without lights, any repairs must be done in front of the officials before you will be allowed to proceed. Any failure to cooperate with officials during the brevet will result in immediate disqualification from this brevet, and possibly any future events organized by the Santa Cruz Randonneurs. Anyone found to be ticketed by police for riding in the dark without lights will be disqualified too.

If you have questions about any of the foregoing information, please don't hesitate to ask. Otherwise, good luck and good riding! ☺