

Haleakala Hulu by Steve Neiner

I had always wanted to ride up a Hawaiian volcano. I saw the Haleakala climb on a local rider's Strava, and that motivated me even more. The biggest climb I have ever done is the White Mountain climb on a double century, at 6,000 feet. I had recently completed three double centuries around October (all over 10,000 feet), and had ridden up Mt Diablo after work several times this year for training. On a vacation to Oahu, I decided to take two days and hop over to Maui to give the Haleakala climb a shot, taking advantage of my training thus far. I read about it extensively, so I knew what to prepare for. I rented a bike at a local bike shop in Paia. I packed a Camelbak, two water bottles, four energy bars, arm warmers, knee warmers, a vest, long fingered gloves, and a rain shell. I was prepared for a long stretch without food and water, and multiple climate changes on the mountain.

When I arrived at the Paia public parking lot at 6:30 AM, three other riders and a driver asked if I was going up, I said yes, and so were they. This would be nice to have other riders in sight on the ride and even a support van.

I had to remove both wheels to get the bike in the trunk of my rental car. When putting the rear wheel on, I dropped the chain underneath the chain catcher, and it got stuck. I struggled with this for about 20 minutes, and with the help of the driver, we finally got the chain on the chainring. The other riders left, and I told the driver to go ahead, I might catch up.

I took off up Baldwin Ave at 7AM from Paia, hoping I might catch up with the group at the store in Makawao. All was going well on the climb, until I heard and felt my rear tire go flat. The bike store supplied a seat bag with supplies, and I did not check it. It had only one tube, and two CO2 cartridges. I could not make a mistake, or my ride would be over. I decided to take my time, and the stiff tire with only one lever made it a slow tube change, but I got it done. Another flat would end my ride and strand me. I decided to chance it, as there was enough car traffic and downhill cycling vans that I might be able to hitchhike back if I had to abandon.

I was getting in a good groove of climbing and forgetting about the drama. I made the right turn on Hanamu, enjoying a mile of a few rollers, then I left on the Haleakala highway. This is a very pleasant part of the ride, not too steep, with spectacular views of the isthmus between east and west Maui. A left turn onto Crater road winds through an exclusive neighborhood. This is at 3500 feet, a little over 1/3 of the way. I caught up with a local rider, who asked what time I started. He said I was making good time. At 16 miles, I was a little over 2 ½ hours, so I thought I might have a chance to reach my five-hour goal.



The Ride Zone

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Then the climb is numerous switchbacks, at 6, 7, 8 or more percent. Fatigue and altitude may be already starting to come into play here, I stayed in my 32 cog for much of this section. Finally, there is a very brief flat section, and the road straightens out a bit, though still climbing. I reach the pay gate, pay my entrance fee, encouraged by the park employees. I asked if she had seen the three riders, and she said they were about 20 minutes ahead. I still had hope I could catch those other riders.

Shortly up the hill is the park headquarters, where there is a water refill station. I filled my Camelbak and ate some more. After the headquarters, the road becomes giant switchbacks, about a mile between turns. The vegetation is low chaparral, making it easy to forget this is Hawaii. This goes on for a long time, and though it is probably averaging 5% here, anything above 5% and I am in my 32, as this section is from 7,000 to 9,000 feet. A downhill rider was blasting the Bee Gees Staying Alive and gave me a thumbs up as he went by. Staying alive, that was all I could say I was doing.

I reach 9,000 feet, and see the observatory at the top, and it looks reachable. I get an adrenaline shot from that, and I am able to pick up my pace. I am still in a low gear, but the exuberance increases my cadence. Finally, I see the summit building at the top, and the lower parking lot. At the lower lot I see the three riders and their support van. I stop by, high five them, then continue up. I still have some work. There is a right turn, and the last half-mile to the summit is the steepest, over 12%, at 10,000 feet with fatigue. I grind it up, with a strange mixture of exuberance and exhaustion, and made it to the upper lot. There is a pedestrian path to the summit lookout building, and to say I biked up all 10,000 feet requires a ride up this path. I push on by dodging pedestrians, and telling a few %excuse me+, but they didn't seem to mind. Then I reach the elevation sign, and I have done it. Tourists ask where I rode from, and when I say Paia at sea level, they congratulate me. I see a thick layer of clouds a few thousand feet below, so I layer up, but notice my vest is gone, likely fallen out of my overstuffed pocket, so I am hoping the rain shell is warm enough. I started the descent enjoying the spectacular view and satisfaction of finishing the climb. Then I drop into the

clouds, but not only is it foggy, it is raining. At least the temperature is, though cold, not shivering cold and dangerous. A guy in a Prius offered me a ride down, and I declined, since I was not in any hypothermia danger.

A few miles later I started to question that decision, as it was raining a little harder. I was cautious, allowing cars to pass, as I did not want to take any chances. Just above the 4,000 feet level I noticed I was under the clouds, though still lightly raining, but at least I was out of the fog. Once on Baldwin Ave it warmed up enough to remove my rain shell. From there it was a comfortable warm and dry downhill to Paia, to finish a most memorable and challenging ride.

RIDE SCHEDULE – March 2018

Helmets required.

Rain or 'serious' threat of rain cancels. Follow Stockton Bicycle Club Facebook page for updates on ride status.



Rides may be amended and additional rides may be scheduled via the Stockton Bicycle Club Yahoo! Group. (details below).

A ride: 20+ mph, paceline riding, few if any regroup. **B** ride:16-20 mph, experienced rider, regroup at major intersections, turns.

C ride: 12-15mph, regroup, no drop ride. MPH is based on a flat ride

For questions or to list a ride of your choice, please call or email Roberta Hoffman at nikehoffman@comcast.net or 763-2807

New Riders Note: There is a rest/refuel break about the middle of the ride. Unless otherwise stated, all rides are recreational in nature and intended for the enjoyment of all. **Terrain:** F=flat, R=rolling, H=Hilly, VH=very hilly

Date	Time	Miles/ Terrain	Start Location	Description	
Tue	9:00	35-45 R/H	Wallace S. Camanche & Wallace Lakes Dr.	Fixed Route: So Comanche Rd/ Burson Rd Olive Orchard to COMMON GROUNDS	
Wed	5:30 PM	25 F	Stockton Bear Creek HS	W.A.R. is back! Begins March 14 th . Details coming on SBC Yahoo! Group	Wed
Thu	9:00	35-45 R/H	Wallace Rossetti's	Show and go	
Sat 3	9:00	38/42 H	Wallace Tri-Lakes Church	42: Campo, Paloma, Water Tank (2900') 46: Pardee (3200')	
Sun 4	9:00	30/40 R/H	Clements Mary's Mini-Mart Hwy 88/Liberty Rd.	30: BV (1200') 40: Brubeck, Ione, Jackson Valley Break in Buena Vista	
Sat 10	9:00	30/49/87 H/VH/M	Patterson Carl's Jr. area	30: Raines Park 49: junction (3000') 87: Mt. Hamilton (7000')	Tonight 
Sun 11	9:00	34/42 F/R	Linden Orlando's Market	34:FloodRd.,EscalonBellota,Shelton, Wimer,Hwy26,Shelton and back(726') 42: Milton Rd to Jenny Lind for pancake breakfast at Odd Fellows Hall	Spring Ahead 1 hour
Sat 17	9:00	40-45 F	Woodbridge Meet Lower Sac and Augusta St.	St. Patrick's Lucky Treat in Walnut Grove Coffee on the Club at Mel's Mocha	
Sun 18	9:00	25/45	Valley Springs 2713 Hogan Dam Rd.	Ride4Art – Event to benefit Calaveras Arts Council https://www.rideandwalk4art.com/ New Hogan Dam, Pardee,	Rob William
Sat 24	B 8:30 A 9:00	38/51 H	Starbucks (ValleySprings) Mar-Val Shopping Ctr	38: Pardee-Stoney- Jackson Break - out and back (3900') 51: Loop up Butte Mtn and down Clinton Rd.	
Sun 25	9:00	40-45 F	Woodbridge Meet Lower Sac and Augusta St.	Loop out to Clement's Ridge– Acampo Rd, Dustin, Orchard, Elliott, Peltier, Collier – break at Clements Ridge	
Sat 31	B 8:30 A 9:00	42 H	Ione Howard Park.	Michigan Bar, Carbondale, Forest Home, Old Sac, break Plymouth, return Irish Hill (2055')	
April Sun 1	9:00	24, 40 F	Clements Fire Station	24:Mackville, Borden, Claystation, Collier, Linn 40: Jahant, Tully, Brandt https://ridewithgps.com/routes/24354800	

For changes/additions to the ride schedule, participate in online discussions or for other club news, join our Yahoo! Group at groups.yahoo.com/group/Stockton_Bicycle_Club or send an e mail to [Stockton Bicycle Club-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:Stockton_Bicycle_Club_subscribe@yahoo.com). Also, see our Stockton Bicycle Club Facebook page for ride changes, and comments.