

The Bigfoot Bicycle Club

...promoting road, mountain, and family cycling



South Bay Time Trial Course and Loleta Loop

The South Bay Time Trial course is an unofficial race that takes place in Humboldt County. The ride travels through picturesque farming country with several points of interest along the way. There are two courses to ride with optional side trips, making the length and difficulty entirely up to the rider. There is an 11.6-mile flat course and a 15.2-mile hilly course. Wes Thornton has the course record time of 29:03 on the short course. Mike Pigg set the course record of 43:23 on the long course. Both courses start at College of the Redwoods, which is 8 miles south of Eureka. The short course is not recommended for a recreational ride because it is fairly boring, following the highway for half its distance. A favorite of locals is to combine the long course with a loop through Loleta. If you start in Eureka and do the long course and Loleta Loop, you will complete 37 miles. There is an optional out-and-back to the south jetty of 11 miles, bringing the total to 48 miles. You can start these rides in Eureka, Loleta, Fortuna, or by driving to College of the Redwoods. This write up will detail the short course, long course, and extra Loleta Loop. This ride guide describes the route starting in Henderson Center in Eureka.

Detailed Route

Mile Point 0- Start in Eureka at Henderson Center Bicycles at 2811 F Street.

This is a good time to get supplies for the ride or try one of two local bakeries. Head south on F Street towards the Fresh Freeze drive-in continuing through the intersection past Jo-Ann Fabrics. The road is busy and narrow but after a few blocks you will enter a nice bike lane. As you continue out F Street its name changes to Fairway Drive. You will drop down a short fast descent, pass the Eureka Golf Course, and then go up a short climb. Continue riding until you come to Highway 101.

Mile Point 3.1- Go over Highway 101 and take the onramp heading south towards Fortuna. The highway has a good wide shoulder.

Mile Point 5- Pass the King Salmon Exit.

Mile Point 5.5- Pass the Fields Landing Exit.

Mile Point 6.9- Get off the highway at the College of the Redwoods Exit.

Mile Point 7.3- Turn right at the intersection.

Mile Point 7.7- Pass the College of the Redwoods North Entrance.

Mile Point 8- College of the Redwoods Main Entrance. The Main Entrance sign is the starting point for both the long and short time trial courses. If you have a computer reset it here.

Short Course

Mile Point 0- Head south on Tompkins Hill Road.

Mile Point 2- Turn right onto Hookton Road. Cross the railroad tracks and take the on ramp to Highway 101 North.

Mile Point 4.8- Take the College of the Redwoods Exit.

Mile Point 5.1- Stop Sign. Caution: Watch out for auto traffic. Cars from the right and straight ahead do not have to stop.

Mile Point 5.8- College of the Redwoods Main Entrance. To complete the short course repeat the loop and you will have completed 11.6 miles. Head back to Eureka the way you came.

Long Course

Mile Point 0- Head south on Tompkins Hill Road.

Mile Point 2- Go straight at the intersection with Hookton Road. The road is narrow but there is very little traffic. This is the best part of the long course as you ride through farm country.

Mile Point- 4.7- You will start the climb, ascending approximately 560 feet in 1 mile.

Mile Point 5.2- You are at the top of the climb. If you look to the west you will have a wonderful view of the Eel River and Loleta.

Mile Point 5.7- At the intersection of Graham Road bear to the right on the main road. You will begin the descent down towards Fortuna.

Mile Point 6- Caution: There is a sharp right hand turn. You can easily build up too much speed on the descent and blow this curve!

Mile Point 7.4- At the stop sign go right and head north on Highway 101.

Mile Point 11.9- You will begin a descent down towards Hookton Road.

Mile Point 13- Turn off on Hookton Road and head over the railroad tracks back towards Tompkins Hill Road.

Mile Point 13.3- Turn left on Tompkins Hill Road and head back towards College of the Redwoods.

Mile Point 15.2- Finish where you started at the main entrance sign. Head back to Eureka the way you came.



Loleta Loop

This loop adds 6.8 miles to the long course. An additional 11 miles is possible by riding out to the south jetty of Humboldt Bay. First, follow the route of the long course to mile point 7.4.

Mile Point 7.4- At the stop sign go right and head north on Highway 101.

Mile Point 7.9- Take the Fernbridge/Ferndale Exit. Ride underneath the overpass and continue along the road as it veers to the right to parallel the highway.

Mile Point 8.7- Fernbridge. The Fernbridge Market and a seasonal fruit stand offer good points to take a break. At the stop sign go straight.

Mile Point 9.2- Turn left at the sign for Loleta.

Mile Point 11- Loleta Drive Intersection. Go straight to continue the ride.

Side trip: Turn right to visit the Loleta Cheese Factory and the town of Loleta.

The Loleta Cheese Factory has free cheese samples and local foods.

There is a wonderful garden on the property where you can picnic or just take a break.

Mile Point 11.4- Turn left on Copenhagen Road. This is a nice country ride through dairy farms on a narrow country road.

Mile Point 15- Turn right on Table Bluff Road.

Side trip: Turn left and go out to the south jetty of Humboldt Bay. The road is gated about 2 miles from the intersection, which limits the amount of vehicle traffic. This out-and-back adds 11 miles to the ride.

Mile Point 15.4- At the intersection of Table Bluff Road and Hookton Road go straight onto Hookton Road. This portion of the road is fun with short climbs and descents.

Mile Point 17.2- Hookton Slough Trail. Continue the ride going straight. If you need a break, turn left and check out the wildlife viewing areas. There are bathrooms and places to picnic.

Mile Point 18.5- Turn left at the stop sign and continue the ride crossing over the Highway 101 overpass. The Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters is located down a frontage road just before you cross the overpass. Follow the signs if you want to check it out.

Mile Point 18.8- After crossing the overpass, turn left at the stop sign and cross the railroad tracks.

Mile Point 19- Turn left at the yield sign and ride down Tompkins Hill Road back to College of the Redwoods.

Mile Point 21- Finish where you started at the main entrance sign. Head back to Eureka the way you came.

By Jim Robbins, Bigfoot Bicycle Club