

## Levi and Paul raise the bar at 2015 Terrible Two

On Saturday, June 20, the Santa Rosa Cycling Club played host to the long-haul truckers of the biking world. The occasion was the 40th Anniversary of the Terrible Two double century. Lured in part by the challenge of the California Triple Crown Stage Race, 260 riders signed up for the full double. Over 100 more joined the party to do the 200-K, making this the largest group of riders ever signed up for a TT Saturday. Minus a few no-shows, 244 double-century hopefuls gathered in the nippy morning air at 5:30 AM in Sebastopol, ready to roll out for a long and daunting voyage along the scenic and hilly back roads of Sonoma and Napa Counties. But the day began with a reminder that this was about more than just a bike ride.

Before the 200-mile riders hit the road, event co-chair Bill Oetinger devoted part of his pre-ride briefing to a tribute to one of our good friends and TT stalwarts, Paul Stimson. It was only three years ago that Paul last participated in the Terrible Two, but since then he had fallen into the clutches of ALS, or Lou Gherig's Disease. Like the legendary Yankee, Paul battled this dreaded, incurable malady with courage and good cheer. He was an inspiration to all who knew him and was in fact presented with the Most Inspirational award at our year-end club banquet last December. Throughout the last Springtime of his life, he did his best to stay upbeat and lively, to squeeze as much as he could out of the days still left to him. But a week before the Terrible Two, his journey ended and he rode off the front, bridging up to the big peloton in the sky.

As a tribute to their fallen friend, dozens of riders in the field wore matching *ALS Sucks!—Never Forget!* jerseys. In a way, each of them was on a tandem, with Paul powering them along as their spiritual stoker. Paul's wife Mary Jane was at the start and said he would have been astounded at the tribute. We think he would have been delighted at such a heartfelt memorial. He might have agreed with Lou Gherig that although he'd had a bad break, today, he "felt like the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

It was cold enough at the start for extra layers to be appreciated, but it soon warmed up to a day that was hot but not crazy hot...not as brutal as the TT can sometimes be. The official mid-afternoon high in Cloverdale—our standard benchmark—was 96°. That probably translated to bike thermometer temps in triple digits on the more exposed climbs, but a pleasant marine breeze kicked in that kept things manageable.

Of those 244 starters, 167 finished before the 11:00 PM time limit. 128 made it in by the club's traditional 10:00 PM cut-off, qualifying for the coveted *I DID IT!* t-shirts (52% of the starting field). Another handful of very tired riders finished after the 11:00 PM cut-off. Some were distraught over missing out on their CTC or Stage Race credit. But what all participants need to understand is that the time limits are an integral part of what makes this event so challenging. This is what distinguishes the TT from all other doubles: the ticking of the clock...the sand running through Father Time's hourglass. Not only do you have to conquer the steep climbs and the technical descents and the sometimes crippling heat, you have to do all of that with a fairly good turn of speed.

We feel deep empathy for those who struggle so long and then come up short at the end. Most of us have been there a time or two. But that's the job description at the TT. That's what we sign up for when we tackle this terrible beast. There are many other riders who went faster, knowing they had to beat the clock, but burned through all their matches before the finish. They are—most of them—pretty much in the same boat as those who proceeded more slowly and finished, but after the time limit. In all cases, any rider who put in a valiant effort deserves our respect. We commend you for your grit and determination...and hope that over time, your disappointment will mellow into satisfaction for the work you put in on this day.

Up at the sharp end of the field, the usual suspects gathered and pushed the pace, as they always do, over the first ridges and down into Napa Valley. Business as usual for the most part. But there was an added element this year that shook things up a bit, or, as Phil Liggett might have put it, "that put the cat among the pigeons." That was the participation of former pro and Santa Rosa homeboy Levi Leipheimer, riding in that ALS kit to honor his friend Paul Stimson. Leipheimer stuck with the lead group to the first rest stop at mile 54, and then started to air it out a bit. But he was not flying solo, at least not yet. He checked in at the 111-mile lunch stop with local racer Brian Finnerty at 10:45. They were in and out in a couple of minutes, headed for the killing fields of Skaggs Springs. The next riders—seriously fast dudes—wouldn't arrive for over 20 minutes.

According to other local racers, Finnerty is "a monster" at shorter distances, such as the Sonoma County Grasshopper events. But the TT was a bit longer than he was used to. He brought a 125-mile long extension cord to a 200-mile race, and somewhere along Skaggs, the power plug popped out of the wall and he was done. Meanwhile, Leipheimer kept moving at a good clip, a clip never seen before in this event. His only company on the lonely roads of the west county were the 200-K riders (who were on the latter half of the course ahead of the doubles riders). We had reports from them of him carving up the course along Fort Ross Road, riding smoothly but at a pace most of us only dream about.

He cruised into the finish at 3:30, 10 hours and 17 seconds after departing. That is a new course record, lopping 50 minutes off the record shared by Brian Anderson and Mark Reidy since 2002. To put this in perspective, the next riders to finish—Aaron Wise (last year's first finisher), Michael Castaldo, and Gary Swanson—didn't arrive until another 1:19 had ticked off the clock, and they were over 20 minutes ahead of the next guy (SRCC's irrepressible Jady Palko).

In a quiet moment after finishing, Levi took the time to talk about his friend Paul Stimson. He noted that even for a stronger rider, 200 challenging miles is a big chunk to manage. He had moments out there that were a struggle for him. In a voice choked with emotion, he said that when he hit those tough spots, the thing that kept him going was thinking about Paul and how he would have embraced the moment, rejoicing in being alive and fit enough to ride a bike through the magnificent landscape of Northern California on a beautiful June day. Over those lonely, solo miles, Levi worked up the notion that he would ask us to put Paul's name in the record books as the first place finisher instead of his own.

For any number of practical reasons, we can't in fact do that. But we are more than happy to honor the profoundly felt sentiment behind his request. We would have given Paul equal billing in any event, at least in this account of a very special day. Paul was always a class act and Levi has been one too in his tribute to his buddy.

But the TT isn't just about the sharp end of the field, no matter how intriguing or inspiring that story might be. The TT is about every rider and the demons each one has to confront. Somewhere between the no-body-fat whippets at the front of the file and the weary warriors at the back, a couple of hundred other men and women were working hard to solve the complicated puzzle that is the Terrible Two. And for all the suffering and toil, most would tell you—at least after they finished—that they had a good time doing it. Among them were SRCC's Paul McKenzie and Sarah Schroer, bringing in their tandem at 13:26. They were the only tandem out of three to finish within the time limit. Rebecca Eckland of Reno was the first woman to finish, in a time of 14:26. Kirsten McDaniel and Becky Berka were not too far behind at 14:45 and 15:03.

We know of no significant crashes. There were a few minor bumps but nothing requiring the attention of the EMTs prowling the course. An assortment of the usual flats and mechanicals caused anything from frustrating delays to DNFs. Murphy's Law is always out there, waiting to trip up unlucky or unprepared riders.

But for most of the 167 hardy souls who made it in ahead of the time limit, it was a day to savor. There were beatific smiles galore at the finish, and exclamations of wonder and gratitude about the beautiful backcountry scenery, the great weather, and the superb support. It was, indeed, a very good day for many and a great day for the whole cycling community. It was a day to be thankful for good health and good fortune. It was an emotional and heart-tugging day for those who carried our good friend with them and felt his inspiring presence along the way.

A few words about the support...

The home club had over 200 volunteers working on this event. Over 200 enthusiastic people supporting around 350 riders! A few worked for weeks and months ahead of the event. Many logged long hours from sometime on Friday right through to Sunday afternoon. The bulk of the bodies were lined out along the course on Saturday, in rest stops, in sag wagons, at the finish... Many worked more than one job. Some people on Saturday put in 20-hour days. We tip our hats to everyone who helped, in whatever capacity. But don't feel too sorry for all those hard-working volunteers: they had a ball out there. Working the TT is for many people one of the most exciting and entertaining days of the year. It's a weird kind of party, spread over 200 miles. It's a grand adventure. The vast majority of them love it, and they'll be back again next year to do it all over again.

## Terrible Two 2015 Ordinal Standings

9 July 2015 9:18

	Bib	Finish Time	Combined Finish Info	
1	146	10:00	Levi Leipheimer, 41, Santa Rosa	M
2	54	11:19	Michael Castaldo, 48, Chico	M
	224	11:19	Gary Swanson, 46, Yuba City	M
	249	11:19	Aaron Wise, 38, Los Angeles	M
5	176	11:40	Jady Palko, 42, Windsor	M
6	94	11:46	Bob Gade, 44, Berkeley	M
7	161	11:47	Marc Moons, 49, Petaluma	M
8	60	11:53	Robert Choi, 54, Ogden, UT	M
9	149	11:57	Mark Lowe, 41, Arvada, CO	M
	202	11:57	Miguel Sanchez, 38, Santa Rosa	M
11	229	12:01	Rich Thurman, 47, Chico	M
12	155	12:12	Maximiliano Mehech, 53, Santa Clara	M
13	204	12:16	Carl Sanders, 47, Lagunitas	M
14	6	12:21	Carl Andersen, 54, Woodside	M
	124	12:21	Eric House, 53, Emeryville	M
	218	12:21	Steve Smead, 51, Lincoln	M
17	64	12:30	Michael Conway, 42, Albany	M
	80	12:30	Micky Dymond, 50, Santa Rosa	M
	180	12:30	Matt Pendleton, 37, San Ramon	M
20	83	12:45	Calvin Erdman, 56, Sacramento	M
	68	12:46	Shawn Daly, 48, Santa Rosa	M
	96	12:46	Michael Gallaher, 35, Windsor	M
23	98	12:48	Teng Gao, 3x, San Francisco	M
	139	12:48	Bryan Kilgore, 33, Oakland	M
25	153	12:50	Douglas McKenzie, 55, Santa Rosa	M
26	78	12:51	Scott Duncan, 61, Healdsburg	M
	209	12:51	Andreas P. Schultz, 47, Redwood City	M
28	112	13:06	Rod Halbert, 51, Roseville	M
	185	13:06	Gregory Plumb, 40, Santa Rosa	M
30	257	13:11	Mark Mularz, , Ashland, OR	M
31	43	13:13	David Burkett, 37, Folsom	M
	62	13:13	Frank Clark, 21, Sebastopol	M
33	59	13:16	Dave Cherne, 53, Cupertino	M
34	208	13:20	Robert Schofield, 40, Carson City, NV	M
35	36	13:22	Bill Brier, 53, Fremont	M

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	Bib	Finish Time	Combined Finish Info	
	126	13:22	Joe Hughes, 35, Sebastopol	M
	158	13:22	Bret Miller, 56, Pismo Beach	M
38	45	13:26	Michael Busha, 35, Menlo Park	M
	154	13:26	McKenzie / Schroer, 60/43, Berkeley/Santa Rosa	M/F
40	122	13:35	Marty Holloway, 51, Sacramento	M
41	31	13:36	Gilles Bouchard, 55, Los Altos	M
	49	13:36	Paul Carpenter, 56, Oakland	M
	150	13:36	Tom Mac, 52, San Jose	M
	179	13:36	Richard Pego, 42, Valley Village	M
	259	13:36	Tim Morken, , Livermore	M
46	187	13:53	Graham Pollock, 47, Folsom	M
47	111	13:56	Doug Hahn, 51, Los Altos	M
	145	13:56	Tony Lee, 56, Petaluma	M
	242	13:56	Doug Weseman, 56, Oroville	M
50	167	14:15	Matthew Muldoon, 56, Petaluma	M
51	65	14:17	Christopher Coppersmith, 53, San Francisco	M
	239	14:17	Mar Villaflor, 46, Oakland	M
	243	14:17	Jim Wheeler, 50, Cupertino	M
54	93	14:21	Bruce Fritz, 56, Emeryville	M
55	89	14:23	Bob Fisher, 59, Spokane, WA	M
56	70	14:24	Laurentiu Dascalu, 27, San Francisco	M
57	81	14:26	Rebecca Eckland, 33, Reno, NV	F
	221	14:26	Rich Staley, 46, Reno, NV	M
59	168	14:27	Michael Munrow, 57, Belmont	M
60	29	14:28	Preston Booker, 52, Santa Rosa	M
	99	14:28	Leland Gee, 60, Santa Rosa	M
62	87	14:35	Bob Fetherston, 62, Los Gatos	M
63	100	14:39	Raphael Gernez, 52, Los Altos	M
64	37	14:42	Michael Brochier, 54, Novato	M
	131	14:42	Rick Jacobson, 56, Van Nuys	M
66	152	14:45	Kirsten McDaniel, 46, Campbell	F
67	114	14:50	David Hartson, 59, Shadow Hills	M
68	183	14:51	Jeff Pierce, 36, Sebastopol	M
	258	14:51	Steve Backman, 58, Santa Rosa	M
70	11	14:56	Renato Arnoco, 47, Fremont	M

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	79	14:56	Wayne Dunlap, 53, Austin, TX	M
	241	14:56	Doug Wagner, 61, Glen Ellen	M
73	21	15:03	Randy Becker, 41, Santa Rosa	M
	24	15:03	Becky Berka, 51, San Ramon	F
	173	15:03	Ramon Ochoa, 44, Campbell	M
76	116	15:04	Craig Hicks, 55, Berkeley	M
77	199	15:13	Eric Ross, 57, Bakersfield	M
78	38	15:15	Judy Brusslan, 55, Long Beach	F
	115	15:15	Gustavo Hernandez, 45, Davis	M
	260	15:15	Laurence Kluck, 66, Eureka	M
	184	15:15	Jason Pierce, 41, Oakland	M
82	191	15:17	Samer Rezkalla, 41, Brentwood	M
83	63	15:20	Randall Coleman, 51, Sacramento	M
	101	15:20	Mark Gibbon, 49, Ross	M
	174	15:20	Daryl Oft, 30, Redlands	M
	210	15:20	Barry Schwartz, 61, Los Altos	M
87	40	15:24	Erbin Burgonio, 49, Tracy	M
	206	15:24	George Sartor, 54, Tracy	M
89	106	15:27	Joe Gorin, 64, Oakmont	M
90	13	15:35	Tyrone Arnold, 45, Santa Rosa	M
91	192	15:38	Christopher Richards, 62, Boerne, TX	M
	193	15:38	G Kurt Richards, 67, La Jolla	M
	201	15:38	Jeffrey Sacramento, 39, Castro Valley	M
94	57	15:41	Joe Chancellor, 35, El Dorado Hills	M
95	140	15:43	Paul Kunkel, 55, El Dorado Hills	M
96	255	15:44	Pauli Frey, 46, Santa Rosa	M
97	19	15:45	Rick Beale, 52, Fortuna	M
	244	15:45	Matthew Wietrick, 46, West Sacramento	M
99	118	15:46	Byron Ho, 60, San Francisco	M
100	148	15:48	Chad Lewis, 40, Irvine	M
	163	15:48	Hunt Moore, 64, Petaluma	M
	227	15:48	Sarah Swigart, 28, Berkeley	F
103	53	15:49	Doug Cassel, 51, Roseville	M
	144	15:49	Vaughan Landrum, 50, Berkeley	M
	200	15:49	Roy Ross, 54, Sunnyvale	M

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	236	15:49	Metin Uz, 49, Palo Alto	M
	254	15:49	Colin Wright, 57, Mount Hamilton	M
108	178	15:50	David Pearl, 48, Los Altos	M
	247	15:50	Randy Will, 53, Paradise	M
110	108	15:52	Jeff Gutierrez, 31, Eureka	M
	136	15:52	Brian Kaemmer, 56, Napa	M
112	231	15:58	Ben Tomsy, 37, San Mateo	M
113	18	16:00	Brian Bauer, 50, Sebastopol	M
	82	16:00	Mark Elgood, 56, Pleasanton	M
	134	16:00	Kris Jones, 51, Danville	F
	225	16:00	Kelly Swanson, 45, Yuba City	F
117	1	16:02	Michael Aberg, 49, Santa Clara	M
	39	16:02	Robert Buntrock, 50, Discovery Bay	M
	97	16:02	Benny Gallardo, 45, Menlo Park	M
	120	16:02	John Hoenigman, 50, Santa Barbara	M
	121	16:02	Richard Hoff, 62, Sanger	M
122	44	16:04	Richard Burton, 43, Monterey	M
	73	16:04	Richard Dones, 42, Cerritos	M
	219	16:04	David Smith, 58, Santa Rosa	M
125	46	16:07	Ken Cabeen, 52, Santa Rosa	M
126	177	16:15	Dylan Pan, 36, San Mateo	M
127	232	16:29	Khoa Tran, 41, San Jose	M
	234	16:29	Stanley Tsang, 54, Pacifica	M
129	103	16:33	Evan Gomberg, 55, San Mateo	M
	130	16:33	Ed Irvine, 62, San Jose	M
	133	16:33	Finbarr Jewell, 54, San Francisco	M
132	51	16:34	Karyn Casaus, 29, Concord	F
	156	16:34	Todd Meier, 44, Walnut Creek	M
134	14	16:36	Kamran Azmoudeh, 59, Santa Rosa	M
135	246	16:38	Adam Wilks, 31, Oakland	M
136	194	16:40	Douglas Richardson, 51, Martinez	M
	256	16:40	Gabrielle Friedly, , Menlo Park	F
138	71	16:45	Johnna Davis, 52, Martinez	F
139	166	16:53	Nancy Morrow, 56, Walnut Creek	F
140	165	16:56	Thomas Morris, 56, Roseville	M

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141	110	16:58	Vu Ha, 43, San Jose	M
	211	16:58	Luke Scrivanich, 52, Santa Rosa	M
	233	16:58	Chris Trinh, 36, San Jose	M
	251	16:58	Daniel Wong, 44, Milpitas	M
145	12	17:03	Megan Arnold, 43, Santa Rosa	F
	41	17:03	Michael Burke, 50, Mill Valley	M
	182	17:03	Vernon Piccinotti, 38, Daly City	M
	197	17:03	Kris Roginski, 52, Menlo Park	M
149	20	17:04	Chris Beauchamp, 49, Los Gatos	M
150	128	17:15	Francis Marlon Ignacio, 47, Duarte	M
	190	17:15	Dante Recio, 49, Rowland Heights	M
	205	17:15	Jesse Santamaria, 55, Norwalk	M
153	15	17:23	Rodolfo "Junrey" Babida, 40, Milpitas	M
	77	17:23	Ariel Dumrique, 37, Union City	M
155	76	17:25	Aaron Dropp, 27, San Francisco	M
156	2	17:26	Mark Abrahams, NA, Berkely	M
157	141	17:27	Chester Labucay, 44, Elk Grove	M
158	214	17:28	Robert Sexton, 46, San Jose	M
159	105	17:30	Henry Gong, 54, Fremont	M
	143	17:30	Lap Lai, 59, Vancouver, WA	M
	147	17:30	Glenn Lejano, 38, Castro Valley	M
	175	17:30	Robert Okano, 49, San Jose	M
	188	17:30	Froylan Pulido, 52, Chowchilla	M
	240	17:30	Heidi Vu, 42, Calabasas	F
	47	17:30	Caragao / Smith, 52/44, Fresno/Hayward	M/F
	127	17:30	Dung D. Huynh, 44, Campbell	M