

## Just another day in Paradise

How can you not want to ride a bike around here? Anyplace in the SF Bay Area, you're likely less than half an hour... by bike... from jaw-dropping scenery and lightly-traveled rural roads. And the weather? Sure, I'll be whining about the cold & wet coming our way soon enough. but in any "normal" year, it might rain 2 or 3 days out of the week, leaving plenty of dry days to ride. Or you could be like me and ride anyway, rain or shine, because life is a bit too busy to allow for a flexible riding schedule and neither rain nor snow nor whatever will stop you from your appointed rounds.

Do I always realize, during those first few pedal strokes away from the garage, that I'm entering Paradise? Er... no. Takes a few minutes to get warmed up/awake and, truth be told, it would be so much nicer if I could start the ride 30 minutes later. More sleep, more light (pretty darn dark in the morning right now, and will be until next week when daylight saving time ends) and a bit less rushed. But 30 minutes later wouldn't work into the schedule (that work thing), and there's 30+ years of tradition, tradition that says, when the Garmin GPS strikes 7:45am, we're off & running.

But for the next two weeks, I'm off elsewhere. I may get a chance to ride Thursday morning, possibly an abbreviated version of the usual ride, since I have to catch a 1pm flight to China. Everyone asks if it's work related, as in, am I visiting Chinese bicycle suppliers. Not this time. Not ruling that out in the future, but this time I'm heading there with my wife to see the "Terracotta Warriors" (plus a couple days in Beijing, where I understand the smog will likely preclude us from actually seeing anything, and a couple days at the end in Shanghai).

But getting back to today, still a fairly large group, heading up the hill at a moderate pace. A bit breezy on the west side of Old LaHonda, a sure sign of changes coming soon. But I'll be on the other side of the world by then, missing the change, wondering how things are going with the guys, and hoping that the shop's intact when I return. :-)  
--Mike--