

It's normal to have to "recover" by climbing, right?



Leaving Pescadero, Kevin's looking forward to West Alpine, but not until after he trashes me, as always, at the Loma Mar sprint (town) sign.

It was time for a ride where everything went just exactly right, and today's ride came really close. Maybe having to backtrack just over a mile on the descent into LaHonda was icing on the cake (something felt not-quite-right with my bike and Kevin (my son) noticed I'd lost my water bottle).

The route was a favorite; reverse-Pescadero with West Alpine. That translates to climbing Old LaHonda, down the other side and straight out to San Gregorio. Then south on Stage Road to Pescadero, lunch at the bakery, then head back via Haskins (in the "hard" direction), and up West Alpine to Skyline. From there you head north to 84 and back down into Woodside. I've created a [route on Strava](#) where you can download a Garmin TCX or GPX file if you like.

It was definitely a dress-warm occasion, with temps running in the low-40s everywhere but Pescadero, where it was a balmy 55. The climb up Old LaHonda was a bit faster than I expected (22-something) and the hills on Stage Road went by pretty quickly too. I had thought maybe Kevin's speed would have been held down by being off the bike for a while, but for the first half of the ride, that wasn't the case.

The weird thing for some, referenced in the title for this piece, is that it felt so good to get onto the Stage Road climbs after the long relatively-flat run to the coast from LaHonda. Doing a climb at a hard effort really helps loosen you up after that.

Lunch at Pescadero was the usual coke and a shared Chicken Club sandwich. Oh, and a chocolate chip cookie too, one of those big-as-your-face types. The climb over Haskins was tough, as always, and not terribly fast. This was where I first noticed Kevin was mortal and had slowed down a bit, especially compared to Old LaHonda, where I was having a bit of trouble keeping up with him.

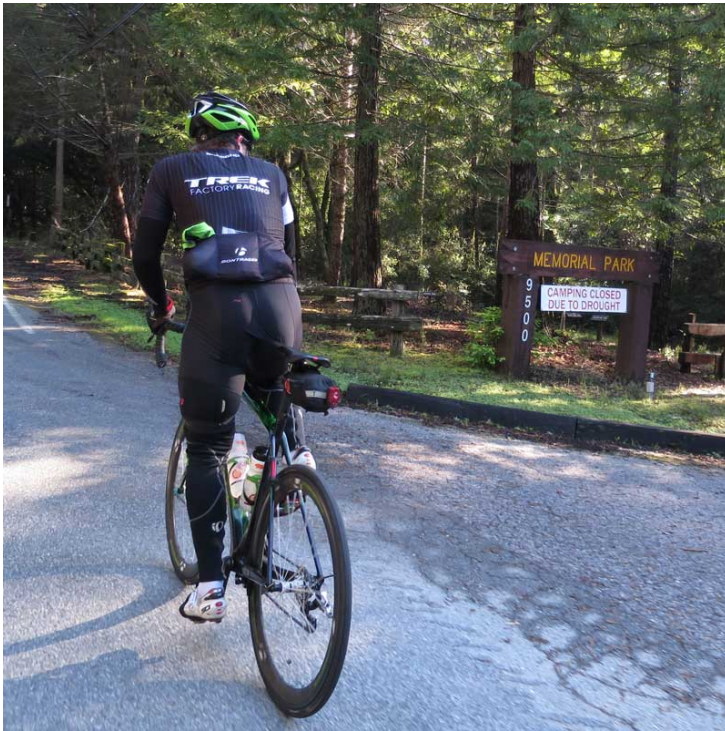
West Alpine? Always a tough climb, always challenging, and always fun. It's probably the iconic mid-Peninsula climb, along with Tunitas Creek. No records today; I had to throttle back a few times to keep Kevin close, but it wasn't as if I was taking it easy. I simply had a (very) temporary advantage because I've been riding more than he has.



The prehistoric animal is still down; they might be waiting for the ground to dry before righting it again.



Water in Pescadero Creek! Really! And I actually managed to photograph it.



Park still closed due to drought???



Approaching West Alpine's 'Bridge of Death' at the base of the climb



Fantastic view off West Alpine



Is the hard part of West Alpine ahead, or the easy part? Never figured that out.