

## First hard effort that felt good in a long time

There are a lot of days you're out riding and it seems harder than it should be. Hard is good, nothing to show for it, not so good. I've had a lot of the latter lately; you're really glad you're out there (because, as we all know, the worst day on a bike is better than the best day doing a lot of other things), but it's not like you could take that effort and mentally frame it and put it up on the wall as something you're proud of. It was, simply, a tough ride.

Today was that rare day where it felt, a few times, like I could twist the throttle and go. That doesn't mean I was in a position to drop Karen, Karl, Eric, Scotty or Kevin (pilot). Not for the long haul anyway. It did mean that I could ride hard through the park and be with the group up front though, and keep them in sight the rest of the way up Kings. It also meant I could push hard in the sprints again; all 3 of them. I lost the Sky Londa sprint to Karen (I'll blame it on Eric not providing a fast-enough lead-out), uncontested on West Old LaHonda final ramp, and nailed the finale (as seen in the video).

Too bad younger Kevin wasn't there to see it; he's still nursing the sore knee he got sprinting on Skyline on Monday's ride. I am finally at peace with what I can do on the bike. Sure, my breathing still leaves a lot to be desired, especially with all the pollen in the air. But I felt some real power in my legs a few times today. I like that feeling. I want more of it.