

Be careful what you wish for (but still a great ride!)



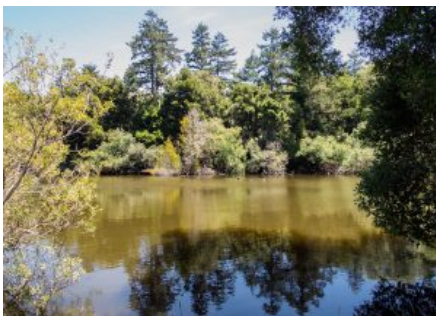
Since I haven't had much exposure to warm temps so far this year, I started my ride a bit late, so I'd be riding during the hottest part of the day. My plan worked.

France is just over two weeks away, and the one thing I haven't prepared for too well this time around is hotter weather. Last year, Kevin and I had a day where it was 102 with headwinds. So far this year, it's been rare to see a day break 80. Today I was determined to try and acclimate myself a bit to warmer temps, and my plan, leaving a bit later, worked. Maybe too well.



Hauling kids in trailers up Old LaHonda

It wasn't going to be a fast ride; I approached Old LaHonda gradually and was probably going to be doing about 23-24 minutes until I spotted Burt (Chain Reaction alumnus) heading down the hill, so we stopped and caught up on the euro racing scene for a bit before I headed on up the hill. Shortly before the top I passed a pair of Dads pulling kid trailers, 2 kids each! That's a hefty load to be carrying up the hill! Of course, in a few weeks Kevin and I will likely be passed on our way up Ventoux, one of the most challenging climbs in the world, by an assortment of young kids and even possibly someone pulling a kid in a trailer or trail-a-bike. There was a time that bothered me; I'm sure it still bothers Kevin.



The LaHonda duck (and turtle) pond

From there it was the usual descent to the LaHonda duck pond, this time actually sitting down to admire the view for a few minutes. It's on my list of favorite places. Kevin enjoys it in small pieces but doesn't see the point to spending too much time there, but since Kevin is still off his bike (on the road anyway; he's getting in some trainer miles while waiting for his head to heal), I had all the time in the world.

And then? Time to meet the sun. Up West Alpine, one of the tougher "reference" climbs. I felt a lot better than I thought I would; maybe the warmer weather loosens me up. Comparing this ride to last year's climb up West Alpine on the same weekend, the temps were about 15 degrees higher today, and I was about two minutes slower. I was expecting to be even slower than that; my 44:50 time really wasn't all that bad, considering I haven't been getting in the really tough rides I'd normally be doing this time of year.

Next, descending Page Mill. Not sure how I ended up with so many PRs for the descent... some probably came when this big guy on a mountain bike came screaming down the hill behind me. I'm thinking, how fast can he go on heavily-treaded mountain bike tires, vs my high-speed smooth road tires? Really fast, it turns out. Faster than I wanted to go anyway.



Life-saving watering hole in Los Altos hills



Who cares what it looks like. It's calories!

To make the ride a respectable length, I took Moody Road into Los Altos hills, which allowed me to get into the real heat. OK, 92 degrees really isn't all that hot, but compared to anything I've ridden lately, it was pretty warm. I was also beginning to run on fumes, not to mention low on water. Fortunately I remembered the water fountain in Los Altos hills, where I refilled my bottles and downed a very melted energy bar of some sort, which proved just barely enough to get me home.

Heading north I did the usual Arastradero, Alpine & Portola Road route, followed by Mountain Home through Woodside and a small detour to see if the Olive Hill Corgis were out (the weren't).

Just took a closer look at last year's ride... almost identical! Weird; that wasn't the plan, just worked out that way. Only real difference is that last year I went up 84 instead of Old LaHonda. The rest of it looks the same. And last year I was on my own as well, since Kevin had been out of commission after getting clipped by a car earlier in the week (while today he's still waiting to get

the stitches from his brain surgery removed before he can ride).

Last year's ride (June 21, 2015)-