

Good to be back home for a while!

Shortly after Sunday's ride, Becky (my daughter and Redwood City Chain Reaction sales manager) hopped on a plane and headed to Madison, Wisconsin, for Trek's huge dealer show. Huge is a bit of an understatement; they take over the entire Monona Terrace facility on the lake for several days. About 100 of the best & biggest dealers in the country fly in and get a chance to see new product, talk with product managers and learn how to run a better business.

Trek really impressed us this year. The past 10 months in the bike biz have been pretty dreadful, nation-wide, with Shimano posting an 18% decline in sales. Dealers really didn't know what to expect going in; so many of us are a rent increase away from oblivion. Would Trek try to strong-arm us, tell us it's their way or the highway? Nope. What Trek did was tell it like it is, that they're in it for the long haul, that unlike everyone else in the industry they've had no layoffs (despite it being a very challenging year), they haven't cut back on engineering, and basically led by example.

Perhaps most impressive was Trek's push for safer cycling. Not better roads and bike paths and education, but rather ways to make cyclists more visible and less likely to be in accidents. They commissioned Clemson University to do the first industry study in the field, and believe they (Trek) can make a serious dent in the accident statistics. Some amazing stuff is coming out of that study, things that really can make us all safer on the roads.

They fed us well; too well, in fact. I gain about 3/4 of a pound per day at these things. Not helping was the unexpected upgrade on the Denver-SF segment coming home; I ended up eating two dinners.

It's good to be home. Riding up Kings, helping customers at the shop, seeing my wife after being gone 4 days.