

First 100 miler of the year went really well!



First things first- I think it's nuts to require 100 mile riders to start between 6-6:30am for a century. Combine that with my general avoidance of driving to a cycling event (if you can possibly ride, why not?) and you found me waking up at 5:50am this morning (isn't that early enough?), getting breakfast going, waking up Kevin at 6, and then leaving for the start, by bike, at 6:50am. Since the ride passes not-too-far from where we live, we roughly followed the ride's route to the start (um, yes, well we did skip the section up Joaquim...), arriving there 48 minutes later.

By the time we were "officially" riding, it was 7:50am. That's OK; more fun when you're chasing people down! Heading immediately up Moody and Page Mill gave lots of opportunities for that. It was quickly evident it would be a very long day for some, as they were off their bikes and walking within just a few miles of the start. Kevin was clearly the stronger rider in the early going, having little trouble on the steepest sections of Page Mill.

After climbing Page Mill to Skyline, it was a quick descent on West Alpine and into LaHonda for the first rest stop. Coffee, fruit bowl, and we're back on the road again, now heading over Haskins to Pescadero. We rode at a respectable clip but respectful of the fact that we had a very long way still to go. Topped off with a bit more food at the Pescadero rest stop before heading onto the Cloverdale loop. It's at this point where we're suddenly alone... as in really, nobody else out there. That's because, up to now, the 100 & 70 mile courses had shared the same roads. But only the 100 milers rode the Cloverdale section, and since they'd all left well before us... we had some serious catching up to do! We were slowed in that endeavor for a couple minutes when Kevin had a yellow jacket latch onto his neck; after swatting it away and making sure it hadn't been a bee (leaving a stinger behind), we were back on the road, soon making the turn north up the coast, into a strong headwind. If I were designing this course, I probably would have done this loop counter-clockwise, taking advantage of Cloverdale Road being more sheltered from winds than Highway 1. But the good news is that I was feeling pretty good and able to pull fairly strongly into the wind. A headwind that continue all the way north on Stage Road of course!



Fuzzy picture of Sarah Coyle earning Goddess status by handing out red vines on Tunitas. Instead of heading straight over Tunitas, the route had us doing a bypass on the lower flanks using Los Lobitos and Los Lobitos cutoff. This seems rather cruel but in reality it wasn't that bad; even the really steep section of Los Lobitos went by pretty quickly. Tunitas itself? We were catching up to a lot of people on Tunitas as I was actually feeling pretty darned good as the ride went on. Best part of Tunitas was Sarah Coyle handing out red vines at the Grassy Knoll (the part where the road begins to level out a bit).

We had to do a bit of creative looping in Woodside to make sure we actually got 100 miles before getting home. The ride went better than I expected; my new meds didn't do me in. Just felt a bit silly wearing white sun shields (think leg warmers) because I'm supposed to limit my exposure to sunlight. They look positively dorky. Think I'll try some SPF 5,000,000 sunscreen next time!