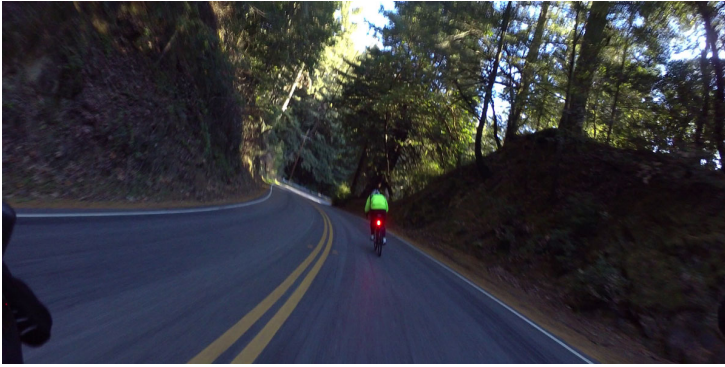


First day of Winter lived up to expectations



It's about time. I mean, for the past what, two months almost?, I've been complaining about it getting colder, making me slower, putting my hibernation weight on and of course making my lungs sound that much more like something to run (or ride) away from. And, for those almost two months, it still wasn't officially winter.

Well that ended today. It was not only winter, but it was also the coldest ride so far, hitting 32 degrees. Exactly freezing. Does that make it the perfect beginning of winter or what? There was actually some sense of relief, almost happiness that winter was here. It made seeing your breath as you waited for others at the start of the ride seem exciting. The first frost sighting beautiful. And the descending just a little bit scarier as the difference in temperature between the pavement and the air above created a potential of condensation. It all added up to a very nice ride.

Just myself and the two Kevins today. Obviously some believe in routine and rituals more so than others, tossing them aside when it's cold and perhaps riding later in the day, or perhaps not even riding at all. That's a potential slippery slope I dare not come near to! The ride through the park wasn't fast, but faster than Tuesday, and it felt better. Kevin and Kevin would occasionally sneak off the front on the steeper pitches, and I'd somehow manage to claw my way back to them.

On West Old LaHonda younger Kevin decided to deal with some grievances and took off (that's what he does if he's either mad or thinking about the sort of things that create angst in a young person). I held onto his wheel for the first part, up to where the road doubles-back upon itself, and then watched him ride away. Surprisingly, my best time on West Old LaHonda since the beginning of August, but sadly, that's not saying much.

It was the perfect first day of winter ride. Had the day been warmer, it wouldn't have been a proper introduction the winter, right? Everything just seemed as it should be. Except for my wonky Garmin computer, which registered 61 miles instead of the 31 it really was.