

## Time to get back to almost-normal routine!



Heading up West Alpine, Kevin's favorite climb

This has been a long week; Tuesday morning I flew to DC to (apparently successfully) lobby for the TIGER funding, which provides federal grants for bicycle infrastructure, flew back very late Wednesday night, got home 1:30am Thursday morning so I missed both the regular Tuesday and Thursday rides. I did commute to work Friday, just to remember what it was like to pedal a bike, but it was with a bit of fear & trepidation that I approached Sunday's ride. And then there was the weather.

The plan was to get out relatively early so Kevin could get back and spend some time with his girlfriend. 9am we'd be out on the road, heading for Pescadero. Well, about 8:50am it started to rain. What??? We waited for a while, hoping the wind would come up and dry the roads, but no wind (that would come later). At 10:48 it was time to head out, but we'd have to abbreviate the ride a bit to get Kevin back in time. Kevin's idea was to do a variant of "the loop" but I needed more than that, something a bit more challenging, so I suggested something I knew he couldn't turn down. West Alpine. He loves West Alpine. Don't know why.

I was feeling OK heading up Old LaHonda until... until, just a little bit up the hill, it felt like my front tire was going flat. Then I thought no, it's ok. Then it let me know it wasn't ok, it was flat. Stopped to pull a piece of glass out and change the tube, and actually felt OK the rest of the way up the hill. Not fast, but legs were doing better than the lungs. Looking at my time, if I subtracted out the 12 minutes we were stopped, it might have ended up being just under 24. For me, lately, that's not so bad. Better yet, my 20 minute average power was finally back over 260, a good 20 watts better than I've seen for a bit.



The turtles return to the lake in LaHonda! West Old LaHonda was even prettier than normal, with the clouds just beginning to clear, and the lake in LaHonda? First turtle sighting in months! Things are gradually getting back to normal.

West Alpine? I was guessing something over 50 minutes, so no problem with 47:50. Sure, I've climbed quite a bit faster than that this past year, but today, that was ok. Looking back, has it really been over 3 and a half months since I last climbed West Alpine? Strava says so! Last time was New Year's Eve in fact.

I think I'm done with flying for a while, so I can get solidly back into the riding routine and look forward to the warmer days ahead. Oh right, it wasn't warm today. The warmest it got was 52; up on Skyline it dropped to 39. It is Spring, right?