

## Kings under 30, VAM over 1000, 219 average weighted power... too soon to say Advair is a success?



This is how it's supposed to be; clear skies & dry roads! I started a new breathing med, Advair, 12 days ago, switching away from Singular. A few frustrating years of seeing my breathing continue to decline led me to new tests and asking for something "stronger" and it appears "stronger" is better for me. It's going to take a bit for it to become fully effective, but the last couple of rides I've actually been able to say a word or two while climbing, and today... today it felt like I turned back the clock a bit, finally getting under 30 minutes for Kings (29:45) and a climbing rate of 1002 vertical meters/hour.

Pretty much from the beginning of the Kings climb, Karen and Kevin (Pilot) took off hard & fast, too hard for me, and Kevin (kid) wasn't feeling so hot at first, so he stayed with me for a bit. I told him I was fine on my own, go after the other two. Eventually he did, rode with them up to the big clearing section, then dropped them. Note that I wasn't around to see that happen. Meantime I was doing my own thing, noticing that I was covering the section to the Huddart entrance in 9:14, fastest time since last November. The 19:46 time at the big clearing was the most-important test; if you can get below 20, you can generally finish below 30. It had been so long since I'd been below 30 that I'd forgotten what it was like, looking at the timer while figuring out if it was going to be faster on a particular section standing or seated.

Skyline was nice & clear, no water on the road for once! I sucked wheels while recovering from the Kings effort, and, curiously, felt good, much better than expected, on West Old LaHonda. That was another section where I had my best time since returning from France last year (July 25th).

It's interesting looking back over past results, and seeing how, sometime around 2015, I began a pretty sharp decline in my climbing. How much of that came from my worsening breathing issues, vs just getting older? It's doubtful my then-yet-undiagnosed Essential Thrombocythemia had anything to do with it, as an excess of platelets doesn't hurt performance; it's the drugs you take to control the platelets that slow you down. This leaves me hopeful that I can recover a lot of performance via Advair. Too bad the stuff costs \$100/month after copay!

One more thing noticed when you look at Strava segments over the years. Since 2008, I've climbed Kings 866 times, and West Old LaHonda 786. I've descended 84 905 times.