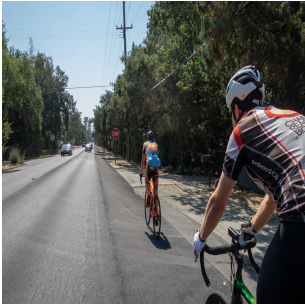


Normalcy returns thanks to extra day to ride



We'll go to great lengths to sell a bike, even if it means meeting a customer on the road. Here Kevin is chasing down JeffZ, no easy feat, to discuss the new Madone road bike he's placing an order for tomorrow.

We'll tackle the rides in order, starting with Sunday. Just me; Kevin wanted to rest his knee a bit more and had other plans for the day. That freed me up to do something I've always wanted to do- ride to the duck pond with a "real" camera and get some decent pictures.

Heck, I ride all over the mountains in France carrying a bunch of camera gear, so why not here? It wasn't that much weight anyway (and of course I did weigh it; just 6 pounds on my back). I was surprised, climbing Old LaHonda, that I didn't even notice it. Even stopping to take photos a couple times on the way up, I was still quite a bit faster than expected. Met a good customer, Rick, towards the top; turns out I sold him his first nice bike in 1983 and he's been a loyal customer since. Nice way to finish the first climb.



The duck pond was in full swing, with, naturally enough, ducks, along with a Heron, an Egret (I think?), a bunch of turtles. The usual suspects. More images from the ride at the bottom of this entry, including Canada & Mountain Home Road.

I spent maybe 20 minutes at the Duck Pond (actually called "Reflection Lake"), way more time than Kevin would have been patient for. Some things I didn't even notice until looking at the photos later, like the turtle behind the bird.



From there I moved on to West Alpine, stopping on the way up to get a photo. At this point I was moving fast enough I debated a bit

if I really wanted to stop and wreck a possibly-decent strava time, but this ride wasn't supposed to be about strava, it was about getting photos. Even so, 48:05 on West Alpine is not such a bad time for me lately. I did suffer a bit in the heat though; there's definitely an issue with my meds and heat tolerance. Hate that. It doesn't slow me down though; it just drenches my head in such a heavy volume of sweat that even my super-duper Halo Headband can't keep it out of my eyes. It was 82 degrees, which isn't all that hot, but anything over 75 seems to trigger it. Doesn't really matter how much over 75; in France, on the Col du Portet climb, it got to 95 and I was still motoring. Just sweating.

Today (Monday), an extra day to ride since the shop is closed on Labor Day. This time Kevin was ready and we managed the full Pescadero/Tunitas loop. It didn't start out really well though; about 2/3rds of the way up Old LaHonda, Kevin was feeling his knee pretty badly. Poor timing for that as I was actually feeling pretty decent and if I didn't have to throttle back and wait for him, I might have had my best time in a couple years. But I couldn't do that, not when it's something like a knee issue. If he was just slow but feeling OK, sure, I could go on ahead. Chance of that happening are, of course, zero.



A zillion bikes in Pescadero, many of them ours!

Thankfully his knee felt better as the ride went on, as I suspected might happen. We didn't hit Haskins too hard, and I did most of the effort fighting the headwind on our way out to Pescadero.

It's probably been years since I've seen so many bikes at the Pescadero Bakery. Western Wheelers was having a ride that attracted a lot of cyclists, and best thing of all, a ton of the bikes had been sold by us. Always nice to see our label on a bike!



The long line for sandwiches

Predictably the line for sandwiches was a mile and a half long, but Kevin and I have the equivalent of the sort of elite status airlines give their best customers. One of the employees recognized us and sent the order in special, saving us at least 10 minutes, maybe

more. If it were United Airlines, it would be the equivalent of "GS" status.

The Stage Road run provided a rabbit for us, a guy who left just in front of us and was putting on quite a show on the flat part. We initially lost a fair amount of ground but clawed our way back on the climb, finishing with him. On the second climb, Kevin pulled away first, then I struggled to get up to him, leaving him maybe 15 seconds behind (which he made up on the descent). Thankfully he stopped at San Gregorio to pick up something at the store; I really wasn't looking forward to trying to rocket up the final Stage Road climb to Highway 1!



Kevin checking himself out, post-seizure

Tunitas? It started out pretty fast, with a slight tailwind, but our pace dropped a bit as it got steeper. For the first time in a while, I had a slight advantage on Kevin, probably because of the number of rides he's missed lately. He did catch back up where it flattens out, and, as usual, I was hanging onto his wheel from then-on. We did have a short stop when he had a small seizure, but no biggie, back on the bike pretty quickly. Total time still might not have been too bad if not for cars blocking the road near Skyline, trying to find parking spaces for the annual Art Fair.

Overall, a very nice ride, and good to have Kevin back.



Rick finishing up on Old LaHonda



Duck at the Duck Pond!



Turtles at the Duck Pond!



Big Bird at the Duck Pond!



Classic West Old La Honda image