

A really long week

On Sunday I discovered something I've kinda known all along. If you miss a Tuesday ride, it's no big deal. If you miss a Thursday ride, as I did because I was in Wisconsin (at a Trek gig), it's a big deal.

Sunday's ride was the usual, Old LaHonda/Pescadero/Tunitas. We actually got out earlier than usual, since Kevin had a date with his girlfriend later that afternoon. But the biggest difference between this and other rides was that, once we hit Old LaHonda, Kevin was gone off the front while I was struggling, badly, up the hill. About four minutes difference by the time we got to the top. Doesn't seem to matter so much if Kevin skips a ride (or two, or three). Me?

Haskins, well, I thought I was doing OK as I was seeing decent numbers on the power meter, but those numbers had more to do with a bit of extra weight I was carrying (Wisconsin food) than being stronger. A couple weeks ago the Strava segment had me at 270 watts average, 9:49 time. Sunday it was 280 watts average, 9:59 time.

A bit different scene than normal in Pescadero. Maybe because we were "early" (arriving about noon). Not too many bikes, not too many people in general. No line for sandwiches! And somehow I managed to pick up a broken cookie.

We braved the gravel on Stage Road (not bad, really) and marveled at a fairly decent-sized group of cyclists at San Gregorio General Store. Didn't know any cyclists still went there; it's not exactly cyclist-friendly and I'm not a fan of a place serving Bloody Mary's before noon. It was about that time we got passed by an older guy in old-style cycling shoes with toe clips. I asked Kevin if he wanted to show the guy how to *really* climb a hill, but not today. OK, as it turned out, it was more like "not yet." We took the first part of Tunitas easy, but not long after the real climb began, he took off. At least until I yelled something to him, don't remember what, so he eased off a bit, then got angry about completely losing his rhythm, acting like I'd destroyed the climb for him. That lasted for about... two minutes. Then he too off again and I didn't see him until the top. I finished the climb in 55 minutes, a good 8 minutes slower than my solo effort just a week prior.

The lesson? You just can't take time off the bike when you get older. Thankfully, I love riding, so there's never a motivation issue. Just the occasional business trip or vacation.

This morning's ride- well, had to get the rain bikes out some time, right? Just barely enough drizzle overnight, not even overnight, just for a few hours, to make the roads a bit too messy for the nice bikes. Surprisingly, there were four of us today, despite the muck. Myself, both Kevins, and JR, back from France with some stories to tell. We had a civilized ride up Kings, about 33 minutes, but because we were running behind schedule, considered shortening the ride, skipping the West Old LaHonda loop. That decision was made for us when we came across a large male deer struggling with a broken leg, obviously having recently been hit by a car. That added quite a few minutes as we had to track someone down at the nearby fire station to call it in.

The surprise today was my ride home. At 13 minutes, 4 seconds (yes, wondering where those 5 seconds went that would have made it seem really fast!), it was my best time heading home, up the hill, in a very long time. I'd felt pretty tired and uncomfortable most of the day (high humidity kills me) but something clicked riding home. Hopefully more of that to come!