

## Maybe it's not that I'm slow; maybe it just takes hours to warm up when it's colder?



Slow as we were, we were having a better day than the two dead baby rattlesnakes we saw on West Old LaHonda. We were determined to do the full regular ride this morning, although I was beginning to wonder if that would happen as Kevin began complaining about his knee shortly after leaving the house, as we rode over Jefferson to the start of the Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride. Like Tuesday it was foggy; unlike Tuesday, it was also wet. Wet enough that we rode quite gingerly through the infamous corner where I slid out on black ice last February and cracked my pelvis in two places.

Who else rode with Kevin and I? That would be... nobody. We saw no other cyclists coming back from the "morning" ride, and only a couple heading down Kings as we were riding up. On the positive side, we noted that we were not passed by a single car the entire way up the hill. We are truly blessed by how little traffic we see when we ride. And we gave the cars plenty of time to find us too! I don't even remember the time but it was probably around 34 minutes, and it was not feeling like it was particularly easy. But as the ride went, there were increasing opportunities to test my legs and discover they'd respond. The slight descent from Skyline down to West Old LaHonda on 84? I was able to go to the front and push it reasonably hard most of the way.

It was on West Old LaHonda where we came across not one but two small rattlesnakes, dead on the road. Both had likely been dropped by birds, as they had the characteristic puncture wounds (you can see that in the photo above). Thankfully it wasn't an omen; our ride continued without incident.

I think I'm stronger than I actually feel right now; it just takes me forever to get warmed up. At least, that's what I want to believe. In a couple weeks I'll find out if there's more to the story, when I go back for another blood test to see if my hematocrit level is still declining. If so, I'll be making some adjustments to my medication, reducing it a bit in hopes that I can get my hematocrit back up to a reasonable level while maintaining a sale number of platelets at the same time.