

## Sunday's ride- Fought for every mile!



Seen at the LaHonda duck pond. A duck! Who knew. It really shouldn't have been that tough a ride, but there's no question that the cooler weather and the higher dose of meds I've been on the past couple months are beginning to catch up to me. That plus it was a solo event; Kevin was goofing off in Disneyland with his sister. Me? No time to goof off. Gotta keep moving! Despite what my platelet-controlling meds are doing to my hematocrit level. I'm actually looking forward to my next blood test, so I can confirm there are "reasons" for my recent decline, and it's not just age and stress getting to me.

I was also testing out my latest medical safety gadget, an iWatch. Never thought I'd own one; the idea of a watch that you have to charge every single day has always put me off. My regular watch is solar powered and gets time signals over the air, so I never had to worry about setting it, or charging it. But, the iWatch has heart monitoring capabilities built into it, which allowed me to confirm that it's not my heart that's causing the haywire readings I've seen lately, but the standard heart rate monitors that talk to your bike computer. That's a good thing.

The plan was the normal Pescadero/Tunitas loop, but by the time I dragged myself up Old LaHonda, about 25 minutes worth, I didn't feel like I had another steep climb in my legs. Or lungs. And especially my left hip, which was not happy at all about my bringing a very heavy e-bike up the stairs to our shop's work area for repairs on Saturday.

At the duck pond I sent a photo to my wife, who responded "I don't see none ducks!" Well, they were there, just a bit tough to see. So I took another, closer photo and appropriately annotated it, as you can see here.

Odd day in Pescadero; virtually no cyclists. What's with that? I picked up a Mtn Dew and chocolate croissant and headed north on Stage. The expected headwinds didn't disappoint but there was no desire in either legs or brain to challenge them. I was just going through the motions, finding my way to the top of each of the two climbs on Stage Road. At the base of the third climb, heading towards Tunitas... I turned right, heading up 84 instead. This was not a ride where the legs felt stronger the further I went.

Heading back on 84 I was feeling a bit sorry for myself, going nowhere very fast, and suffered the indignity of some guy passing me with what looked like a backpack full of bricks. It took a couple seconds before realizing, this is not who I am. I picked up speed, wondering if it would be possible to match his pace, and, surprisingly, it was. I didn't sit on his wheel but instead allowed him to pace me, maybe 10 meters in front. And I stayed there, even on the rollers, until he finally pulled off for some reason. Later I checked his ride out on Strava; he was doing 100+ miles, starting in San Francisco!

There wasn't much left of me by the time I got home, but I definitely felt a lot better afterward than I did before. It wasn't fast, it wasn't pretty, but I held off... something... for 60 miles.



The local Triceratops is still facing off the Mastadon outside Pescadero



Beautiful Fall colors. See, you don't have to go to New England!



Overview of Stage Road



Llamas, sheep and there might have been a goat or two



The guy I was chasing for a while on 84.