

## I've got to get back to this!

Wow, what happened, all the time that's gone by. Sunday was supposed to be a Santa Cruz run via Soquel San Jose road, and I'm trying to remember why it went south. Oh, right, I discovered I had a broken saddle rail (carbon rails; sometimes they do that, and this one had a zillion miles on it). And Kevin's leg was acting up a bit, so we ended up doing a bit of a contorted ride, heading over Old LaHonda, up West Alpine, then south on skyline, descending 9 to Mt. Eden and the back across the valley.

Tuesday morning's ride was a slog for me, better for Kevin and Colin. And then Thursday. Oh my Thursday. Because Kevin's leg was still an issue, he rode his ebike, which would be fine, but Todd showed up. Fast Todd. Always in shape Todd. It wasn't long before the two of them were riding on up ahead, with me several minutes behind. I'd like to blame some of it on having dressed too warmly; it was upper-50s on the way up Kings! And then everything fell apart. I mean, even more so. We're all heading south on Skyline and it's getting colder, and then wetter, with Todd at the front, holding a pretty good pace just above 28mph. Which I figured was why I didn't see Kevin on my wheel, since his ebike tops out at 28mph. But as the road tilted upward slightly, I should have seen him catching up. Finally, at Bear Gulch, I tell Todd we should pull over and wait a bit for Kevin... but after a minute or two, he's still not there, so time to head back up the road to search for him. Just me; Todd's got to get to work.

I ride, and keep riding, and like, where is he? What happened? Did he have a seizure and ride off the road? Not likely, but all sorts of things go through your head. Finally I'm all the way back to Skegg's and there he is, with a flat tire. OK, normally that shouldn't be a big deal, except he neglected to bring a spare tube. I had a patch kit, but... the CO2 inflater wouldn't work because the pin that punctures the cartridge had broken off. Which mean, first time in maybe, well, way over 10 years anyway, we had to call Becky (Kevin's sister) to drive up and bail us out. Ouch. I would normally have considered riding home by bike instead of the sag, but the combination of cold and wet and standing around for a while didn't make descending a very appealing option.

It's a bit of a let-down, the way my cycling has gone the past two weeks. The prior 5 weeks, things were going great, multiple rides to Santa Cruz, faster times up Kings. And then it all fell apart. Maybe I'm in recovery mode? Taking a breather before the tough stuff coming up in France starting... well, first ride will be a week from tomorrow!

And lots to do in the meantime, which has also kept me from updating things here. Just found out that, to get back into the US after being overseas, you have to have a negative Covid test 72 hours prior to departure. Or is it prior to landing in the US? There's a kit you can purchase where you essentially test yourself, in the presence of a medical person in a remote location (a zoom sort of thing). Hopefully it will arrive in time; otherwise, we need to waste some time during our final days in France, looking for a test lab. At a time when we won't have much free time.

Film at 11.