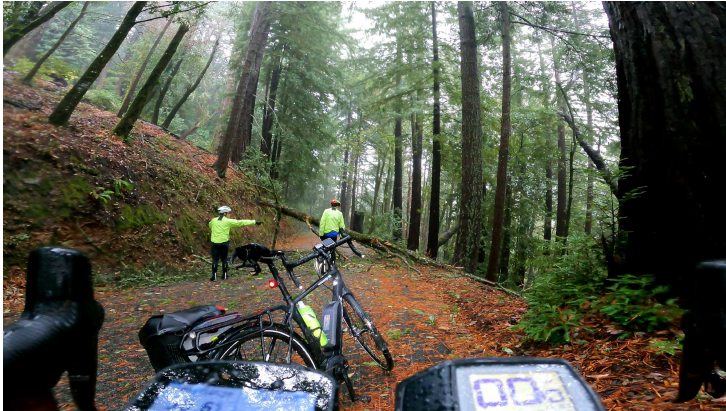


You only had one job... (Sunday's ride in the storm)



Think back a few days to Sunday's big storm. Unfortunately, you have to think back, because I've been woefully derelict in keeping up with the Almost Daily Diary. But it was just a couple days ago, so many today's sunny skies will help to heighten the contrast to the crazy weather we had Sunday. You know, the type of day when there couldn't be anybody out there on a bike, right?

But there was. Somebody had to do it, so the rest of you could stay in your warm homes (assuming you hadn't yet lost power) and do the Zwift thing on your trainer. Maybe feel badly that you hadn't cleaned the gutters. Or, for the first time in years, found water dripping down the fireplace because the wind was blowing the rain in all directions including horizontal. But you have to depend on some things, right? And if you can't depend on me writing up the crazy rides in near real time, maybe you've lost faith in depending upon my son and I doing bike rides in crazy weather.



Kevin working on his pole vaulting form as we neared the top of Kings. We're serious when we say we stop and clear debris from the roads when we're riding.

But we did. Couldn't take our normal rain bikes because we still haven't repaired the damage from last year's rain rides (primarily brakes that aren't working), so Kevin was out there on his commute e-bike and I borrowed the Trek Domane+ ebike my brother Steve often rides. The downside is that you're doing less work, generating less heat, and when it's both raining and cold, you need that self-generated heat. But, you just turn down the bike's power, turn up your own, and you're pretty much OK. And besides, we got to prove that a high-quality Bosch-powered ebike is reliable in the most-extreme weather.

As is always the case on days like Sunday, there's lots of debris in the road, so we're constantly stopping to move it to the side, even though (in most cases) it would be easy to ride around. Why? First, because somebody has to do it. The cars generally aren't going to stop for something they can get past, but they are likely to swerve dangerously when they encounter it. And if they swerve dangerously at the same time a cyclist is coming in the other direction? Serious bad news. And of course, there were so many other cyclists out Sunday. Not. But it also feels good knowing that some of those same people driving and thinking how much they dislike cyclists... get to see cyclists out there clearing the road for them.

The original plan was to head out to the coast via 84 and back on Tunitas, but that plan was quickly changed due to notifications of road closures, flooding, and a sense that maybe we should stay on less-traveled roads as much as possible. So up Kings, and down

Tunitas. Up Kings worked out well; only a few places where it felt like we could get blown off our bikes. But up on top it was quite a bit colder than expected (mid-40s instead of 50s) and our planned ride became increasingly tentative. Especially so after we came across the tree you see in the photo above, and the Chain Reaction engineering team just wasn't prepared for that. Not being able to saw through it with our multi-tool (no chainsaw attachment; what's with that?), and not stable enough to go underneath it, we stepped around the side and continued down the hill.

The rain and wind were still pretty heavy when we came across a San Mateo County road crew, one of whom recognized me as a regular (actually used to work for Chain Reaction) and wasn't surprised at all to see us up there. We reported the tree to him and were back on our way. Got a bit down past the "grassy knoll" before deciding it was time to turn back and pay a visit to the "other" Kevin, ex-pilot, who lives up that way. Headed up Star Hill but, as we got close to his place, a downed power line kept us from getting through. So we're back to retracing our steps, wondering if the County road crew had made quick work of the tree (they had) and headed back home.

One small hassle on the return, as Kevin got a flat tire about halfway down Kings, and it's so much fun replacing a tube in the rain. But, got the job done, not that big a deal, and successfully concluded our three hour tour.