

## Getting back to the basics. Why We Ride.



It was an interesting morning. I dressed appropriately for the cooling temps lately, but still lamented that Summer is over and Winter is coming.

Just me and Kevin this morning, unfortunately the faster, younger Kevin. He pretty much stayed with me on the way up the hill, taking it easy and never out of breath. It was Thursday which meant up through the park, and that steep pitch in the middle hit me even harder than usual, making me wonder if it was going to be possible to do the full ride this morning. You wonder why you don't turn back, several times up the hill, but you don't want to look back at this day, this ride, this moment, as the time you look back to when you gave up and from then on, shortening the ride would become routine. Instead, I admit to thinking maybe we'd have to move the ride up and leave 10 minutes earlier. Or maybe at some point in time I could semi-retire and no longer work 6 full days a week at the bike shop, but instead show up a bit late now & then because the ride took a bit longer.

But eventually I did make it, like I always do, and Kevin asks if we need to shorten the ride, maybe do the upper-Tunitas loop instead. I wasn't having that. I pushed on. Nicer up on top than Tuesday; no fog, no damp roads. Nice views too! My legs were still OK for the little bumps on Skyline, and maybe they'd be OK on West Old LaHonda too.

Some time back we decided that 8:43am was the bail-out time. If we arrived at Sky Londa later than 8:43, we'd need to abandon the West Old LaHonda section and head straight down. That was mainly an issue for rain, which slows things down a bit, especially the descents. But 8:43 is still what I keep in mind, and I told Kevin, as we approached the descent on Skyline into Sky Londa, that, while we were behind schedule, we could make it up on the descent! Yeah, right, a 6 minute descent that we'd have to do in 3 minutes to keep to schedule.

With no time to waste (being three minutes behind schedule) we headed west on 84, with a large propane truck a bit behind to keep the heat on. That actually worked pretty well; the guy seemed to be doing about 27mph, so we did have to put in some effort to stay ahead. And, of course, memories of the movie "Duel" came to mind.

West Old LaHonda was brutal. No legs, no lungs. No rabbits or turkeys either. Where are all the turkeys??? But the view of the coast, sans fog, made it worthwhile. It always does, at least for me. Kevin doesn't understand my fascination with that stretch of road. He just wants it over and done with. I don't get it; if I were as strong as Kevin, if I could handle it with such ease, I'd think it was fun!