

## Winter is coming. I hate winter.

Yes, I rode Tuesday, yes, it was a magnificent morning, yes, a great group of guys (not that there'd be anything at all wrong with some women showing up!). Yes, I have trouble remembering who was there a day or two later, so I'm looking at some photos from the ride right now (and yes, those photos, as always, are of west-side Old LaHonda). OK, I see Ludo, Mike, Kevin, Eric, John & Jan. Mike wasn't there at the start but somehow magically appeared up on Skyline, obviously having chased us up the hill. He's strong enough that he can do that. I rode at a varied pace, riding at the front group's pace up to the park entrance, then keeping track of the back for the rest of the trip up the hill.

Tomorrow... Thursday morning... probably the coldest ride in many months, and a sign of things to come. The hourly forecast doesn't look so bad, but you can tell something's changed. You go outside (something often done at night when taking out the garbage) and it just feels different. Not just a bit colder, but a light breeze that feels like it's coming from the north pole. Earlier today it still felt warm, but right about the time the shop closed (7pm) the warmth got sucked away. Where does it go? I should have known yesterday, when I was showing some of the staff in our Redwood City store the biggest Ravens I've ever seen, on top of the Firestone building across the street. These guys were fat, so fat it was surprising they could even fly. Not that Ravens fly all that much; they're usually so lazy (or economical) they don't fly unless they really have to, instead choosing to simply hop away as you ride close to them. The sighting of such fat Ravens is probably an indication that they're getting ready for winter. Winter=fat. Is that a law of nature? I would so much like to not become one of those fat Ravens this winter. I would really like to avoid putting on the usual 6 pounds or so. I wonder, if I can remove that 6 pounds each Spring through Summer, what would happen if I lived someplace that didn't have cooler winters? Would I never gain my winter weight, and possibly lose 6 pounds each year? Probably not.

But finishing up on yesterday's ride, Jan took the first sprint from me at Sky L'onda, while I took the second at Albion/Olive Hill. For the first, I chose not to go tactical and led it out from the front, hitting the bottom way too fast (which gives too much drafting advantage to those behind) and couldn't get onto Jan's wheel fast enough when he came around. The final sprint was a more brute-force affair, almost (almost?) a game of chicken as neither of us would concede, which meant bringing it all the way to the stop sign and then having to pull up hard to avoid riding off the far end of the road. Yes, this is what I do for fun. That, and complain about the cooler days ahead.