

Bonny Doon was Kevin's idea, not mine!



Mid 60s-70s, light winds, not much traffic. What's not to like? A great day for a bike ride!

With the trip to France coming up in just over two weeks, and no recent semi-epic rides to speak of, it was time to go big. And going big without driving somewhere means it's time to do the classic Santa Cruz run, 112 miles of hills, flat stuff, rollers and hopefully tail winds on the coast. That was the plan, so that's what we did. Mostly.

As usual, the first order of business is Old LaHonda, which Kevin dispatched in just under 20 minutes, while I arrived just over two minutes later. I'm getting used to that. But I'm also getting used to getting stronger later in the ride, so it wasn't too surprising that we were fairly equally-matched on the run up Haskins to Pescadero.



Mandatory refueling stop at Davenport's Whaler Cafe. Remember they do not take credit cards, cash only. The run down the coast was far more pleasant than last time (when we had pretty stiff headwinds from Pescadero to Santa Cruz); even the traffic was lighter, despite this being officially "summer" (perhaps the moderate temps kept people away?). Perhaps we arrived in Davenport feeling too good, too fresh, because Kevin thought we should ride up Bonny Doon, a much tougher route than the run down the coast to Santa Cruz. Ouch. It's not just the nasty initial climb to Bonny Doon, but the subsequent climbs and rollers that take you to Empire Grade and the eventual descent (via Jamison Creek) to Boulder Creek. It didn't disappoint. It was just as steep and nasty as I'd remembered.



Next up? China Grade. You cross the Bridge of Death at the bottom and for the next 10-15 minutes, you're out of the saddle, trying to keep your front wheel on the ground and your rear wheel from slipping on either loose pavement or the occasional water seepage on the road. I did fine keeping up with Kevin here too. After China Grade it's a bumpy climb and descent to highway 9 at Waterman Gap, and then a fairly easy grade up to Skyline and Mr. Mustard, where an ice-cold drink (Coke for Kevin, Squirt for me) awaits. Kevin was definitely ready for a break, as he'd had three seizures on the ride, the final one on the highway 9 climb to Skyline (and that one left him with a bit of a headache). Fortunately, he'd had warning for all three of them, so he was able to come to a stop and lie down before each hit.

No drama on the run north on Skyline, and we arrived home about 8 hours after we left, feeling pretty good, and pretty tired. Just as we had hoped.