

Interesting riding someone else's bike

It's a tough job but someone's gotta do it. We have a customer in our Los Altos store who recently added a Domane 6.9 to his stable, a gorgeous bike with full DuraAce 11-speed Di2 electric shifting and carbon wheels. He was having issues with not enough braking power and some noise from the front, and, since he rides a 60cm, as do I, my brother thought it made sense to have me try it on the Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride and see what's up. The braking issue was simple; the brake pads were set so close to the wheel that you couldn't generate much power (the stopping force is much greater as the lever pulls in further towards the handlebar). Loosened up the cables a bit and voila, brakes back up to full power! Noticed a little squeaking, which was later taken care of by tweaking the pad angle just a bit.

Regarding the bike in general, wow, what a difference in normal setup between my Madone 6.9 H1 and the new Domane. Way shorter top tube on the Domane, and way higher. I compensated as much as I could by installing a slightly-longer stem, inverting it (so it's as low as it can get) and "slamming" it (just one thin spacer underneath, all the rest on top) and it was still a good 2 or 3 cm higher than I'm used to, and nearly 2cm shorter. What effect does that have? Plenty. I'm sure, given a bit of time, I could get used to it, and in fact, later in the ride, it wasn't so bad. But until then, it at least gave me the best excuse in a long time for climbing really slowly. You don't realize how much difference it can make; when you're used to bars a certain height and move them higher, climbing, particularly when standing, feels markedly different. Overall, making the move from a Madone H1 to a Domane is going to require bumping down one size for the frame and probably adding 3cm (!) to the stem. Good news for someone who feels too stretched out most of the time. It was an excellent exercise and helped me to spot a fit issue today with someone picking up a new bike (Domane 5.2) really fast. Should have done this long ago!

As for the ride, we saw the return of Mark E., along with the usual suspects, Todd, Karl, Karen, Kevin, Jan, and, at the very end, we came across Pilot Kevin returning from a different ride. "Serious" training apparently. Guess I'll have to look at his Strava account to see what he's up to! As I mentioned it was a pretty leisurely ride up the hill for me, losing sight of the last person ahead around the half-way point. Got to admit it's times like those that you're really looking forward to "topping out" on Skyline, the main part of the climbing behind you, and looking forward to the beautiful views of the coast.

One thing different was that, with the higher handlebars, I found myself in the drops (lower part of the bars) for a while heading down west 84. The others must have thought they were hallucinating, as I'm almost always on the top part of the bar, even descending.



Kevin & Karl on West Old LaHonda



Crowded Olive Hill Road on our return