

## If I felt as good as this picture looks...



Heading west into the setting sun on Sand Hill Road

I'd pretty much written off riding today; my cold has been doing this up & down thing where you'd feel pretty darned good in the morning and then about 8 hours later you'd be wiped out. Several days in a row of that and it started getting kinda old, y'know? Worst part was when you'd be feeling bad and forget what it was like to feel good. Hate that! But funny thing today; I think, if I'd actually gotten any sleep last night, I would have been doing pretty good! But a variety of things conspired against me such that I probably ended up with a whole 3 hours, and it really didn't help the Gent-Wevelgem cycling race, one of the early-season "Classics" in Europe, was available to watch on the tv from about 5am on. So Burt, if you're reading this, I started watching with about 120k to go. Maybe I beat you to it this time!

By the time it was time to get up, getting up seemed like the last thing I wanted to do, but going to sleep wasn't working out either. So I did the semi-zombie thing until about 4pm, working on the shop's website, checking order status with suppliers, and then decided I had to get out and ride. Yesterday I wouldn't have done so, but today, it was mostly the zombie thing, not being sick, I've always felt better after a ride when previously I'd been in a zombie state.

Couldn't be much of a ride though as there's no question my lungs are still impaired, lots of hacking, so I used modern technology to hold my heart rate at 140 or below, and power generally below 190 watts. Riding away from my house, up over Jefferson, I was beginning to have serious doubts this was a good idea; it took a while for me to "stabilize" and figure out what I could, and could not, do. There was a bit of a wind out there too, and that was playing havoc on my lungs. I could climb OK, flats weren't too bad, but descending was awful. Why? Because I can't breathe through my nose (never could very well and with the cold, simply no chance) and the effect of high-velocity air going into my lungs was hackingly unpleasant.

Yet in the end it was a pretty pleasant ride. Intentionally throttled back, not trying to catch up to anybody, just riding along at a pace that didn't require much more than a walking effort. A whole 21 miles, 1400ft of climbing. "The loop." I survived, felt better afterward, and have an appointment with the doctor to see about getting this thing cleared out of my system. But before that I'm going to get a good night's sleep.

Oh, one more thing. At about 2am last night my son was wandering around, trying to walk off some pain from his kidney tube. We talked for a while, about pain, about the future, about getting back into shape after his operation, about the various doctors he's seen lately who have been universal in complimenting him on his excellent health (aside from the kidney and his epilepsy). Kevin mentioned that cycling may have actually saved his life, because it got the rest of his body in such good shape that it could handle a kidney issue that meant he was running at only 35% capacity. And I brought up that perhaps the reason I've had to deal with feeling so bad is so I could better relate to what he's had to go through, with his various procedures and all. Kind of a humbling thing, perhaps a necessary thing for a guy like me who rarely gets sick. Three sick days in 34 years. This latest bug has been with me just 8 days and I am so ready for it to be over! Kevin's been dealing with the kidney issues for... well, the painful stuff for about 6 years. I have it pretty easy. --Mike--