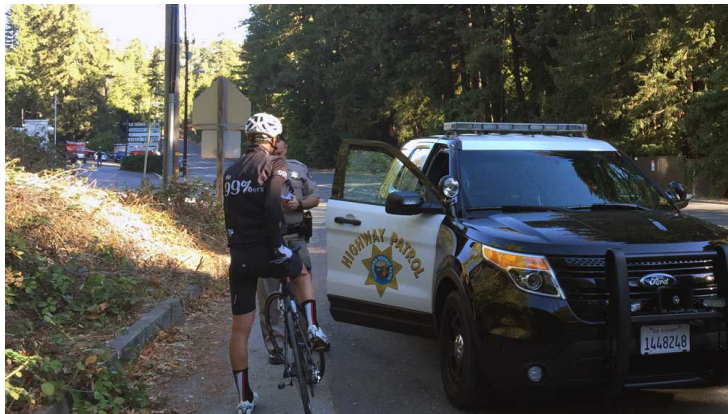


## The officer was looking for trouble, but came up empty-handed



So you're thinking there must be an interesting story here, because my rides virtually never have issues, with motorists or cops. And for the most part, they still don't. **The good stuff begins in the fifth paragraph.**

We did something different today; I'd been sent an email from one of the regulars on our Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride, George (who, coincidentally, is seen in the photo above!), asking if Kevin and I might want to do a "social" ride to the coast with him and a few others... the others being pretty strong riders, so the "social" part was something I questioned but, what the heck, fun to do something different on a Sunday ride, and good to have an incentive to get going earlier (the ride started at the base of Old LaHonda at 8:30am; Kevin and I are usually lucky to be on the road by noon).

So we're at the appointed place, 8:30am, maybe a minute earlier, thinking we should have left 5 minutes sooner. But nobody else yet. This is definitely not the Tuesday/Thursday ride, which leaves the second our GPS-enabled Garmins say it's 7:45am. A minute or two and JR shows up, then another Kevin (not the pilot, nor my son; there's clearly no shortage of riders named Kevin!), George, and Dan S. The ride turned out to be reverse Pescadero with West Alpine, just like Kevin and I did two weeks ago, only this time substituting highway 1 along the coast instead of Stage Road.

Old LaHonda was at a pretty moderate pace, or at least started that way, and very gradually gained speed as we went. Don't know if anyone noticed that but me. 23:18 for the climb, so a good minute off what I'd normally be doing. So far, so good.

**The good stuff starts here:** It was on the run out to the coast that "the law" caught up with us. Heading down 84 towards LaHonda, George was riding next to the other Kevin when a CHP cruiser pulled up behind us, doing the usual "ride single file" thing on his speaker and then, when George didn't respond, asked if those of us who spoke english could raise our hands (while riding). OK, this guy's a bit odd, but it was also weird that George never heard the guy, nor a couple of us yelling the usual "car back." Eventually words gets through to George and he pulls into the line, single file, the cop goes flying past, and we figure ok, done with him. Until we get to LaHonda, where he's at the side of the road and, as we pass, waves at us. It seemed just a bit weird; we kept going for maybe 50 feet or so before asking among ourselves, is he asking us to pull over? So we did, which was the officer's first great disappointment. He'd already set his lights on and was about to take off after us; we literally shut him down cold as we circled back to him.

The officer says something a bit odd. "Do any of you know this guy?" as he's talking to George. Um, yes. He then asks George for his name, and is, again, clearly, and I mean quite clearly, disappointed that George gave his real name. He was looking forward to taking him in, like he did another cyclist last week. He went to great trouble to tell us all about it, about the guy's concern over how his \$4000 bike would get put into the CHP cruiser etc. George was, wisely, giving no trouble at all to the officer.

It got weirder. When he couldn't nail us with something, he started trying to be conversational, kind of faux-nice. He asked what we thought of the new 3 foot law (we told him it was a problem because motorists are scared to cross over a double yellow line to pass

us). We didn't go too far trying to explain to him that we don't legally have to ride single file, nor did we try to help him out by telling him that he \*could\* choose to get on cyclist's cases for impeding traffic. And I just let it slide when he told us we needed to move off the roadway to let people pass (which is absolutely not true and dangerous!).

Eventually we parted ways, relatively-pleasantly, and while riding single-file next time we came across him again, a spot a couple miles down the road where he'd obviously decided to try and ambush us. He just wasn't getting any breaks today.

We, on the other hand, enjoyed really nice weather, a nice view of a fog bank maybe a mile off the coast, Kevin's giant face-sized cookie in Pescadero, and a "social" paced climb up Haskins that left me dropped like a rock off the back. But a very nice ride overall, very good company.

--Mike--