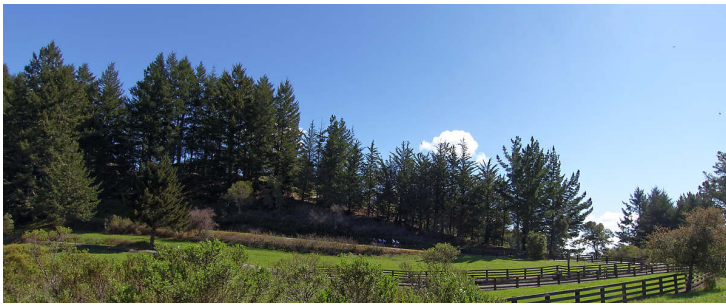


Another great ride, but what did I learn?



You can see the faster people in the group, pretty much everyone but me, riding ahead on West Alpine

It gets a bit boring talking about each awesome ride, one after another, a product of yet another mild, near-rainless "winter" in Northern California. 67 miles, met up with the Alto Velo A ride in Pescadero, rode hard enough to feel it in my legs later in the day. I live for that feeling!

But what did I learn/what was unique about today?

- Stick to the plan. If Kevin has a seizure at the top of Old LaHonda (like he did today after setting a pretty fast pace up the hill), don't let him cut the ride short because he doesn't feel well. It's temporary and passes quickly, and has been a "feature" of many of his best rides.
- Believe in yourself. When we hooked up with Alto Velo's "A" ride, the pace was quite a bit faster than what we'd been doing on our own. Heading east from Pescadero I'm trying to figure out when I'm going to get blown off the back. You're going through the route in your head, literally planning your exit strategy. That's dumb! I went back to my racing strategy from back-in-the-day. No matter how hard it is hanging onto that wheel in front of you, it's even-harder losing it and trying to keep from getting too far behind. So I managed to stay with the group until things started to break up on the Haskins climb.
- Cars don't have a vendetta against cyclists; they're trying to kill themselves off and sometimes we just get in the way. It's amazing how often you see cars pass you on blind corners, moving completely into the oncoming lane.
- Ride earlier in the day and you'll find a lot more cyclists on the road; more rabbits to chase on the climbs, more people to introduce the local "bridges of death" to (the bridge at the base of most of the epic local climbs, including China Grade, West Alpine and Tunitas), more trains to catch (groups of riders you can draft behind).



Stage Road heading south towards Pescadero



Descending Stage towards Pescadero



For a short while, I was actually ahead of a few people on Haskins. Not for long though.



Way way way up ahead is Kevin; he finished Haskins over a minute ahead of me. Along with Ted Huang and a couple others.



You can see the faster people in the group, pretty much everyone but me, riding ahead on West Alpine



West Alpine was a favorite for two-wheelers of all types today



Another view of the coast from Skyline



The view from Skyline