

The Pain Cave



It was supposed to be the reference ride, the usual Old LaHonda/Pescadero/Tunitas run. Something Kevin and I do all too often, but it's a good way to figure out how you're doing. Unfortunately, Kevin was still not feeling great (he's got a kidney stone thing going again), so I finally went out on my own around noon. I figured I'd still do the same ride, but as I headed (not-so-quickly) up Old LaHonda I was thinking maybe I'd do something different, maybe it was time to do something kind of ugly. You know, ugly as in roads that might not be so fun, which often means riding a road that usually is fun, but only when ridden in the other direction.

I was debating some sort of ride up West Alpine, and honestly, I wasn't sure which way I'd go until just before I got to the intersection, where you go straight and you're heading up West Alpine, or curve right and it's up over Haskins to Pescadero. Today, I chose West Alpine, and to make it ugly, when I hit Skyline, I headed south, the "ugly" direction, to Highway 9, then down to Redwood Gulch, Stevens Creek, and home via Foothill/Alameda. That's a lot of flat stuff on the return, another component for "ugly."

The "Pain Cave" refers to that steep stretch of West Alpine towards the top, where you go through the tree-tunnel.

This did give me the opportunity to check up on things in our Los Altos store, but not before first coming across Dale on Steven's Creek, who was having a bit of trouble with his bike... his electric shifting was working in the back, not in the front. Simple; his battery had run low (that's what Shimano Di2 does when the battery gets low; it stops shifting first on the front, then you'll have about 80 shifts on the rear).

But why do an "ugly" ride? First, it builds character. Second, because you don't do it very often, you get a lot of Strava PRs. :-)