

Mount Hamilton the hard way / don't trust Strava to create a route

It should have been a pretty straightforward ride to Mount Hamilton. Normally, Kevin and I take the train down to San Jose, and ride from the station up to the top, and back. About 50 miles round-trip. But today I decided to make it a bit tougher, riding all the way from Redwood City instead of taking the train (but on the return, catching the train in San Jose).

Of course, back in the day, my friends and I would do the complete round-trip by bike, just over 100 miles. I wasn't ready for quite that much punishment and, besides, the roads were a lot easier to navigate back then (less traffic on city streets). Riding one-way there, train back, seemed like a reasonable compromise. But... how to get there? I considered just mapping it out in a straight-forward fashion, heading south on Foothill, then Stevens Creek into San Jose, pretty much what I did 44 years ago. Not much fun, right? So I tried Strava's route creation feature, thinking I should take advantage of the various bike trails and paths. With a bit of mucking around, I had a route that, I thought, made sense.

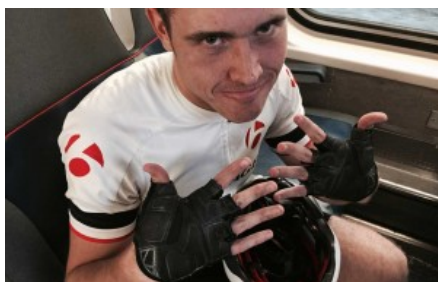


One of several gravel trails Strava's routing software put us onto. We opted out of any further gravel excursions.

And it did make sense, until it routed us, more than once, onto gravel trails. Fine for a hybrid, not so great for a roadbike with light tires. Thankfully it wasn't too tough to figure out how to route around the gravel trails, but it added quite a bit of time to the ride.

Surprisingly, despite the extra miles and stress getting to Mount Hamilton, we felt pretty good getting up it. A fantastic little Vietnamese coffee/sandwich shop we found probably helped in that regard.

There was some drama; either we timed things just right or way-wrong as we raced to the train station and had, literally, 90 seconds to spare. Just one more red light and we wouldn't have made it, causing us to wait another hour for next train. Not fun fumbling with the ticket machine, trying to make sure we got that right, knowing the train was just about to pull out!



How tired was Kevin? Tired enough to put the wrong glove on the right hand!

Overall, about 82 miles for the day. Kevin's really tired; I'm ready for more! Unfortunately, "more" will have to wait for a few days, as I travel to the bike industry's trade show tomorrow and miss both Tuesday & Thursday-morning's rides. Hate that. Hopefully there will be cool stuff to see and bring in for customers though. --MikeJ