

Kevin's on Fire; I'm playing the role of the anchor



World's best Chicken Club sandwich (maybe one of the best sandwiches of any type), another Cookie Face Test, and Mastadon Down. It was time to finally get a decent ride in, first "long" ride since returning from Africa over two weeks ago. Or was it three? Whatever, life has conspired in a number of ways to keep me from getting in a really challenging ride, but that was going to end today.

Reverse Pescadero plus West Alpine. That's normally not that big a deal; 67 miles, 6300ft of climbing. But normal hasn't described the last few weeks, including my weight, which is 6 lbs above my "summer weight" and 2 lbs above the heaviest my "winter weight" should ever be. And then there's that sudden move from mild temps to just plain cold.

Add to all that Kevin somehow really coming into his own, getting faster again on the climbs and generally running me into the ground. And yet, it was still a good ride. Much warmer than Thursday morning (maybe waiting until 10:45am to ride had something to do with that?), just a very mild headwind going out to the coast, slight tailwind heading south on Stage to Pescadero, the usual great food at the Pescadero Bakery... what's not to like?

Well, Haskins Grade for one. Yes, it's gotten steeper since I last rode it! And by the time we got to West Alpine, my legs had been used up. Kevin was in a mood to fly, so off he went. I'd keep looking ahead for him, on those sections where you could see a minute or two up the hill, but I quickly lost him. I still managed to do the West Alpine section in a bit under 48, but it was a really, really, really ugly climb, if you know what I mean. He was attacking with style. Had he not stopped to take photos of a Coyote on the way up, he likely would have had 39-something instead of 42.

It was good to finish with really fried legs. That painful feeling later in the day when walking down steps, that tells you yes, your legs got a workout today. Paraphrasing a Klingon proverb, it was a good day to feel like your bike killed you.