

## I made it about half-way at a good clip; the rest of Mount Hamilton was tough!



So how many guys does it take to fix a flat? Came across this group on the descent; asked if they had what they needed and they were willing to admit they'd spent 40 minutes damaging two or three tubes...It was another cold day (as if there are any other types lately), the New Year starting out just like the Old Year ended. Being January 1st, it was time for the traditional ride up Mt Hamilton. Normally I'd be riding with Kevin but he wasn't looking too good this morning (that sore throat thing that's been going around) so it was just me, riding to the train station in Redwood City and heading to San Jose. Back in the day, I would have driven, but I've been "car free" for a few years now.

The problem with taking the train to San Jose and riding to Mount Hamilton is the endless run of red lights heading out of downtown, extending all the way up to the foothills. It's nuts! There's got to be a better way to get there; one of these days I'll figure it out. It shouldn't take 30+ minutes to ride to & from the train station to the base of Mount Hamilton road!

Meeting me at the start was Eric, one of the most-regular regulars from our Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride. Eric has no problem with endless hills; he typically rides up Kings before doing our morning ride and heading up it a second time. Me? Normally not a big deal, but today, I was able to handle the first half, maybe 2/3rds, of Mount Hamilton without too much trouble, but the last part killed me. I got to watch my power output drop to about 200 watts, at which point Eric rode on up ahead a bit while I went into survival mode, hoping my legs might recover as I rode. They sorta did, but not really (although they actually felt pretty good on the return).

Cold up top? Not too bad; about 36 degrees. Going into the very-heated building with the bathroom and vending machines was a rude awakening though. It's clear that the one thing my lungs hate worse than cold is quickly moving from cold to warm (and back again). The obvious thing to do was not spend much time up there and quickly head back down.

We were joined at the top by Chris, a former Tuesday/Thursday-morning regular, and, mindful of the limited time I had to make the train connection home, rode at a pretty good speed down the hill. At least, until we came across the guys in the picture at the top, who were having a really bad time trying to fix a flat. Two or three tubes they'd pinched trying to install; they just hadn't gotten down the art of installing a tire without levers. Looking at the video time stamps, I actually spent less than two minutes getting the tire on for them, explaining that you have to outsmart the tire, recognizing that it's not an inanimate object, before heading back down.

Of course, I hit nearly every stop light on the way back, so my thinking I had plenty of time quickly evaporated. In the end, I made it to the train with literally less than 90 seconds to spare, running, in bike cleats, up the ramp.

The best news was that the Raynauds meds are working great. No issues with hands, despite descending at speed on a cold day. The lungs? Yeah, that's next!