

Windy much? Oh yeah! Kevin's last big ride was a good one.



It's been a while since the Stage Road Peacocks were out on display. Sometimes you hear them, but rarely see them. When they are out, there's usually staring at its reflection on the second floor window, wondering who that other Peacock is. Not the smartest birds.

Kevin goes in for brain surgery this Friday (for his epilepsy), so today was his final "big" ride for a while. If the weather had been just a bit nicer, and if Kevin and I were in a bit better shape, it would have been tempting to do a Santa Cruz run. But, the weather, well, one of the windiest days I've been on a bike! And our shape? We might have been able to survive a Santa Cruz ride, but just barely, and it wouldn't have been much fun. In fact, as we were riding through Woodside towards the end of the ride, I mentioned to Kevin that it was hard to imagine riding another 50 miles.



Pescadero/Tunitas was getting a little old, but at the same time, it would be a shame to miss out on the Pescadero Bakery, so we did reverse Pescadero (Old LaHonda, San Gregorio, Pescadero) with a West Alpine kicker to make it tougher. I'm continuing to see gradual improvement on Old LaHonda, finally getting back under 22 minutes. Two months ago, it felt like I'd *never* get there! Kevin, curiously, was right with me this time, instead of finishing a day ahead. Quite a few riders at the top of Old LaHonda, including Mary Souter, Chain Reaction customer shown in the photo, getting an explanation from Kevin about his upcoming surgery.

Glad we had our leg warmers; it wasn't really cold, but did spend a fair amount of time in the low-50s. But the real adversary today was WIND. The run from La Honda to San Gregorio was pretty much head-first into the wind and, surprisingly, I was up to it. Definitely a huge relief when we turned south on Stage Road though.

Pescadero Bakery was it's usual awesome self. I think we frequent it so much we take it for granted; I mentioned to Kevin that, in all seriousness, even though France is the land of excellent pastries, Pescadero is the best.

Then it was time to hit the hard stuff... Haskins and West Alpine. Haskins from the Pescadero side is one of my least-favorite climbs; I just can't get a rhythm on it. Today, neither could Kevin. Not such a bad thing, I'm thinking, as he said he was going to ride West Alpine at a pretty easy pace. Like that was going to happen!

We did ride the bottom pretty easy, taking 6:40 to get to the Bridge of Death. If we were pushing, it would be right at 6 minutes. I had hope Kevin would keep his word... hope that died once we hit the climb. I stayed with Kevin almost to the Snoopy dog house, but from there gradually ceded time, finishing about a minute behind at Skyline. The good news is that my time was under 44 minutes, so there's definitely evidence that I'm beginning to get a bit faster on the climbs. A very good thing, that! --Mike--