

Ventoux... our ride was easy compared to the Pros... yes, the fans were awful!



There was little drama associated with our ride up Ventoux; no issues getting there, finding a place to ride from, and sure, it was cold & windy near the top (which was actually 7k from the real top, since they'd shortened the climb a bit due to the nasty conditions) but we were pretty well prepared for it.

But the crowds, in our area, were the worst I've ever seen. This was the first time I've witnessed first-hand the near-complete-collapsing of the roadway space for the cyclists; flags everywhere, people pushing in anyplace there wasn't a barrier. The answer can't possibly be to barricade the entire race, and there are certainly simple measures that could be entertained that might make things a lot more civilized.

Starting with flags. I'm not just saying this because they get into my pictures. In fact, it can sometimes look pretty cool when a cyclist emerges from "the tunnel." But check out what we were dealing with at 500 meters to go. Originally they had no barricades at all past 500 meters, but eventually installed them on just one side, shortly before the race. On the other side, Gendarmes attempted to keep the crowds pushed back. Yeah right, like that's possible?



Trek's Bauke Mollema blasting up Ventoux, moving into 3rd place.

We had no idea at the time that anything had gone wrong less than a kilometer down the road from us, but something seemed really odd with Trek's Bauke Mollema, a really good rider but not a Tour de France winner, came up the hill over a minute ahead of Chris Froome. Turns out Mollema, Porte and Froome had all been involved in a collision with a race TV motorcycle when it had to suddenly stop due to fans essentially closing the road. Of the three Mollema picked himself up fastest while Froome had to deal with the further indignity of a motorcycle behind him running into his bike and breaking it.

At the end of the day the good news is that the Tour de France organization gave Froome the same time as Mollema so he didn't lose the Yellow Jersey, and Mollema himself moved up to 3rd place.

So little drama for Kevin and I, but a very exciting race. --Mike--