

Catching up on Tuesday & Thursday's rides



Tuesday on the left, Thursday on the right Still more catching up to do; spent some time after returning from France just getting the France stories up. Now time to get back to normal.

Normal was, for me, getting up and doing the Tuesday-morning ride, even though I'd arrived home 9:30pm the night before, massively-sleep-deprived and certainly could have had a reasonable excuse to skip the ride. But, that's not me. That's not how I roll. You gotta get back to the routine. So that's what I did, waking up slightly earlier than normal, and not getting Kevin up, as he'd made it clear he wasn't interested in doing anything but sleeping for a while. Sleep. He's a master at sleep. He sleeps more than anyone I know. He hardly needs an excuse to sleep even more! Nevertheless, I let him sleep, while I went about the normal duties of preparing to ride.

I'd gotten a bit out of practice for bay area weather and neglected to use leg warmers (the only time we needed them in France was up on Ventoux), so when it got down to 46 degrees on Skyline, sure, the re-introduction to home riding was mildly rude. The ride up Kings was pretty fast for the first half, pretty easy for the second. Just myself, Kevin (pilot) and Eric, if I recall correctly. Most noteworthy event was Kevin (pilot) getting stung by a bee on the way up. That's Eric approaching the top of Kings in the left picture. And yes, it felt nice being on a bike that's about 5 pounds lighter than my travel bike!

The interesting thing for me and travel is that I get hit really hard not the day after, but two days after returning. By Thursday morning I'd fought through Wednesday's fog though, and younger Kevin was ready to ride. Much larger group, with both Kevins, Karl, Eric, Marcus and Karen. The photo on the right is at the top of Kings, with Kevin (younger Kevin) showing everyone the photos of his brain, with various attached gizmos, taken during one of his three brain surgeries early last month. The ride itself? Moderate pace up Kings (would have been faster but Kevin had a seizure partway up), reasonably good pace the rest of the way. Felt really good to be back into the routine again.

Yet, already, I miss France. I don't so much miss the Tour de France, at least not after seeing the drenching everyone's gotten the last two stages. Had we been there for those stages, we would not have been having much fun! But I miss the different food, the pizzas with an egg in the middle, the Fanta & Oasis orange drinks that don't taste at all like what we have here. I miss being able to use local trains to ride in areas further away, without having to use a car. I miss the ridiculously-late daylight hours. I miss cars that have a lot more respect for cyclists. In an odd way, it feels like I miss... home.

First year I went to France was 2000. Before that, I never traveled anywhere beyond US borders, except for one 30 minute trip south of the border. Since, I've been all over the world (although as far as cycling goes, just France). Australia, Thailand, China, Peru, Italy, Greece, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania. I'm sure I'm leaving out a couple more. But only France feels like home.