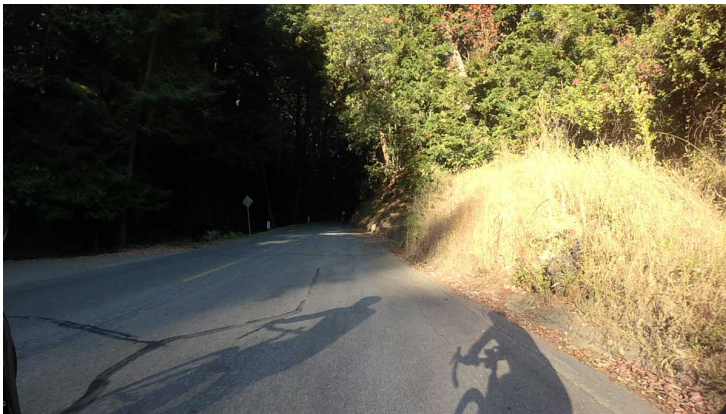


## Shadow of my former self



That's my shadow on the right, Kevin's shadow on the left. Note that I'm taller than Kevin, but his shadow, well, overshadows mine. I think it's a sign.

OK, that was a ride to remember... or forget! For a variety of reasons I didn't get much sleep last night, maybe 4 hours or so. Mostly one of those things where you know you need to get to sleep, which makes you tense, so you can't get to sleep. Hate that. And then there is that oh-so-rare back pain, something I might experience once every 5 years or so, if even that. And this one was nasty, likely brought on by repairing our dryer the night before. Dryers, it turns out, are ridiculously-simple machines, but terribly awkward to deal with, especially in small spaces. And, it's possible, not likely, but possible, that my PR going up Sand Hill Road the day before might have done me in. Whatever, it was really hard just getting out of bed, but you go through the motions, because that's what you do. It's Tuesday morning, so you ride.

Kevin, despite having not ridden in a week, looked no worse for wear. Hate that, too.

We started out with Kevin (kid), Kevin (pilot), JR & Scotty. That makes 4 over-60-year-old and one 23-year-old. As we rolled out from the start we picked up Marcus who, at 47 (I think?) helped provide a bit of balance to the age curve. Still, I felt quite out-of-place with this group as they rode up and away from me. My back began to feel better as I climbed, but it was still almost impossible to get any speed sitting down. Eventually I made it to the top, 33 minutes, could be worse. On the other hand, it was worse, because I was literally seeing shadows of myself as I climbed, and the all-too-obvious "shadow of my former self" metaphor took root strongly. Thus the photo at the top of this entry.

Not sure why but Kevin (pilot) took us on a short detour to show us the private water supply system, a mercifully short (but steep) climb off Skyline.

Normally this is where I'd be pointing out that I felt stronger as the ride went on, but I think today was all about mental toughness, nothing physical. Still, we finished the ride just a few minutes behind schedule, which I found surprising. So maybe there's a bit of life in me yet. Maybe. We'll see Thursday!