

A very satisfying commute home



Heading home after work tonight, we spotted another cyclist turning onto Jefferson from the opposite direction. She had the hole shot at the intersection (Jefferson & El Camino), so we lined up behind her, waiting for the light. I wasn't sure, but thought she might be on an e-bike. Kevin was sure, but didn't mention anything.

Normally, I'd be letting Kevin pull us home on Jefferson, where he'd be doing about 18mph. She was doing 16.5mph, which isn't bad at all, just a little bit slower than our normal speed. There's enough traffic that passing wasn't really an option for several blocks, and in the back of my mind I'm thinking e-bike, do I really want to try and pass an e-bike and then find out I don't have the motor myself to stay in front? I'm also wondering what I'm doing out in front in the first place. But I figure I can come up to speed and pass her, and let Kevin take over at the front.

Anyone reading this is thinking there's too much thinking going on about pretty much nothing, and they'd be right, but that's how I roll. At least that's what can help make a 3 mile ride home a bit interesting.

4 blocks past El Camino I make my move, bringing my speed up to just a bit over 19mph and slowly passing her, watts increasing from 125 to 210 or so. I said hi as we rode past; she responded in kind. I'm thinking, is she drafting us now? I'm thinking, with a speed 2.5mph higher than hers, are we gradually pulling away, or is she picking up speed behind? I'm thinking, how long can I keep this speed up, since normally I'm drafting behind Kevin and having trouble as he picks things up a bit?

A couple blocks later I ask Kevin if she's still there, and mention that I'm a bit surprised I'm still able to keep the speed up. I mean, what am I doing, passing someone on an e-bike? Rule #1, don't ever pass someone you can't stay in front of. Very risky when the person you pass has the ability to cruise along at speeds up to 20mph with a significant motor assist. But I did it, we stayed in front all the way to the climb, and despite putting out a lot more effort than normal, I didn't feel too bad. Even had some fun on a ride home that's become pretty routine over the years.

Not too many times I'd post a Strava record from my commute home, but this one does pretty clearly show the kick up in speed from 16.5 to 19mph. :-)