

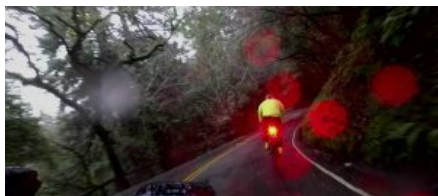
Thankful this is behind us, at least for a few days...



Sure, it was a bit dark and ominous up on the other side of Skyline Thursday morning, but I don't recall it looking quite this spooky!

Tuesday's ride had finally been epic quality, but the forecast for Thursday had the angry yellowish-orange storm cells hitting just towards the end of our ride. Pretty much on-target; it was windy and raining lightly as Kevin and I headed out (and we're finally getting the wet-weather-get-all-the-gear-together timing right, so we're no longer showing up a couple minutes late and having to race after imaginary rabbits).

Would anybody else be there? Yep. Kevin (pilot) was willing to brave whatever weather might come at us. The climb up Kings was pretty slow; in truth, I felt terrible for the first half, but fortunately did work into the ride as it went. Any fear that we'd be in the way of locals and construction equipment was unfounded; we were passed by maybe 3 cars on the way up, and saw a dozen or so coming down. That's over a half-hour period!



This photo makes it look like we're really flying around the corners! Largely an illusion; I cropped out the part of the bike computer showing us at just 18mph.

It wasn't a good idea to trust any other route back down the hill, given all the mudslides lately, but we really wanted to get in a few more miles than "just" up and down Kings. Pilot came up with an excellent suggestion... we ride down Tunitas to the "grassy knoll" and back. That was actually a pretty nice little addition, with maybe one or two cars and a bit of fog to give things a slightly-eerie appearance. Got to say though, it didn't seem as cool at the time as the photo above shows!

Back up on Kings it was time to put on the rain jackets and things started to look threatening, and no more than a minute or two into the descent, we were glad we did. It started coming down pretty good, but traction remained excellent (one of the benefits of heavy rain is that you don't get any oil sitting on top of the road) and we made pretty good time down the hill. We did stop to let a couple cars pass; we're doing our best not to inconvenience anyone trying to get around on whatever roads remain open.

As much fun as the ride was, I am looking forward to a few days without rain.