

Alarm clock fail, wonky garmin, flat tire and the bridge was washed out



Talk about perfect storms! I woke up, expecting to see the clock reading 6:53, the usual time I wake up and two minutes before it's supposed to go off. But it said 7:16!!! Yikes. I'd somehow forgot to throw the switch the night before. I hurriedly went to wake up Kevin, who informed me he wasn't riding because he'd only gotten a few hours sleep. Well, at least that might speed my exit a bit. Good thing I'd laid out my clothes ahead of time.

Seemed a bit cold out there so I started out with my warmer pair of winter gloves but carried my lighter ones too, just in case it got warmer later on. I wish. Started out from the house and noticed I wasn't picking up speed on my garmin. And the field showing accuracy, which should be displaying something like 10-14 feet after the first 30 seconds? It was blank. Nothing. Zilch. Never seen that before. My first thought was, maybe when it said searching for satellites in the garage, continue yes/no, that I hit the wrong option, telling it to stop looking and operate without the gps enabled. So I stopped shortly after leaving, tried turning the computer off, then back on again, hoping it would now work. No time to sit around hand-holding it, since I was running a bit late, but it didn't seem to want to cooperate. Hmm.

Surprisingly, despite the colder-than-hoped-for weather, we had Kevin (pilot), Marcus, Karen, Todd & George. We were riding at a moderate pace up Kings, moderate meaning I was hanging with everyone all the way up. Or almost all the way up. Something didn't seem quite right about halfway up; my bike was acting like it had a headset issue or maybe a loose wheel. Then I noticed that my watts were higher than they should be for the effort. Looking down again, this time it was obvious. My front tire was losing air. I yelled "flat" and stopped to take care of it, but nobody noticed. No biggie; it's not like I can't fix a flat tire on my own. Only trouble was, I couldn't get my thicker gloves back on afterward and had to use my lighter ones. This being one of those days where it got colder as you climbed (actually saw 32 degrees up on Skyline), well, let's just say I had pretty cold hands for a while!

By the time I got to Skyline Karen and Marcus had moved on, leaving Kevin (pilot), George, Todd and I to check out the current condition of the now-closed West Old LaHonda road. Well, pretty much exactly as we found it last Sunday, which was pretty much exactly what we saw last Thursday (last Thursday being the last day it was "open"). It's pretty clear that the roadway won't take any more cars on the section where a good chunk has fallen away, but the county's protestation that the area is too dangerous to cross through because it's an active slide seems a bit overblown. I doubt that bikes impact the roadway any more than the rabbits that frequently cross there. My fear is that the county isn't going to do anything anytime soon because the only people really inconvenienced are, in fact, cyclists.

It was certainly a more-eventful ride than normal, arriving home maybe 20 minutes behind schedule, but still felt like a good day on a bike. The great thing about cycling, for me, is that nearly every ride I've done, I can look back upon and feel good about having done it. In fact, I don't think I've ever had a ride where I said afterward, gee, I wished I'd stayed home this time. Despite waking up late, the bike computer not working right, the flat tire and the West Old LaHonda drama, it's still a ride I can look back at and say, "it was a good ride." --Mike--