

## A really nice ride, despite learning about county road dept thinking cyclists don't pay for roads



Heading up Tunitas, serious bad news. My Garmin telling me that I'm actually ahead of a very fast pace. This too shall pass.

What a nice day to ride! It didn't start out that way; pretty gray until Kevin and I finally left the house at about 11am, wondering if perhaps we might be overdressed as the sun came out and things warmed up quickly. Fortunately(?) the upper-60s didn't last long, dropping to the mid-50s by the time we were heading up Old LaHonda.

No records on Old LaHonda today; just a bit slower than two weeks ago, but there was plenty more hills to ride at a faster pace after getting warmed up. As we started down the "closed" side of West Old LaHonda, we came across a guy that had dealt with one of the county's road crews setting up signs announcing the road closure. This guy was told (by the county crew) that cyclists didn't belong on West Old LaHonda because they don't pay gas tax. OK, first guess we ought to ban Teslas from all roads! Second, nearly every adult cyclist also owns a car and pays gas taxes. Third, gas taxes are only a part of what funds road building and repair. Additional and significant funding comes from special taxes (San Mateo County has a 1/2% general sales tax that goes to transportation projects), federal grants, assessment districts, property taxes... there's a whole lot of money going into our road system that isn't paid for through "user fees" (gas tax).

For what it's worth, West Old LaHonda continues just as it has since being "closed" with no obvious signs of the county doing any engineering work or even marking the pavement. If the county is concerned about the hill sliding into the road, you would think there'd be some evidence of survey markers etc. My concern is that the road is simply going to be ignored because local residents suffer almost no inconvenience from the closure (which conveniently is pretty close to the half-way point between 84 & Skyline, so the few residents living in the area likely don't even have to change their driving routes).



The duck pond's still there; a bit overcast for great photos. The turtles are back out on their rafts (not sure where they hang out in the winter, but this time of year they share the small wood rafts along with whatever bird might fly in).

Haskins? The mid-sized climb from LaHonda to Pescadero? Kevin and I definitely felt faster on Haskins than we had up Old LaHonda, but couldn't quite crack 10 minutes (missed it by just 6 seconds).



The baked-goods cabinet at the Pescadero store. Very good stuff inside!

Pescadero? The usual great chicken club sandwich, coke and a cookie. Had to search for a big-enough cookie for Kevin though! They were all "big" but most were "fatter" and less big-around.

Stage Road... one of the few times we've had mild & even favorable winds at times heading north! I actually ended up with a PR on the first hill, and Kevin picked one up on the final climb up to Highway 1.

Tunitas Creek? Again, we had favorable winds and, for some reason, were simply feeling like we could ride faster than normal on the flat-ish leadin to the big climb. In fact, as you can see in the photo at the top of this page, we were actually 27 seconds ahead, when we hit the beginning of the main climb, of a very fast time recorded not too long ago by a good customer, Tod Francis. It was partly fun and partly distressing to watch that "ahead" number gradually reduce to zero as we ride up the hill, and then go the wrong way. I knew we couldn't stay ahead of Tod's pace, although Kevin did try, racing off the front when it got steep.

Apparently, Kevin's engine blew a gasket further on though, as he finished just a minute ahead of me (but must have been at least two minutes ahead when I first lost sight of him). I was doing my best to try and keep pace with a group of three just ahead, finally catching up to them after Tunitas levels out. I ended up towing them to the top, which normally might bother me a bit, but today, I was more interested in an "unassisted" time to the top than one assisted by hanging onto other wheels. Not that I haven't done that in the past! I did end up with my best time up Tunitas in two years. Life could be worse. --Mike