

The adventure starts from your doorstep. No long flights, no expensive hotels. Why I ride!



A field of Lavender on Stage Road, just outside of Pescadero.

Long flights, hotels and lots of other expenses so people can get away from home. But all you need is a road bike and you can have an awesome adventure the moment you step out of your home! No need to go to the South of France to see Lavender fields; they're just two hours away, by bike, in Pescadero! Some complain about the cost of a nice road bike, but a good road bike, properly set up, is amazingly comfortable for very long rides, and if you consider what people pay for a business-class seat in a plane, good for between 10-20 hours of use, maybe a couple of decent meals along with it... the bike seems like the much-better value. And hey, I know where you can get one! OK, on to the ride description.

After last week's Sequoia Century, I was feeling pretty strong, and I'm still not seeing signs of the normal side effects of my meds (fatigue), so it was time for something reasonably challenging. Kevin wasn't feeling quite as good at first though, taking it pretty easy on Old LaHonda as he dealt with a bit of side pain and some trouble breathing. That's a switch! I think the wind was stirring up a lot of things that were irritating his lungs. He pushed on, feeling very gradually better as we went. Pretty strong headwinds going towards the coast, as expected, but I wasn't having trouble pulling at the front a bit more than normal.

Doing the Pescadero loop counterclockwise made Stage Road much more fun than usual, although no records set as Kevin was still not on his game. It certainly was nice heading into Pescadero at 23mph instead of exiting at 14! Yes, one of the few times I'll admit to a good tail wind. Would have been a great day to ride down the coast to Santa Cruz.



Kevin enjoying a burrito in Pescadero

Pescadero held a surprise for us. First, the bakery had no cookies. What? No cookies? Second, the line for sandwiches was a mile long. Kevin suggested the Mexican restaurant at the gas station. Good call. Fortunately I brought exactly enough cash (\$18) for a pair of burritos; they don't take credit cards. No money for cokes; had to wash it down with Nuun. Excellent burritos, by the way.

Fully fueled, it was time to hit Haskins the hard way (from the west), followed by West Alpine. There was some fear that we'd be riding too slow to establish a rhythm, but Kevin was recovering nicely and, every once in a while, putting me in a bit of trouble. But hey, he's 24, I'm 61, isn't that normal?



West Alpine

Skyline... can't put a pretty picture on what it was like heading north on Skyline today. Crazy winds and a lot of exposure. And it got pretty cold! 47 degrees, in June??? The skies were even getting ugly, making it look like we might get wet if we didn't get back quickly. Fortunately, it stayed dry for the entire ride.

67 miles, 6200ft of climbing. Good ride, and really happy to be seeing no bad effects from a medicine that's designed to act the exact opposite of a performance-enhancing drug. The other good thing? The little aches & pains I've had lately, which may or may not be attributable to my meds or what they're treating? They completely disappear when I'm on the bike. It's quite likely that they're simply normal little aches & pains that I shouldn't be trying to attribute to anything other than normal life. And right now, it seems normal life is good. I just need to stop looking at nasty scenarios on the 'net, and recognize that people don't write about anything but the worse-case scenarios, because the other stuff isn't very interesting. --Mike--