

Could be worse... could be raining. Oh. Wait.



It's not been an easy road bike on the bike after 10 days off, being in vacation with my wife in South Africa. Got back last Wednesday evening, rode the annual Turkey Trot to Pescadero and back via Tunitas with my son Kevin and Karen, one of our Tuesday/Thursday semi-regulars, and, well, it was tough. I was on fumes climbing Tunitas Thursday, with Kevin and Karen finishing many minutes ahead of me, but I made it (as if there was an alternative?). One of the few rides where I really didn't feel like I could have ridden any further.

Then today... rain? Really? It was just me doing to solo gig; Kevin was on a date with his girlfriend, and nobody else was going to be out there with me on the first real weekend rain ride. The plan was to do the usual Tuesday ride; up Kings, across Skyline to 35, west side 84 to West Old LaHonda and then back down 84. It was a bit of a slog, not unexpectedly, heading up Kings. Meaning, slow. But slow got slowly faster as I rode, and by the time I made it to the top of Kings I was feeling pretty decent. Oh, I should also add that I had a mildly-dragging rear brake the whole way. The story behind that? I discovered when I got the bike ready this morning that both front and rear disc brake pads were shot, the rear ones in particular, which were almost down to the metal backing. After installing new ones, I couldn't move the pads quite far enough away from the rotor not to scrape. I figured after a few miles in the rain they'd probably wear away enough to not be adding much resistance, although I admittedly haven't checked since.

OK, just checked, the brake is still dragging a bit. Well, the good news is that I got a better workout than otherwise, right?

It was up on Skyline that I discovered I wasn't quite ready for my first rain ride. I'd forgotten something. Something important. A cycling cap, under the helmet. Absolutely essential for keeping salty water from coming down into your eyes, as well as keeping the rain off your face while descending. I found myself having to stop every mile or so on the Skyline descent so I could wipe the stinging salty water away from my eyes so I could see again for a while, and decided I'd have to head straight back down 84 instead of doing the West Old LaHonda loop. But, since I didn't see anybody else out today, I thought, maybe, not such a bad thing.

Well, as I turned off Tripp Road onto Kings, I came across a couple of guys who'd just descended Kings, after having headed out to the coast and back via Tunitas. What I should have done, probably would have done, had Kevin been with me and I hadn't forgotten my cycling cap. I'll be better prepared next time!