

3 Signs of the Apocalypse and why ride up Redwood Gulch?



The third and final sign of the Apocalypse on today's ride- an empty scenic overlook on Skyline.

Just me today as Kevin had to get a suit for a friends' wedding. For reasons unknown I decided not to do the usual ride to the coast but instead head south through the foothills, then head up Redwood Gulch & 9, and return home via Skyline.

Why would anyone head up Redwood Gulch without someone holding a gun to their head? I thought maybe I could do better by somehow riding it "smart." Think the only thing I proved was that you can't fix stupid. When I was 16 and weighed 133 maybe that climb was fun. Ok, I'll admit I actually did get my best time in just over two years today, so not so bad. Of course I had nothing left once I hit 9, but even there I again had my best time in two years. Looking it up, that was the Sequoia Century. Makes sense; lots of rabbits to try and catch.

There remains the question of why I rode it, and that's where the first apocalyptic thoughts came from. As in, why in most apocalyptic stories is there some guy (yes, usually it's a guy but you could make the case the first person in that role was Eve) who just has to unleash the worst evil has to offer upon the world. What motivates someone to toss aside logic and do that? I'm thinking it's a simple extrapolation from the rationalization required to ride up Redwood Gulch.

At least I wasn't sweating up a storm at that point. That came about 10 minutes later, on 9. It appears I can put in about 23 minutes of hard climbing before my head turns into a water hose sprayer attachment that's always leaking in the "off" position. Very frustrating!!!

Of course, the reward is an ice cold coke from Mr Mustard at Saratoga Gap. Except he hasn't been seen for months! At least not by me or another cyclist at the top, someone, presumably for health reasons, a bit repulsed by my desire for a coke. Hey, I've been drinking cokes and mtn dew's all my life on bike rides and I'm as healthy as a ... oh, wait, never mind.

The second sign of the Apocalypse was just prior to Page Mill, where I spooked three very large vultures who were feasting on a very smelly carcass of some kind. They quite startlingly flew up into the tree above them, more than a bit annoyed that I had now stopped to take pictures of them.

The final sign of the apocalypse was passing the large parking lot at the scenic overlook, just north of Page Mill. Nobody there! The place is usually packed. Ok, actually one woman in a truck who'd apparently pulled in to make a phone call.

Temps ranged from mid-70s to mid-80s with a light breeze. A very pleasant day to be out on a bike, and yet not nearly as many as last weekend. The weather is typically a bit nicer after Labor Day, yet fewer people ride. Odd thing, that.

