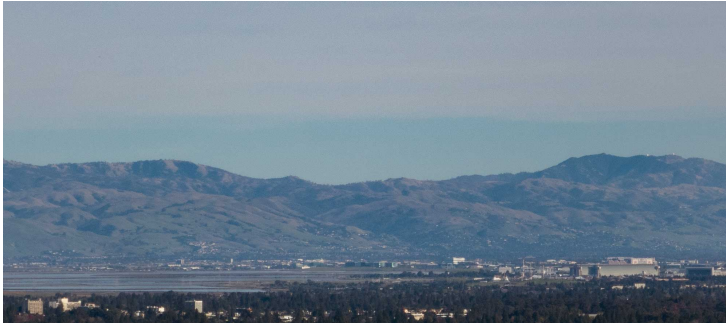


Not the view of Mt Hamilton I was looking for. Not a week I'd want to re-live either!



Upper right, those two little dots, that's my view of Mt. Hamilton today. Today, New Year's Day, is my annual Mt. Hamilton ride. I was going to make it a big deal this year, publicizing it here, sending out an email, telling people which train to catch and everything. Encourage a lot of people to do something BIG on New Years Day. Something I've been doing for well over 20 years. Maybe it's well over 30. A long long time anyway.

But not to be this year. A week ago Sunday I had a bit of a sore throat, nothing too bad, so Kevin and I did a shorter-than-normal loop up West Alpine, mainly to be back in time for the one Sunday a year the shop is open. I was hoping that riding would burn it out of my system. Not so entirely sure it would be that easy though since my wife had come down with a nasty hacking cough a couple days earlier, but had to try, and I didn't feel that bad. Nobody was feeling great Christmas; but I wasn't doing that badly and did an easy solo ride Thursday morning. Not Kevin; he isn't into the "burn out a cold" program like I am. Saturday, I actually left the shop an hour prior to closing and didn't even consider a ride Sunday. That's pretty unusual for me. Yesterday (New Years Eve) I started to feel a little bit better, but no way could I commit to Mt Hamilton. If I woke up feeling great, great!



Typical readings from my Garmin today. Hey, at least I haven't flat-lined! Needless to say, I didn't wake up feeling great, and Kevin felt worse. Still, I did feel better, and there was no way I was going to miss yet another day on the bike. I was getting concerned I'd be losing "mind over legs" control, if you know what I mean.

And... it wasn't terrible. It was slow, and it took about 15 minutes before I could breathe without coughing, due to the sudden change in temperature. Same thing happened when I got home two hours later. But in between, I was on my bike, taking it easy, and feeling pretty good. Average power output down by 25% and any thoughts of chasing people down in front of me shot. Hated that, but there was also a certain peace that came from knowing that just wasn't in the cards today. Just a couple hours on the bike, feeling the pedals turn, shifting gears, using the brakes, enjoying some of the most basic silly things imaginable.

Hopefully this thing is on its way out. I've had extended bouts of bronchitis before, usually in the summer, where I'd be hacking for maybe 6 weeks. And I've had plenty of times I've lost my voice for a few weeks in the winter. But never, ever, anything quite like this. That feeling, until today anyway, that you've totally lost track of what it feels like to be well. But that feeling is within my grasp now. I can tell. I'm coming back.