

No centuries in three years, now two on back-to-back Sundays? This one a bit tougher though!



And so it begins. The non-descript start of Mountain Charlie Road, off Glenwood. There are three primary 100-mile loops from Redwood City to Santa Cruz. They all start the same way, heading over Old LaHonda, Haskins, almost into Pescadero but turning onto Gazos Creek, then heading down the coast to Davenport for lunch. That's common to all of them. 50 miles so far. The traditional route, which we did last week, continues into Santa Cruz, then up Highway 9 to Skyline, north on Skyline to 84 and then drop into Woodside and back to Redwood City. Today's route, after going into Santa Cruz, then takes a mildly-convoluted route that parallels highway 17 to Scotts Valley, then up Mtn Charlie via Bean Creek and Glenwood. This drops you off at the highway 17 end of Summit, which you take north until it becomes Skyline, and from the intersection of highway 9, it's the same route home as the traditional. And finally we have the Bonny Doon version, which doesn't actually go all the way to Santa Cruz. We'll cover that when we do it in a couple weeks. Maybe.

But first we'll try to figure out why today's ride, which is almost exactly the same distance as last week's (114 miles vs 113), about a thousand feet more of climbing (9500 vs 8200) is so much tougher. I think a lot of it is having to follow that convoluted routing from Santa Cruz to Scotts Valley; it might actually be easier to do a bit of climbing and get there via Glen Canyon instead. Very important to get food in Scotts Valley before hitting the turn onto Glenwood Drive. There's a Starbuck's on the right hand side, and a gas station with mini-mart on the left. We used both to good advantage. This is your last chance to get drinks or food for the rest of the day! Actually, we did try feeding the coke machine quarters at the fire station, but it ended up being a \$1.75 donation; the machine simply ate the quarters and wouldn't return them.

Kevin was doing great until the upper slopes of Mountain Charlie and was dying on Summit. Fortunately, once we got out of the undulating rolling stuff, he started to recover. Amazing how much it feels like home turf once you get to Saratoga Gap!

Temperature was pretty nice until we got towards Saratoga Gap, where it dropped from 70 to about 60, low enough to trigger my Raynauds and cause my fingers to go icy. Hate that.

Overall this felt like a really tough ride and passed the "legs hurting when walking down steps" test with flying colors.