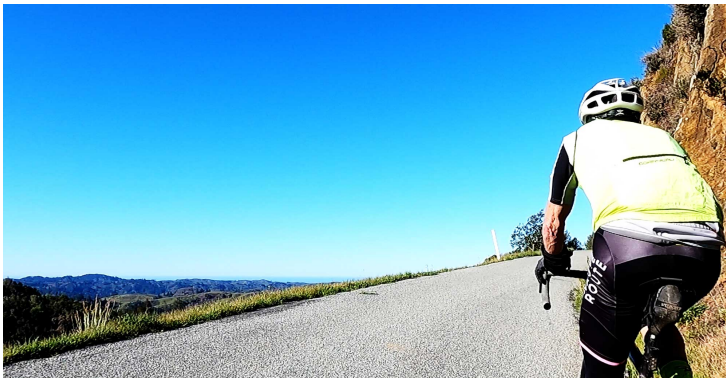


"Don't get me up. I've been awake since 2. I'm not riding."



Kind of odd, waking up to a text message. A bit weirder still when it's from your son, letting you know he's not going to be riding, please don't wake him up. Could have used that as an excuse myself not to ride, but in the past zillion-point-three years, that's happened maybe once or twice, and I don't want to ever look back and be able to say today was the day my Tuesday-Thursday morning ride became optional. That I'd allow things to get in the way. I've often said, don't plan meetings, doctor's appointments, funerals or anything else on Tuesday & Thursday mornings, because that ride is my life's anchor, that thing you build around, not move around.

I did wonder, actually assume, I'd be alone out there, as there have been so few times lately anyone but Kevin (younger Kevin, not ex-pilot) showed up. Sometimes Karen, but she's got to be getting pretty bored of the slow pace lately. But today, it was Kevin (ex-pilot) showing up. I would have been OK on my own, pretty sure I would have done the full ride including the West Old LaHonda loop, but nice to have someone else to talk with and help keep the pace.

Kings was actually a bit easier than I thought it might be, just under 34 minutes. Kevin remarked that we have to broaden the qualifications for our ride; can't tell people anymore they have to be able to ride up Kings in 30 minutes or less, if we can't do so ourselves! Will I be able to get back to a 30 minute time again? Tough to say. Sure won't be easy.

Easy? Kings and Skyline were fine, but have to admit that West Old LaHonda was pretty tough. Still, pretty tough is a lot better than not at all.