

• Does everybody know you? •

With Kevin (my son Kevin, not pilot Kevin) still out of action due to a kidney stone, I called in the reserves, texting (yes, 54 year olds text, at least those with iPhones anyway) Jeff, one of our reps, who has some serious riding credentials (Devil Mtn Double, plus he's ridden Sonora Pass with me). We connected in the morning, doing a variant of the Old LaHonda/Pescadero/Tunitas loop, but tossing in just a little bit more at the end by heading up Star Hill Road, then south on Skyline and down 84.

While waiting for Jeff at the base of Old LaHonda, I figured I'd try and use the iPhone's WordPress blogging application to put something up in real-time regarding the ride, but no matter how good the idea or software is, you can't do much if you can't see the screen in bright daylight. I did get a nice shot of cyclists on Portola Road though, using my "regular" pocket camera (Fuji EXR200) zoomed out as far as it could go... a mode I never use when riding because you can't hold it steady enough. Funny how you forget that there are times when you can get a more-interesting photo by zooming in



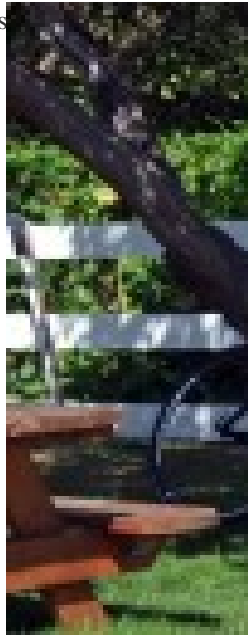
Cyclists on Portola Road near Old LaHonda, part of The Loop

It was a beautiful morning, perfect weather for climbing Old LaHonda. I pointed out to Jeff places like "Pipe Country" (about a mile up, where there are pipes coming out of a retaining wall on the left side of the road), "Cytomax Country" (just a bit further up, where it flattens out for a bit giving you a chance to drink), and the half-way point, the yellow house on the left right after the second steep part. We rode a fairly-civilized pace up the hill, about 24 minutes, pretty much exactly the pace Kevin might have capable of. Darn that kidney stone!

Quite a few people at the top of Old LaHonda, but unlike yesterday I wasn't on a Pied Piper mission so we headed straight down the other side and down to LaHonda, where I introduced Jeff to the "shortcut" to Pescadero Road at Apple Jacks. Amazing the things people who have lived and ridden the roads here most of their lives and don't yet know! Never assume that your favorite road is known to all.

Another thing different on this ride compared to most was that we came across quite a few other cyclists on the "other" (some would say "wrong") side of the hill. Many of them customers of mine, and it seemed to surprise Jeff how many fit into this category. At the mandatory stop in Pescadero we came across Susan, whom I came across climbing Tunitas three years ago, and today she told me about coming into our shop four years ago to buy her first pair of cycling shoes, coincidentally at the same time we were fitting

Kevin, somewhat reluctantly, to a new pair of shoes. It was clear he wasn't really into cycling at the time, and she was impressed with how far he's come since then. So, even though Kevin wasn't along with us on the ride, it sorta seemed like he was



Susan preparing her bike in the picnic area behind the Pescadero Bakery

From there it was the usual run on Stage Road, made a bit less fun by all the gravel they've spread across it, supposedly as a way to improve the road surface. I've never understood that. How, without any sort of binding agent (oil), does the gravel embed in the old asphalt? No stopping at San Gregorio but we did cruise by the Bike Hut at the base of Tunitas to pick up some water (\$.25/bottle to defray the costs of filtering their groundwater).



We weren't the only ones on Tunitas this morning!

There were quite a few cyclists on Tunitas, and up to this point, darned few cars! That changed once we hit Skyline, which we sort of detoured onto via Star Hill/Swett Road (featuring that uber-steep section where I might have been tempted to zig-zag except that the road is very narrow there and a couple of cars decided that that's where they had to pass me). Heading south on Skyline to 84 though, I had never seen such heavy traffic up there before, probably due to the beautiful weather and the Kings Mtn Art Show.

Ride totals? 63.39 miles, 6328ft of climbing. Missed the definition of a "mountainous" ride by... 11 feet????!!! Food & water are available at "B" (La Honda, a small market), "C" (Pescadero, two excellent bakeries/general stores, both of which like cyclists), "D"

(San Gregorio general store, which tolerates cyclists) and "E" (The Bike Hut, which reliably has water but not always food). Also "F" (Sky Londa, a small market as well as Alice's Restaraunt).

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