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Export date: Thu Aug 21 18:10:33 2014 / +0000 GMT

I've trained these guys well

I time things very well; I know exactly how long it takes me to get going in the morning, when I have to get out the door, how fast I need to ride to get to the start of the Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride in time. If I'm feeling really good, it takes just over 8 minutes to climb over Jefferson and head down Canada to Olive Hill. If my legs feel like a caffeine junkie who's been given decaf, it can take up to 2 minutes longer. I plan on slower and hope for faster. What I didn't plan on was feeling slow and having to fight a nasty headwind getting to the start, so I arrived with a scan 20 seconds to spare. George, Karl & Chris, if I recall correctly, were all suggesting that I had arrived late, something unthinkable for a ride that leaves on time, period. Fortunately, Eric was there as well, and he, like myself, has a Garmin GPS bike computer that gets its time from a satellite, and knew that it was, in fact, still 7:44 and some number of seconds.

So, without any time to chat, we did leave at precisely 7:45am, just as we always do. At one point there were 10 of us; I'll try and recall everyone. George, Karl, Karen, Chris, Eric, John, Ludo, Marcus, and one other person beside myself. Nigel! OK, I think I've got them all. Overall the ride was as leisurely (at least for some of us) as it was windy. Most of the time we were protected by trees so the primary effect of the wind was noise, a vey loud noise very much in contrast with the relative calm below.

Yes, it was a beautifully-clear morning on the coast, while curiously-hazy on the bay side. I took the mandatory photos of the view from west-side Old LaHonda, but when I discovered that some of our group had dropped behind a bit, I stopped a bit further up to get a picture from a different vantage point, as you can see here. That's Ludo & Eric heading up around the last corner before heading into the trees.

Oh yes, about those trees. Those trees that initially protected us from the wind. On our return, descending 84, George was literally attacked, not once, but twice, by Eucalyptus branches falling in front of him. After the second one, we decided it wasn't too safe to be around George and gave him plenty of room! Too bad I didn't have the video camera running today; there would have been a great shot of him swerving to avoid his second encounter.