

The Perfect 60-mile Ride

The weather turned on us this week, first getting wet, then getting cold & wet. On a bike, wet isn't so bad, and cold isn't so bad, but the two together? Bad. Anyone getting out on Saturday got it bad, but most cancelled their rides and seemed to head for shelter at our Redwood City store. Hey, when it's dark & cold & wet outside, we're expecting it to be quiet, so having good company (since our customers are cyclists, that goes without saying!) and a few dollars in the register was very welcome.



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Even more welcome was having a nice day to ride today (Sunday). The weather forecast held up; sometime around 11pm Saturday night it started to clear up a bit, and by the time I got out at 10:30 Sunday morning, it was pretty nice. Not warm nice, not not too cold, and nice skies with a few clouds for contrast.



The view on Stage Road, looking back towards San Gregorio

There were three of us enjoying the day; myself, plus Andrew & Brian from the shop. I did try to convince Burt to ride, but I don't think he really believed the day would turn out so nice. We did a variant of the reverse Pescadero loop ([detailed Google map](#)), starting in Woodside, heading up Old LaHonda and down the other side to San Gregorio, south on Stage Road to Pescadero, then over Haskins Grade (the "hard" way) and back up to Skyline via West Alpine to add a bit more "kick." You can see the details on the map; this is a ride that's nice in just about anything but rain (although I'm dumb enough that wouldn't likely stop me).



Heading south on Stage Road into Pescadero

I've always tried to see something new on each ride, even on roads I've ridden literally hundreds of times before. Today? Easy. Heading out towards San Gregorio there's a barn on the right hand side, one that you can often see cows hanging out underneath on a hot summer day. Today, out in front, not too far from the road, was a Coyote munching on an animal carcass. I rode past before realizing exactly what it was; it looked, for all the world, just like a large piece of meat that would be hung from a hook at a butcher, all the ribs showing white against the red flesh. As I stopped and started back (had to get a picture, y'know?) the Coyote quickly headed off, very wary of our intentions. Strange thing, that. My recent dealings with Coyotes on rides has been that they just haven't seemed to care about me as I rode closely past. A couple of years ago, there was one on Mount Hamilton that was heading up the hill alongside the road at pretty much the same speed I was, which was almost creepy.



Looks cold & was cold as we neared Skyline

Brian was surprised we weren't stopping at the San Gregorio store, but I generally don't stop there when doing the counter-clockwise loop, because the much-better Pescadero Bakery isn't too far off and they actually like cyclists in Pescadero, while at San Gregorio, they're concerned we'll be displacing customers drinking their 10am Bloody Marys. Seriously.



Check your tires before riding! You don't want to see this with 30 miles to go.

It was in Pescadero that I noticed my rear tire getting a bit soft, and then saw a pretty good amount of exposed casing. Not much life left in that tire; please check your tires carefully before each ride and make sure they've got some life left! Thankfully, it held up the rest of the way.

The temperature was pretty nice until we got to the back side of Haskins Grade, but since we quickly started the stiff climb up West Alpine, it wasn't an issue until we got to Skyline. Not much snow, just a little bit left here & there alongside the road, probably having been washed away by the pretty heavy rains Saturday.