

An awesome tune-up for the Tour de France... for me *and* Chris!



I'm not going to reduce the size of this photo because there's no way to reduce the size of Chris Horner's ride today!

Wow. I had no idea this day would turn out quite so spectacular. First, the rain that had been forecast stayed away. Second, getting to the race without using a car went without a hitch, taking CalTrain to San Jose with my Bike Friday (didn't want to risk damage to my Madone on what passes for a bike rack on CalTrain) and riding from there to the course. Third, I saw lots of friends & customers (often one & the same) offering encouragement as I climbed the hill, and on Sierra Road, with camera gear on my back and a rack bag with all sorts of other stuff, I needed all the help I could get! And fourth, I saw a fantastic race, with Chris Horner showing that getting older doesn't mean getting slower.

I'd be lying to say Sierra Road was easy. While the temps were moderate, I felt overdressed for most of the climb, with a warm base layer and leg warmers causing me to consider stopping along the way to remove them... but stopping, once on a climb, is something done only for "external" reasons (or should I say excuses?). Such as coming across a friend you haven't seen in some time (saw a few of those today but didn't stop), or maybe an imaginary mechanical problem. I was sweating more than I have in ages, and wondered how close my heart rate was to red-lining (hitting the maximum that I can reach, which these days is going to be around 175). I was getting a much-tougher workout than I had planned, and that, of course, was a good thing.

But everything worked out great. I made it to the top without getting passed by too many along the way, and the Bike Friday and I felt like we were up to the task of some challenging rides in France. I'll admit that initially I felt like I wanted my Madone but it wasn't too long before that feeling passed and it was just me & the hill.