

Trains & bikes, no planes, no automobiles as we took on Mount Hamilton

The last mile up Mount Hamilton, with an over-the-top soundtrack.

It's Sunday, you need to get in something tough, and it's tough to get in something tough without heading out to the coast. But how many variants of a ride to the coast can you do before it starts getting a bit repetitive? This coming from the guy who's done the same loop every single Tuesday & Thursday morning for the past 30+ years, by the way. Kevin likes variety, while I like consistency and dedication. But looking out the window this morning and seeing the heavy marine layer still hugging the coastal hills, I was thinking maybe it's time to head east, away from the clouds. Trouble is, it's not so easy to head east on a bike; you've got the bay in the way, or a really long boring ride around it if you want to get anywhere decent. Or you drive, but I've really been trying to avoid that car thing lately. What to do.

Simple. Ride to the train station, take CalTrain to San Jose, ride up Mount Hamilton & return. Not much different from last Wednesday's run up Sierra Road to see the Tour of California come through. So that's what Kevin and I did, leaving the house at 10:50 to catch the 11:07 train (which ran 20 minutes late due to track work), got off in San Jose, hit every single red light you could possibly hit and had a very nice ride up Mount Hamilton. Nothing super fast; just under two hours, but Kevin's not yet up to speed, and this was a very good opportunity for him to see where he was with the France trip coming up in less than two months.

I took a lot of video on the way up; still working out the kinks on that, figuring out how things work, how to get the least camera jitter, but what I really need to work on is the post-ride editing. Adding music is key to an interesting video, and clearly what I need to do is lay down the music track and then edit the video around it. Or I could ride with music playing and try to set the tempo accordingly, but that's probably not so practical.

Eventually I'd like to set up a bunch of rides that can be easily accessed via public transportation (trains), so you can leave your car at home. Key to that will be identifying train stations that are close to places we like to ride, and hours that particular train system allows bikes. CalTrain allows bike on all trains, but BART is much more restrictive, keeping you off them during commute hours. That still leaves weekends! Using a combination of CalTrain, BART and the Capitol Corridor lines, we've probably got access to a pretty wide area.