

Cars vs Bikes vs Cops

Saturday, August 28th, the County Sheriff's department ticketed approximately 25 cyclists for not properly proceeding through the intersection at Canada & Woodside Roads. It's difficult to figure out exactly what transpired, but it sounds like a group of about 40 cyclists came to the intersection, the front of the group stopped until it was safe to ride through, and the rest followed. Tickets were issued because it's illegal for a group of vehicles to do anything other than stop individually before going through a stop sign.

The story was reported in the Country Almanac and created a huge response. You can [read the article and responses here](#). Below is my addition to the fray.

So on my regular Tuesday/Thursday morning ride, I stopped and spoke with a Sheriff's Deputy at Sky Londa where they were ticketing people who were traveling north on Skyline and making the right turn onto 84. Our group of cyclists (5) all came to a stop (without putting our feet down) before proceeding through, and while the others continued down the hill, I stayed behind and had a conversation with the officer. He'd heard but not read about the now-infamous incident in Woodside that's generating all this buzz. I filled him in a bit on it, and asked him a few specific questions.

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Most interesting was that he couldn't see any reason, ever, to ticket 2, 3, 4 or 5 cyclists who all rode up to the limit line, stopped (which *he* said didn't mean putting a foot down) and proceeded through together. He doesn't even believe there's a law that would support ticketing in such a situation (but I explained to him that there are interpretations otherwise). Note that this is different from the concept of a "train" of cyclists, where a large group moves through an intersection, figuring that as long as they're following closely behind someone else, they're fine.

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I'm thinking, and the officerÂ seemed to be thinking, that people are making a big deal out of the wrong thing here. There are plenty of examples of really bad behaviour on the road, but was this really one of them? Or was it just a final-straw sort of thing?

I strongly believe that cyclists should behave better out on the roads, but I just as strongly resent the idea that we should "stick to where we live" etc. In the communities many of us live, we have to put up with Ikeas and strip malls and all sorts of evils related to high-density zoning... things that Woodside would never allow, and yet Woodside residents rely on. We are not isolated communities; we are all inter-dependent, whether we want to admit to that or not.

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Don't assume you're anonymous when you do stupid things driving a car. Cameras are everywhere.

People just don't understand that we're all connected, and need to look out for each other. On the return from my ride this morning, heading over the top of Jefferson, a car (seen in the photo) turned onto Jefferson right in front of me. It rolled right through the stop sign (this was at the side street adjacent to the new fire station), at a speed at least as high as what you might see a "bad" cyclist do. I was in plain sight. Did they not see me? Or simply expect that I wouldn't mind? And yes, I deliberately blurred the license plate in

the photo.