

10 days off the bike, ouch!



A very wet scene at the Pescadero bakery/market. It was with no small amount of fear & trepidation that I approached today's ride, one that could not be avoided no matter what the weather brought. Why? 10 days off the bike, that's why! I hadn't ridden since a week ago Thursday, due to my trip to the DC Bicycle Summit. And while there, I ate too much, exercised too little, and came back to see a number on the scale I haven't seen in a couple years, and it's not even "winter" anymore.

Tell that to the weatherman. The winter part. I held off a bit, since the forecast was for the rain to stop by 10am and stay away until 3. I can live with that; just enough time for a quick run out to Pescadero and return via Tunitas Creek. And since it wasn't raining when I left, I brought out the nice bike (Madone) instead of the rain bike. And it stayed dry... until I approached the top of Old LaHonda, and descending the other side it went from a drizzle to light rain. And that beautiful view of the coast from west-side Old LaHonda? Just gray clouds and rain.

How did it feel climbing Old LaHonda? Not as bad as I thought it would. No, that's not true, it felt every bit as bad as I thought it would, it just went a bit faster than I thought it might. I was expecting 25 minutes and it was about 23, probably because I had spotted someone climbing up the hill behind me and didn't want to get caught. According to Strava I paid for that, with an average heart rate a bit higher than normal (143 instead of 135).

Descending 84 towards LaHonda I hit the first of two cloudbursts. Really heavy rain that made it tough to see where I was going, and made me wish I'd brought a cycling hat to keep the rain out of my eyes. I was seriously considering shortening the ride by either turning up West Alpine or heading straight out to San Gregorio instead of Pescadero. I even thought of simply turning around at LaHonda and heading back up 84! But the plan is the plan, follow the plan. How close did I come to cutting it short? So close that I skipped the "shortcut" through LaHonda to Pescadero Road, thinking at that point that I'd do the straight shot out to San Gregorio instead. I came to my senses only when I got to the regular intersection.



Always nice to ride Tunitas after a good rain; the creek becomes alive!

One more brief downpour just prior to Pescadero, after which things cleared up nicely! Thank goodness, since I needed to dry out. But of course the rain wasn't through with me yet; the final 3 miles of Tunitas Creek were essentially riding into a cloud, complete with rain, fog and even hail. This continued all the way to the bottom of Kings Mtn, at which point I finally saw the promised weather... for the last 5 miles of my ride. :-)

The stats? They got a bit messed up. I know the mileage (about 57), but the combination of heavy cloud cover and changing barometric pressure did a number on my Garmin, such that it significantly under-reported elevation gain and the profile showed a couple of cliffs that I apparently scaled. But it's not as if this isn't a ride I haven't done a hundred times before.