

Don Draper in Mad Men has it right



A big group this morning, probably waiting about 5 minutes for my arrival at the top of Kings. I've got work to do!

If this is what 56 feels like, I can't wait to be 57! I'd like to say it was fun this morning, but that's not quite the right adjective. "Fun" lost out as a description in so many ways, beginning with a mistaken weather report that said rain from 7am-on (it's 1:30pm presently and rain has yet to make an appearance) so we rode our heavier, slower, less "fun" rain bikes... in my case, my 5900, which is a pretty nice machine, except that I've got tires on it that are suited for uber-nasty conditions but feel like you're riding through sand. It also wasn't much "fun" when you round the corner to view the first big hairpin going up Kings (at the halfway point), looking forward to seeing how far ahead the rest of the riders are... but there are none in sight. Hate that! It means that I'm already over a minute down from the next-slowest rider on the climb.

It's at moments like these that you start searching for an appropriate tune in your head, something that matches both your pace and your predicament. Sadly, I could not recall enough of the lyrics from Procol Harum's "About to Die" to carry the tune. Maybe I should have gone for ELP's "Welcome back my friends to the show that never ends..." Or, if things were really dire, Procol Harum's "Still There'll Be More" (warning: the lyrics are a bit, er, harsh).

It's funny too when you're looking at the elapsed time and thinking, well, I'm still at this point on the climb and they just finished. Actually, even though there remained 4 or 5 minutes to go when that thought hit me, it was encouraging. Not that much further to go! I started thinking about how you feel better as you get into the ride, and if I could survive to west-side Old LaHonda I'd be feeling pretty good! And to the extent that simply surviving that far was an accomplishment, I was feeling better. And at the end of the ride, I felt a lot better than I would have had I not ridden.

But note to self: I'm not going to let myself get so out of shape and gain so much weight next time I'm off the bike for 10 days!

Oh, the Don Draper remark? In the recent season opening episode, a surprise birthday party is thrown for Don, whom we discover doesn't do birthdays. I can relate to that. But a surprise birthday party at only 40 years old, as if that's a big thing? I had one at 50, and got to admit my wife did a pretty impressive job with it, but it didn't change my mind about birthdays in general. Judge me by what I can do, not how old I am. That thinking might change as I get older and even slower.Â --Mike--