

Tour of California Stage 1 challenge



Three cyclists in the break enjoying a light moment early in the first stage

So the Tour of California is back, you really want to see it, but you don't want to go a long way to just catch a quick glimpse of them and then poof, they're gone. Hey, if it's in your back yard, no biggie, go see the parade of world-class cyclists that you read about and see on TV and once a year shows up here. But when you have to drive two and a half hours to get there... three+ hours on the way back? Plus losing out on a bike ride?

So I had an idea. What if you could design a bike ride that would cut across the course multiple times? Not as easy as it sounds; you've got to get maps and write down estimated times that the race will pass various points on the course and then study the roads that criss-cross the course and see if something can work out. And it did!

Sorry I don't have a way to overlay the actual race course with the route Kevin and I rode, but it all worked out pretty well. We started our ride at 10:30 and have plenty of time to get to our first intercept at 11:17, then rode 5 miles to the next intercept at 11:44, another 12 miles to see them at 1:10 and then a pretty tough 20 miles including the steep climb up Coleman for our final visit at 3:10.

Somehow it all worked out, even managing to get home in time for Mother's Day dinner. 53 miles, not that much climbing (but quality!), moderate speed (would have been faster except that we were often in heavy traffic and once in a while not sure which way to go), but a lot better than watching it on TV and not riding!