

## Counting the days (until I can dope like the racers)

It was tough to say whether a sub-par ride up Kings this morning was partly the result of knowing why I've slowed down over the past year or if it was simply a high-gravity day. Probably just a coincidence, and it's not as if a 29-something time up Kings, when riding through the park, is all that slow anyway. Nevertheless, it did serve as that thing at the back of my mind that caused me to send an email to my doctor, asking if he'd seen the results of the tests, and wonder what the timetable looks like from here on.

So is the question as simple as it seems? My desire to go faster up the hill, and the knowledge that a drug (probably albuterol) that will reduce the effects of exercise-induced asthma will help, and now I'm pushing the doctor to get things moving along... am I much different from the healthy athlete who wants something to help him or her keep up with the rest of the pack?

Let's face it, my exercise-induced asthma is exactly that. Exercise-induced. There's nothing about it that hinders everyday normal activity. I have never had any sort of "attack", just a feeling of being a bit more out-of-breath than I'd like when, say, climbing stairs or, heaven forbid, running for some reason. Big deal. But on my bike, trying to keep up with the faster folk? That's when the hammer comes down on me. But even then, if I was content to ride at a more-moderate pace, it wouldn't be that big a deal.

But for me, it is that big a deal. Wanting to push my limits on a bike has always been part of (perhaps a large part of) who and what I am. So much so that it drove me to visit a doctor, something I habitually avoid unless there's a bone sticking out of my arm or something like that. Obviously, I've become highly motivated. To dope. :-)