

## Squirrel, Deer, Hawk, Honda



The Old Dudes heading up through Huddart Park. Except Todd. He's not old. And Chris. He's at most medium.

It's gradually warming up here in Northern California, 41 degree average temp according to my Garmin computer (which I think reads a couple degrees on the low side), up from 37 two days before, 35 or so the week prior, 32 before that... you get the idea. Still, we're a very long way from dispensing with leg warmers and even full-finger gloves for our morning ride!

Small group today; Kevin (pilot), Chris, Eric, John & Todd. The other Kevin is still feeling the effects of his tonsil removal on Tuesday (I did ask last night if he was riding, and he gave me one of those "What kind of person would ask me that?" looks). Pretty easy ride up through the park, with the pace only picking up to something challenging on Skyline, just prior to the descent, as Chris came to the front and I glued myself to his rear wheel.

Our first encounter with wildlife was the Honda (I think it was a Honda, but it could have been any other generic sub-compact) that was going to make turn into a driveway in front of us. We've seen this car before, same time, same place. I remember last week thinking that car was going to turn in front of us and I'm thinking, what part of the car would be the softest, what should I aim for? In fact, it was that car that got me to install a new super-bright flashing bar-type LED light on my front fork, so it would see me coming. But today the car made no attempt to cut us off.

I think it was the squirrel that came next, darting across then back. Hate squirrels. A bit later we saw the deer, reasonable size, towards the beginning of west-side Old LaHonda, followed a mile or so later by a very large & beautiful hawk which flew across the valley to a tree on the other side. He got there a whole lot faster than we did!

We? By this time it was just Eric with me; John had just shown up at the start but didn't ride up the hill because that wasn't in his new training program for the day, and Todd & Kevin & Chris had ridden down 84 without doing the west-side Old LaHonda loop due to someplace they had to be. We did come across Keith, the guy who shows us how it's done and makes disparaging references to the average age of the guys I ride with; turns out he was on a semi-epic 92 miler that put him at over 1000 miles for the month. Impressive! And more believable than the guy from Australia that's supposedly done over 3200 miles.