

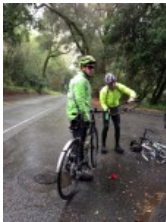
Cold, wet, 2 flats, let's not do this again!

I woke up briefly at 4am this morning, looked out the window and saw clearing skies. Ah, maybe the weather was going to hold off! Back to sleep until 6:55am when I woke up to... rain. No quite right; at most a light drizzle, but really wet streets. Thankfully, I'd already made sure our rain bikes were ready, so Kevin and I dutifully hit the road at 7:31am, a few minutes earlier than normal 'cuz the rain bikes are a bit slower and you're somehow just a bit less inspired when all bundled up and staring into gray skies that are literally descending upon you.



First flat, descending 84. 37 degrees, raining pretty hard. Not fun!

Just one other silly person at the start, the other Kevin. It's a bit confusing on a ride in which the only other people are both named Kevin; I decided to call the older guy (the pilot who's done this ride with me for 20+ years) "Captain" and the other Kevin, the 20 year old whippersnapper who shares my last name and address... well, still trying to figure that one out. It wasn't a pretty ride by any standard; 33 minutes up Kings tells that story! Not so bad across the top (Skyline) although we did notice the temperature steadily dropping, which isn't normal. It's supposed to start out cold and get warmer, not start out cold and get colder.



But nothing too exciting, no drama, until just prior to heading back down 84 "Captain" Kevin notices his rear tire is low and stops to inflate it. We make it about 3/4 of the way down the hill before it's nearly flat again, so we stop to replace it. In a very cold (about 37 degrees according to my Garmin) and steadily-increasing rain. Cold and wet enough that, after "Captain" Kevin used a CO2 cartridge and placed it on top of his gloves and the old tube on the ground, everything literally froze together. Seriously. And I didn't get a photo! Darn.



Post-ride coffee not optional today, but required!

We then proceeded down the rest of 84 and got less than half a mile down the road before his tire went flat. Again. This time with a bit of a bang, because during the inflation he'd apparently pushed the valve up into the tire a bit, causing the tube to wrap down underneath and rip. Sigh. At least it was now 41 degrees. 10 minutes later we were off again, no more drama the last few miles, and finally, clearing skies. We were left wondering if it was going to be a beautiful day for riding just as soon as we finished, but fortunately, that didn't turn out to be the case as the blustery weather continued for most of the day.

It was a very, very good feeling finally getting up over Jefferson, half an hour behind schedule, knowing a hot shower was in my immediate future. One of those hot showers where your gradually-thawing hands become incredibly painful as they finally warm up, and one of those mornings where a Caramel Latte at Peet's wasn't optional, it was required.

Could we have skipped this morning and ridden tomorrow, when it will be much nicer, instead? That's what most people would do, but we're not most people. When it's time to ride, it's time to ride, and you can't let the world tell you otherwise. That's just how we roll. We're stupid that way. Curiously, looking at Strava, very few others were out riding this morning. Wonder why?