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Planned Santa Cruz loop almost cut short

It was time to blow out the cylinders and get some miles in again! Not that we didn't have some good rides in France, but they were mostly "intense" miles, not long. Santa Cruz was calling to me! But not quite so much to Kevin, who had concerns about whether it was a good idea to ride 100+ miles after making some fit adjustments to his bike (a bit longer and lower stem).

In fact, it wasn't until we got near Pescadero and I yelled at him for going straight instead of making the left onto Cloverdale Road that he realized we weren't just doing the usual Pescadero/Tunitas loop. He complained about the distance, he wasn't happy about the cool weather, but on we went, riding towards Davenport, our traditional lunch stop.

Oh, right, first we tackled Old LaHonda and once again Kevin started out way too fast, dying on the second half. Not that I'd know that first-hand, since he's way ahead of me by that point. On the other hand, I did better than usual, possibly because I was working on my breathing, trying something that Obree, former hour-record holder, recommended. Every other breath, exhale more-deeply than normal. Until this become automatic, which is going to take quite a while, it's best done on your own, so you can concentrate on it. The evidence it works is based on Strava giving me a personal best for the Old LaHonda segment.

Shortly before reaching Davenport Kevin started developing the stabbing flank pains that have put him in the ER in the past... pains that the doctors can't find any basis for, and believe are a remnant of the "real" kidney issues he's had in the past, and his body simulating those pains again in a quest for powerful pain-killer meds. Might have worked too, except that Kevin's dad isn't always the most-compassionate and told him that once we got climbing again, he'd be able to deal with the pain better. And in fact, once we got climbing, it all but disappeared.

Overall, the ride was at a pretty casual pace. No strong tail winds on the coast to speed us south, nor any "zippy" feeling on Kevin's part except... except when he was really mad at me for not letting him bail and flew on up that first grade out of Santa Cruz. It took me a couple minutes to get back up to his wheel; he was really flying. And for that, we both got new personal records on that segment. Was it worth the pain? Likely not; Kevin wasn't feeling too strong the rest of the way.