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Nice morning ride!

It was with a little bit of apprehension that I approached this morning's ride; I haven't slept as well as I should, having concerns about Kevin's (my son, not the pilot) ongoing kidney issues that have kept him out of school (and off the bike) the past three weeks, and I had a slight issue in my right knee due to contorting myself a bit on Tuesday's ride in an effort to keep the velcro strap from my seat bag from shredding my shorts. In the end, I lost, the velcro won.

But onÂ the bike, the mild knee pain disappeared! For me, whatever "normal" aches & pains exist that might be associated with getting older or doing something stupid... they just go away once on the bike. And that feeling of not quite getting enough sleep? A few minutes at a tough pace and even that goes away too! Life is good on a bike.

This morning, we started with Karen, Jan & John, with Mike catching up to us on the climb (coming up from behind me at an alarmingly-rapid pace) and Chris up on top. Still no sign of Eric, who not only survived the Everest Challenge but did pretty well, coming in 17th in his category! We started up pretty easy but then Karen started doing long intervals, shelling me off the back until I finally caught up with her while she was resting after her second effort. I felt like I could do fairly well if I just rode at a steady pace, and was encouraged enough by my time at the wide-open section to think a sub-27-minute time was possible. It ended up being close... really close. Fortunately, on the good side, making it to the top in 26:58, a whole two seconds to spare. That was closer than I thought it was going to be; I really thought I had it by another 5 seconds or so when I got to that last yellow sign before the top, which is about 30 seconds to go. There really wasn't anything left in the tank though, so if I did slow down at the very end, it wasn't from lack of effort.

Is it discouraging to be going for what, to you, is a respectable time and yet others seem to fly past? Well yeah, but I got over most of that a long time ago. Now I'm more into a "those who can't do, teach" mentality. Besides, maybe I can't climb so fast anymore, but I still enjoy it, and once on Skyline, I know I can suck a wheel with the best of them. And, I can sprint. Not as fast as Chris today, but reasonably well.

Oh, the vital statistics? 60-65 degrees most of the ride, clear skies, no rabbits or bobcats or owls or rattlesnakes, but did see at least one lizard. Overall pace was up there with a Tuesday ride, arriving back at Olive Hill & Canada at 9:17 (more typical time for a Thursday would be 9:25).