

The candle that burns twice as bright lives half as long



Sure, the candle might live half as long, but cookies on a ride taste twice as good. However, this cookie fails an important test; Kevin says if it's not big enough to completely cover your face, it's simply not big enough! Still good enough to eat though, as is everything from the Pescadero Bakery.



Roads can do worse than be "paved" with a bed of pine needles. And few are prettier than west Old LaHonda



Our normal "shortcut" through LaHonda blocked by construction work

Finally, Kevin (my son, who's had on & off-again kidney and other related issues for a few years) was relatively pain-free and ready for a "real" ride. I really didn't want to do something too challenging, since he's missed quite a few rides (some longer Sunday rides, and an occasional Tuesday or Thursday-morning ride), but figured the "coastal classic" would be a good way to get back in the swing of things.

For those unaware, the coastal classic involves heading through Woodside, up Old LaHonda & down the other side, over Haskins to Pescadero, then Stage Road north to Tunitas, up Tunitas and down Kings back into Woodside. About 57 miles and 6000ft or so of climbing from home. I cautioned Kevin not to go too fast up Old LaHonda, but of course that had no effect, as he worked to ditch dad and try for a decent time. Dad, meanwhile, was trying to stay seated the whole way up Old LaHonda, since that gets better video and there were a lot of other cyclists out on the climb today (which makes the video more interesting). What I didn't expect was to see Kevin not that far ahead of me in the last half mile or so; he'd gone out too hard, too fast, and lost power before the finish. I, on the other hand, had ridden a very consistent pace and had used my Stages power meter to keep from going too far into the red. In the end, Kevin didn't get the time he wanted (about 21:04 and he was hoping for under-20) and I was 8 seconds off my best Strava time.



Approaching Pescadero from the coast (not the usual direction)



Kevin powering into the headwind as we pass Pigeon Point

We did actually take it fairly easy over Haskins (about 12 minutes when we generally climb closer to 10), and by the top Kevin's realizing that he's actually feeling really good and flats the ridiculous idea of extending the ride to Santa Cruz. Um, no, we left too late for that. But he's still not done with making things more challenging; as we neared Pescadero he's saying we should do Gazos Creek and then come back the coast. I gave in; it's only 15 or so extra miles, although I did warn him about the headwinds we'd have on the way back up the coast. As we rode quite briskly south on first Bean Hollow then Gazos Creek, he brings up Santa Cruz yet again. We're almost to Highway 1; from there, it would be about 75 miles to go. Let's see; it's 12:15, it's going to be too dark to safely ride by about 5:15 (we had flashing lights but no regular headlights), and at 15mph, without stops for food, you're talking 5 hours. I explain this is a math problem, it just can't be done, mostly because you've got to figure in about 45 minutes for lunch at Davenport and drinks in Boulder Creek. Too bad, because the tail winds would have been awesome!



Even bullets can't stop us. This one found on Stage Road (he carried it back home, as we routinely do with all unexploded ordnance).

And those awesome tailwinds to Santa Cruz? That meant horrific headwinds as we headed north back up to Pescadero. Kevin turned the corner and just took off. Hard. I'm thinking I'll gradually pick up the pace and get back to him but I quickly realized he was on fire and if I didn't quickly go flat-out to get his wheel, I'd probably lose my only chance. It was actually tough just staying on his wheel as he fought into the headwind; I'd occasionally come out to the side just to see how bad the wind was, and how many watts he was most-likely generating. Impressive. Probably well over 300 watts for over 20 minutes. Doing that on a climb is a whole lot easier than doing that against the wind.



Passing the Bridge of Death on Tunitas, with some guys doing it (Tunitas) for the first time.

But at Pescadero he was feeling pretty fried, and the headwinds on Stage turned into a real grind. Tunitas was something we were actually looking forward to, because there'd be no headwind, and we've got the feeling that we tamed it long ago. But not today. It was pretty tough on Kevin, taking us almost an hour to make it up from the coast. But he was in good spirits at the top, and even better when we got home. 71 miles, 7400ft of climbing. He's coming back.