

Page Mill = Death (although beginning to get used to it)



Maybe it's time to give up on that dream of skiing and get back out on your bike? Both pictures from the same day, one at Squaw Valley with, maybe, 4 people? The other on West Old LaHonda. Which looks more like paradise to you?

You could have been out riding today, or you could have been skiing with all the... hmm... 4 people I can find in this picture? Our people really still holding onto the dream of a ski season? Isn't it time to give up and get back on your bike? The past two Sundays we've done the same ride, a strange loop with two climbs that are normally tough to get together in a logical manner- Page Mill & West Alpine. Basically the same road from both sides of Skyline. Back in the day I didn't care much for Page Mill, so I didn't climb it all that often. I certainly had no awareness of what a good time was, unlike Kings, 84 & Old LaHonda. Sometimes Page Mill would get tossed into the Sequoia Century, sometimes a club training ride. What's wrong with Page Mill? It's not those nasty steep sections in the middle; I used to live for nasty steep sections. Rather, there's something about it, especially the first third, that makes it really difficult to develop a rhythm.



Kevin & Andrew at the Woodside Bakery

But today Kevin wanted to ride it again, and invited Andrew from the shop to come with us. But not until first enjoying the pre-ride fuel stop at the Woodside Bakery, of course. Two gnarly pastries, on large mocha later and we're (sluggishly) off & running. Too bad it wasn't a coffee to go, as it got pretty cold heading through Portola Valley, a surprisingly-low 39 degrees. It very quickly warmed up on the climb though! And surprisingly, I'm beginning to get a feel for that climb. Who knew.

It's interesting that heading north on Skyline between Page Mill and Sky Londa twice in one day doesn't seem repetitive, but it's not. Can't explain it. But if you're going to climb both Page Mill and West Alpine in the same day, there's no good way to avoid it.



A photo can almost catch the steepness of Page Mill. Almost.

Heading down 84 towards LaHonda I was really looking forward to climbing West Alpine. Don't know why. Once on the West Alpine climb, I was having a tough time figuring out what I had been looking forward to, especially after Kevin and Andrew took off! I eventually caught back up to Andrew, but Kevin just kept going, and going, and going... until I come around a corner and there he is, at the side of the road, having had a seizure. Andrew looked perfectly happy to stop for him though, so I just kept going, figuring the two of them would ride up together.

I figured incorrectly; as soon as Kevin was feeling better, he went full throttle and quickly ditched Andrew. Nice guy. I still had to wait a few minutes for him at the top though, and my time was actually pretty decent.

Can't imagine how much nicer it could have been for a day in mid-January, with temps rising to the mid-70s. Seriously, time to drop that ski dream and get back on your bike!