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One of the best-rides ever, or what? Wow!

Kevin setting up Jeff's computer for his new bike

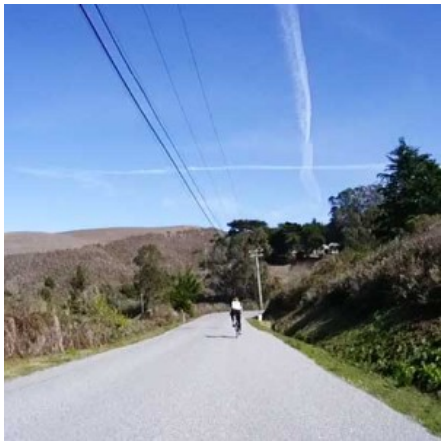
What could possibly make a ride that you've done dozens, likely well over a hundred times, really special? What would make it stand out from the rest? It's hard to figure out just what it was that made today's "Coastal Classic" ride with Kevin stand out. Was it...

-The coffee & pastries at Woodside Bakery? It seems so good at the time, but I seriously doubt it's the best thing to do just 10 minutes prior to starting up Old LaHonda!

-Running into JeffZ, who'd just picked up a new Madone 7 from us yesterday, and had a question about interfacing it with his Garmin computer (which he hadn't brought into the shop when he picked it up)? Or maybe the fact that he really likes the bike, and I just happened to have built it, completely, myself?

-Roads that had just about finished drying off after last night's rain, or the nearly-cloudless skies that created really cool clouds of fog coming up from the ground?

Lindsay Crawford, far right, local cycling legend (and very positive influence during my early racing days)



Do planes have intersections in the sky?

-Feeling pretty good up Haskins Grade, the hill on the way to Pescadero. That was nice! Any time I can get under 10 minutes on that climb, I'm OK with my effort. Worked out really well; I did a nice long & hard pull across the middle of the climb, after which Kevin went to the front and brought us home.

-Running into local cycling legend Lindsay Crawford outside Pescadero, heading the opposite way, who turned around to mention that he'd read my blog entry about doing time trials back in the day and he still had one of the handlebar holders for the stopwatches we used to keep track of our progress (which I'd mentioned in the post).

-The new cash register layout at the Pescadero Store. Yeah, I know, borderline thrill, but it really opens the place up and makes you wonder why they hadn't done that before.

The Pescadero Bakery is one very good reason to ride!

-The Pescadero Bakery pastries. Although this trip, while we bought a couple of raspberry turnovers (I think that's what they were), we kept those in my seatpack for emergency use (in case we bonked) and only had a coke. The pastries from the Woodside Bakery were still very much with us. Along with the large mochas (with whipped cream... wish they wouldn't bother asking, I mean, should it really be optional?).

-The skies. Just a few light clouds here & there, but for some reason aircraft trails were really obvious, including a few spots where they crossed in the sky, looking like intersections.

And then there's Tunitas. Truth be told, I kinda felt a bit worn by my efforts on Old LaHonda, Haskins and that last nasty bump on Stage Road before it reaches Highway 1. But it's Tunitas, you gotta love it. Kevin got away from me about halfway up the climb, and I briefly thought about going into suicide mode; you know, trying to go full-gas to keep up, until you explode. Every once in a while, you go a lot further than you thought, and sometimes, a really strong effort will psyche out the other person and they'll fall apart themselves first (because they don't know you can't keep going). But not today. I just kept plugging away, and eventually came across Kevin again on the flatter section, where he was recovering from a seizure. Another guy we see out there a lot, and who's name I forget, had stopped to make sure he was OK.Â He was back up and running just as I got there, thinking about the time up Tunitas he could have had. And me? I got to put the pedal to the floor and drag them back up to Skyline.

57 miles, 6358ft of climbing, back in plenty of time to not get done all the things I had time to get done. And Kevin really enjoyed it, the version of Kevin that didn't seem at all dragged down by all the meds he takes for his epilepsy, the version that I don't see as often as I'd like.

All that and I forgot one of the coolest things we saw. Climbing up the first hill on Stage Road, three large deer were flying across

the hillside. I have never, ever seen an animal racing across a field that fast! Two of them first, then another one appeared across the top of the hill and raced after the first two. Couldn't see anything they were running from. Maybe there's another side of deer that nobody knows about, a different way they act, only when nobody's looking? Whatever the reason, it was impressive and fun to watch.

A truly great ride. One of those days where all the dots connected nicely. --Mike--