

Get on a plane, or get on a bike? Pretty easy choice, even with wet road. Bike!

(Note: There would normally be photos of the ride, but still a few bugs in the system on this

The plan (remember, there's always a plan) was to get in a nice ride to the coast on a day without rain. Yeah, that was the plan. Get going at a reasonable time and get back early enough that, if needed, I could get a flight out to DC today instead of tomorrow, hoping to make it in time for the congressional meetings back there despite a nasty storm moving in.

What I didn't count on was waking up to... rain. It was supposed to be gone during the night! New weather report says it's supposed to be over by 2pm. We wait. and wait. Well, it is letting up, and in fact, at 2pm it's pretty much stopped raining. Wet everywhere, yes, but raining, no. Which meant rain bikes and yes, if we had to be out on our rain bikes, we might as well have left earlier. It's not exactly rocket science. But 1:59pm and Kevin & I were finally out of the garage and out on the road.

That original plan, going to the coast... that was out of the question. Not enough daylight. That meant West Alpine, but as secondary options go, that's a pretty nice one. So up Old LaHonda in about 24 minutes, down the other side, and 47 minutes up West Alpine. Could be worse. Faster on our Trek Madones? Oh yeah. But only by a couple minutes. The rain bikes feel a lot slower than they actually are, and after a while, you get used to it and it's not so bothersome anymore.

Heading up Old LaHonda we eventually caught up with a guy, later identified via Strava as Stephane M, who seemed just a bit faster than me, not quite as fast as Kevin. He had headed down the other side of West Old LaHonda as well, last seen stopped to take some photos. Then later, about halfway up West Alpine, we saw him again! He'd gotten past us when we took the "shortcut" by the duck pond, which adds a few minutes to the route. I was thinking, nice, maybe Kevin might go into "social" mode and slow down for a bit. Well yes, for about a minute, then he was off & running again, flying up the second half of West Alpine. I hung on for a while, eventually giving up about a minute to him by the top.

But here's the thing. Kevin was on the ropes on the first half of West Alpine, causing me to wait up for him. If I exploited his weaknesses, if I dropped him when I could, I'd probably be able to stay ahead of him to the top.

At the top we did a quick regroup with Stephane, alone with a Chain Reaction customer or two who'd ridden up the Page Mill side, including Joel B. You meet the nicest people on a bike.

In the end it was 42.3 miles, 4700ft of climbing, not too fast, but pretty nice ride. Yes, we should have left earlier, in the rain, and done Tunitas, but I was spending too much time on the computer, trying to figure out flight options for tomorrow's trip... and, in the end, sticking with the original. Because, after all, that was the plan. --Mike--