

Kevin's last ride for a while (not by choice)

After Sunday's tough ride to Santa Cruz I expected to feel a bit tired in the legs, but surprisingly that wasn't the case; I actually felt pretty darned good. Good enough that I just started climbing away from the group, which was content to start up Kings at a pretty leisurely pace, chatting about their own tough rides (think a couple of them, including Kevin Keenan, had done gnarly rides both Saturday and Sunday). I just kept on going, thinking I'll take it as far as I can.

About half mile past the park Kevin (my son, not the pilot) suddenly comes flying out of nowhere up to me, and I'm thinking geez, he was just loafing back there with the rest of 'em and was now going to drop me like a rock? Wish that had been the case. Instead he's raced up to tell me that he's turning back for home because of extreme pain in his side, plus a feeling like he was going to throw up. I thought OK, I've heard this before, it passes, and suggested he keep riding with us up to Skyline and head down 84 instead of doing the West Old LaHonda loop. No, he said this was too painful for that, so I told him I'd see him later and he headed back for home.

Everything else about the ride ends up being pretty insignificant; when I return home I find that Kevin's been taken to Kaiser Emergency, possibly for a ruptured appendix. He's admitted, and undergoes all manner of tests while I'm holding things together at the bike shop, short both Kevin and his sister, Becky. Kaiser determines that his right kidney is 100% blocked, which, for someone whose left kidney runs at 70% normal, isn't a good thing. Tonight he went through a procedure to have a stent installed, basically a tube forced through to open up the blockage. Didn't work. Scar tissue from earlier work on his kidney had completely sealed up the ureter.

The doctor explains to us why it's so important to get things flowing again; the blockage has actually shut down the kidney. This is not a good thing. Tomorrow they're going to try and place a tube directly through his side to the kidney, allowing a drainage path and hopefully jump-start the kidney back to life.

I just left Kevin shortly ago (11pm Tuesday night) in a state you don't want to see anybody in. Thankfully the excruciating pain was finally beginning to subside (due to drugs you don't want to be on). In the morning I'll see him again before work, find out when the new procedure is scheduled, and rearrange my priorities accordingly. And in-between now & then I'm left to wonder how, according to the Doctor, this kidney blockage might have been going on for months without being recognized (he'd visited the ER several times for flank pain, and told it was likely gas). Along with the usual questions about why Kevin, what can I do to ease his pain, the usual father-child stuff. But job#1 is to pray, literally, that his right kidney gets back to work. --Mike--