This page was exported from - Almost-Daily Diary
Export date: Wed Aug 5 10:41:39 2015 / +0000 GMT

Windy? Oh yeah! Flat road, 12mph, 220 watts... that's a headwind!

One nice thing about the wind is that it clears the air. This is the view from Highway 1 where Stage Road hits it, just south of Tunitas Creek.

One more solo Sunday ride to go before Kevin's back on the bike... it's been about 7 weeks since his last kidney operation, and finally, a week from Thursday, he gets his stent removed and can ride again. I could have used him today in the stiff headwinds on Stage Road! Actually, he sucks at headwinds, quite literally sucking my rear wheel. It's that one thing that I seem to be getting better at as I get older, but he just can't handle them. Noticed that a year or two ago, whenever it was we did the Delta Century, perfectly flat, fair amount of wind, and I had to be careful not to ride him off my wheel. It really shouldn't be that tough to hold someone's wheel in a headwind.

Admiring the view on West Old LaHonda

Simon, Francesca & Jason at the top of Old LaHonda

It was the usual Coastal Classic, with a lot more bike traffic than usual. Lots of people out riding in Woodside and up Old LaHonda, including quite a few people we've sold bikes to. At the top I ran into Francesca, Simon & Jason, and introduced them to the beauty of the west side of Old LaHonda. Hopefully they appreciated it enough to not mind the gradual climb back up to Skyline afterward. The view out there is so nice, hard to believe anybody could take it for granted. We are very fortunate to have such a fantastic playground to ride!

I decided early on that this wasn't going to be a speed run; I was going to take some time to smell the roses (take photos) along the way. Â Nevertheless I did get under 22 again up Old LaHonda, and under 10 minutes up Haskins. In between I stopped at the LaHonda duck pond, but nothing happening there, not many ducks, no turtles.

The run-in to Pescadero was predictably windy, but rather surprising was that it was one of those extremely-rare times there were no other cyclists there. Feeling a bit odd leaving my bike outside by itself, no other cyclists around, I passed on food & drink and rode on... straight into a really nasty headwind on Stage Road, the headwind referenced in the title of this post. Â Made me feel quite envious of the cyclists I saw riding in the other direction!

House on Stage Road with 2nd-floor Peacock

Closeup of the Peacock staring at its reflection

But soon it became evident why riding into such a nasty headwind was worthwhile. Â The house at the end of the section of Stage Road with the tunnel of trees? The Peacocks were out today, one of them walking across the 2nd story landing, staring at its reflection in the window and striking at what it thought was another Peacock. Real smart birds, these! But quite beautiful and entertaining to watch.

Time for more photos on the way up the final section of Stage to Highway 1, as seen at the top of this post, and then off to Tunitas Creek. For a brief time I considered going for speed, but that doesn't work if you don't reach the Bike Hut in less than 3 minutes unless you're really moving up the climb, and what the heck, I figured maybe I could finally get some photos of the mini waterfalls. Nope. Virtually impossible to catch on a camera what you can see with your eyes; the lighting is far too variable. You'd need to set up a tripod and take multiple pictures with different exposures and combine them, and I'm not about to lug that sort of gear on a bike ride!

More customers on Tunitas

A cyclist heading over the "bump" that officially ends the tough part of the climb

I did come across more customers though; two wonderful people who put in big miles at a pace far more reasonable than mine. Got a photo of them admiring the Bridge of Death (the bridge to the right of Tunitas that's at the start of the really nasty stuff), then moved on. Nice to not have to worry about my time up the hill for once! Just riding my bike.

Of course, a ride has many chapters, it's not always the case that a ride is relaxing or hard from beginning to end. Today, that meant an easy pace up Tunitas would be followed by a fast descent on Kings. It was warm & dry enough to be perfect for a high-speed descent; the only thing that could wreck it would be to come across a slow car. It only takes one; there's no way to safely pass a car on Kings. And sure enough, I had smooth sailing, no cars, until a bit below the Huddart Park entrance. Darned! Would have likely had my best Strava descent for Kings. Yes, I know, not always something safe to go for, but I set pretty firm rules for myself, not allowing myself to cross over the center line, always assuming there could be a car coming up around the corner that is.

All in all, just another nice day on a bike.