

Dressed the part... Andy Schleck won't be ready for the 'Tour, but Kevin will be



You know the world's in order when the Pescadero Mastadon no longer requires support cables to stay upright

It's hard to believe the roads to the coast aren't packed with cyclists. Seems like 95%+ are content to stay on the bay side, where cars are more numerous and the views aren't quite as spectacular as you find "up on top" or on the other side. Is it the effort it takes to climb, or are people concerned about being "too far away" from civilization? Hard to believe the latter is the case with everyone having a cell phone! But today, as usual, we saw lots of people in Woodside and very, very few during our ride through LaHonda, San Gregorio & Pescadero.

Today's ride didn't look so tough on paper, but buy did it hurt. Up Old LaHonda, out to San Gregorio, Stage to Pescadero, over Haskins, up West Alpine and return. I felt not-so-great going up Old LaHonda but a steady pace got me to the top just barely under 22. Kevin had passed me earlier but I gradually caught back up and passed him before the top. I definitely burned a few matches with that one, and then burned a whole lot more on the run to the coast, into a stiff headwind. Kevin claims he would have come around and worked if I'd asked him to, but might have been nice if he'd volunteered.

On Stage Road I still had the upper hand, but should have known it wouldn't last. After lunch in Pescadero, things would change. That really long sprint for the Loma Mar sign, the one Kevin always takes? Well, Kevin's back and had no problem taking that sprint yet again, leaving me a mile behind. On Haskins I thought I had him, but he clawed his way back to me and just kept going, and I didn't have whatever it might take to keep up. And the run up West Alpine? Kevin couldn't hold my wheel on the lower flat section, so I had to hold back a bit, and on the first part of the climb, he was quite a way back until the Buffalo Ranch, after which I could just barely keep him in sight.

So what made today's ride so much tougher than the Sequoia 100k? Probably the fact that Kevin's gradually returning to his old self so we were both riding a lot harder than two weeks ago. Strava tells the story; it's been a while since either one of us have had rides where we've had "accomplishments" on climbs, and today we had several of them, on Haskins and West Alpine. I'd say there's good reason to believe Kevin's going to ride me into the ground in France in a few weeks. Again.