Can't get a new engine, but a new bike helps!



When you look up at Skyline from below, seeing all the fog, you're thinking great, my brand new bike, first real ride, is going to be a mess. But it magically burns off before you get there, and you wonder what could be nicer than a morning like this?
There were supposed to be three more rides left in my 2010 Madone 6, not quite 5 years old. Last night riding home, this morning on the regular ride up Kings, and a final ride to the shop. Quite the surprise when UPS delivered my bike a day early, so I got it built up enough to ride home last night, leaving my old Madone in a sad state of partial disassembly, prior to stripping everything off and sending the frame back to Trek so they can see what 36,652.9 hard miles (including a crash or two, one of which resulted in a broken wrist) have done to it.

I weighed my Madone bare, with pedals, 15.73 pounds. This bike is 14.43. Still using the same wheels (Bontrager Aeolus D3) which had been on the Madone for about a year. Weight difference comes from a new one-piece bar & stem, lighter frameset, and 11-speed DuraAce Di2 vs 10. But what does it ride like?

Well... it couldn't quite overcome some significant air intake issues with the engine this morning. I really wish I could have had a dramatic entrance with the new bike, blowing past everyone on the climb, setting a new PR for Kings, but today's lungs were the worst since last winter. 27:22, could be worse, but sure would be nice to get under 27 again. Considering how I was breathing, I'm surprised I could get under 28. But once up top the world became a nicer place, with the sun's rays piercing through the trees and streaking across the road, and the wheels of Kevin, Todd, JR, George and Marcus to pull me along.



Yes, that's actually Kevin pulling at the front, followed by George, Todd & JR.Strangest thing on the ride this morning? Seeing Kevin (my son, not the pilot) actually pulling at the front as we descended the west side of 84! Thought I was hallucinating, but I took a picture, just to prove it.

So what can I say, so far, about the new bike? Yes, it feels lighter. When you stand and sprint, it feels like there's less of it to throw around. And it's absolutely positively smoother on chip seal, a definite plus! Handling is virtually identical to my Madone, which is a very good thing, since that bike handled amazingly-well, head and shoulders above anything else I'd ridden before. I set the bike up identically to the Madone, with two exceptions. I shortened the stem's reach from 10cm to 9, and narrowed the width of the bars from 44 to 42. The bar width was absolutely the right thing to do. Shortening the length? The jury's still out on that one. I might drop the stem a bit and increase the reach slightly, something I couldn't do before without getting into some pain.

Can't wait to get it out on a long ride this weekend!