

Riding/Working/TdF Planning

Where do I start. No write ups for Tuesday's or Thursday's rides. Nothing really eventful; still riding stronger than Kevin (not the pilot), and that's likely to continue because he didn't ride at all today (Sunday), leaving me to do a solo effort. Up Old LaHonda at a pretty good clip, 22:08 according to Strava. Leaving me to wonder where those 9 seconds were lost! Best recent historical time was back in September when I clocked a 22:04, so even 5 seconds faster would have been nice. Still, pretty good speed on the climb, especially on the first half. Then headed south on Skyline, something I rarely do, then down Page Mill, looped out to our former store location in Los Altos (still vacant after 2.5 years!!!) then back via Sand Hill and Woodside. Just 48 miles but felt pretty good and was able to keep the watts up later in the ride.

Work. Oh. My. Gosh. I need to be so grateful that we have work, that we're allowed to be open, which is so much better than many can say. But the stress of working through the day non-stop, no time for lunch, phone ringing every two minutes instead of once every 6, lines outside the door many times during the day... it gets to you. And the masks. I have a pretty nasty lung condition which I've compensated for by breathing more often than most. Specifically my lungs clear CO₂ at 28% efficiency of a normal person, but, because my lungs have been trained to breathe more often, I can still climb a hill on a bike. Just... loudly. But the masks. Wow. I get out of breath just talking to someone on the phone! Climbing stairs? Yikes. Thinking I've got another year of this ahead of me is scary.

And then there's the shop move. Getting the new location ready has been a Covid-19-enhanced nightmare. Few things are going right, but somehow it's all going to magically pull together and we'll be wondering why we didn't make this move years ago.

So sometimes I start feeling a bit helpless, hopeless, and generally down. Because what's to look forward to? That's what keeps me going. Something to look forward to. So, I bit the bullet. Despite the questions about how Covid-19 is going to play out, I've made arrangements to see the Tour de France again. The rescheduled Tour de France, which will run from August 31st to September 20, nearly two months later than normal. Found some very inexpensive air fares, but seriously don't know if United is going to keep flying nearly-empty planes or cancel a lot of them, potentially making it difficult to get to where we need to be, when we need to be there. But I need hope, so I've got everything blocked out, hotels in Grenoble (7 nights), Mulhouse (2 nights) and Paris (1 night). No idea what the Tour might be doing to keep things from getting too crowded, but we've generally not had much trouble finding a not-too-crowded spot on the big climbs. The finale in Paris? I have no idea how they could control crowd density, if they allow spectators at all.

And will the local trains be running? I hope so, because I'd really rather not rent a car, and I've mapped out an itinerary that allows us great access using the combination of local trains and our bikes. The 2020 TdF route at first looked downright hostile to fans, in terms of seeing many of the stages, due to long distances between some of them. But it really does look like I've got it figured out. One of those brief moments of clarity where it all came together.

Except, of course, that it could all come apart, if the trains aren't running, or they decide to exclude fans entirely. But the worst-case scenario is that we'll be able to ride some of the best cycling roads in the world, on our own. Life could be worse.