

Why ride Redwood Gulch if you don't like it? Ask Nietzsche.

Just the two of us today, and Kevin had no great ideas for where to ride. Someday he'll learn that, if he doesn't come up with a good plan, his dad will come up with... a bad plan. If you don't want to do Tunitas, if you've done West Alpine too many times lately for it to be fun, if riding up Page Mill on a warm-but-getting-hot day seems like a bad idea... then the only thing left is something even worse. If bad isn't good enough, and you don't want to drive to Mt. Hamilton, then what's left?

Redwood Gulch.

It's tough to say what the worst part of that ride is. The cruise through the Foothills to the Los Altos Peets, where we can check into what's happening to our old store's location, isn't challenging but isn't all that bad either. We kind of phoned it in, effort-wise though. Kevin insisted he didn't want to stop for coffee and food, that we could just ride straight through. Yeah, right. 58 miles straight through, with Redwood Gulch and Highway 9? No food anymore at the top of Skyline since Mr. Mustard left the scene? I talked him into it, which he later admitted was a good thing. But getting back to the worst part? The run up Stevens Creek Canyon feels like one long junk climb, never really amounting to anything, but never allowing you to establish a rhythm either. It's actually a pretty road, just not a fun road to ride up.

As if. As if you can really make a case that anything's as tough as Redwood Gulch. I still don't remember what it takes to climb RWG in style. Maybe I never did. I tried something a bit different this time, starting up the first steep section in my lowest gear, thinking maybe I wouldn't wear myself out so quickly. And what happened? I kept thinking about how steep it was and I had no lower gear left! Memo to Mike- that SRAM AXS 33 tooth rear cog is looking pretty tempting whenever I get a new bike. But I eventually made it, and once on Highway 9 started feeling not-quite-so-bad. Kevin was kicking up the pace a bit, I was holding it fine, but I was also wondering if it was a smart idea to be riding that hard up 9. Turns out it wasn't; the heat and effort triggered a pretty good seizure for Kevin, ruining prospects of a pretty decent time. Never mind that he almost rolled down a ravine in the process (he had safely gotten off his bike, I had him down on the ground, but then he started rolling in the wrong direction and I caught him just in time).

High temp 93, cooled down to mid-70s up on Skyline. Back up to mid-80s in Woodside. Only 56 miles, but pretty decent quality 56 miles.