

Still here



It's been a bit tough lately; there's no question I've had some issues with power since coming back from France. Those two broken ribs interrupted things in a bad way. Even though it was only a very short time off the bike (just a day or two), and it seemed remarkable I was riding again just a day after diagnosis and two days after breaking them, I had to take it easy for a while. No big climbs, no really long rides, had to be careful not to crash and re-injure myself worse than before. Normally, I'd come back from France and have some of my best times on the local climbs! This time? Far from it.

Most of it, I think, comes from a pretty rapid deterioration in breathing ability. I've got some pretty sucky lungs (going in for another test next week), and the only thing that keeps me going is working them (my lungs) really hard. I mean really, really hard. My ability to clear CO₂ out of my system is terrible, testing out at 28% of normal. I make up for it by breathing much more rapidly than most, which requires your lungs to really, really work. Give those lungs some time off (shorter rides, staying out of the hills initially) and what happens?

Even though things seem so bad right now, it still feels like I'm just one really good hard ride away from getting back to normal. Tackle something really challenging, like doing a Santa Cruz loop again.

Sounds like I'm looking for excuses, right? And I've got one more in my pocket. The meds I'm on for my bone marrow issue are doing a great job at controlling my otherwise out-of-control platelet engine (you don't want too many platelets as they can lead to nasty things like strokes, heart attacks, blood clots...), but they're also beginning to drive my hematocrit level lower. I dropped from 43% (not bad) on my test 4 or 5 months ago, to just 40% (not so good) on my test last week. Fortunately I'm in a place where it's OK to lower my med dosage a bit, which might bring them back up a few points. This, by the way, is approved by my hemo/oncologist. I doubt he has too many patients that want to chart out dosage vs power levers vs hematocrit. :-)

I'll try to get back to updating more regularly. Another thing that's kept me away from the diary has been planning for my annual vacation with my wife; Covid makes international trips just a bit more challenging than before! Plus this trip has a lot of moving pieces, takes place in Greece and includes time on a cruise ship in the middle of it all. Cruise ship? Me? Such a strange concept, but I'm actually looking forward to it. Leaving on Wed Oct 27th, returning Wed Nov 10th. Two weeks, 6 missed rides, and nobody gains weight on a cruise ship, right?