

## A lot less stressful than driving to SLO and back for a dog

The plan (remember, there's always a plan) was to get back to the usual, the Pescadero/Tunitas loop. But well before we even got to the base of Old LaHonda, Kevin was complaining about his knee and thinking maybe just get to the top and head back home. Me? No power, but no pain either. I'm good for whatever comes my way, as long as it's not fast.

But as usual, Kevin felt better as he went. At his suggestion we skipped the Pescadero visit, heading directly to San Gregorio. Back in the day, this wasn't a great option because the San Gregorio General Store wasn't bike-friendly, but that's changed over the years; today, the woman at the counter even let us know they had a bathroom if we needed it (we didn't). Very good drip coffee, by the way!

One downside of a coffee/snack break in San Gregorio though. Afterward, you immediately climb up Stage Road. With a break in Pescadero, you have several miles before you hit any climbing. That immediate climb up Stage, heading north from San Gregorio, is a rude awakening! You can pretend it's a warm-up to Tunitas, but you're just kidding yourself. It's too much, too soon, at least for a 65 year old. Kevin, on the other hand? He can hit the ground running, no issue.

Somehow I managed to stay on Kevin's wheel and not hold us up too much on Tunitas. We even passed quite a few people along the way. Except. Except this one guy, who we've seen before on Tunitas, flying past. I joked with another cyclist who'd seen him fly by that the guy doesn't actually ride all the way up Tunitas; he hides, waits for someone to come by, chases them down, rides ahead at full speed far enough to get out of sight, then pulls off and hides, waiting for the next victim. The candle that burns twice as bright only has to travel half as far. :-)

So now, Kevin hates me. Why? Because, like nearly every other ride, it worked out like I said it would. He felt much better at the end than the beginning.