

## Back to normal, sort of? Solo ugly ride up Redwood Gulch



A next-gen Tour de France in early training. Thursday didn't work out so well; Kevin got as far as, well, less than halfway to the START of the Tuesday/Thursday morning ride and couldn't go further due to vision issues caused by his epilepsy meds. Usually it's not too bad, but Thursday, not so good. He told me he'd catch up, that I should go ahead to see if anyone else was at the start and let them know. I did ride to the start, nobody else was there, and eventually I get a text from Kevin telling me it's just not happening. Not a good thing; my riding has been a bit sucky lately and I need the miles!

And then today... Kevin can't make it because he'd been throwing up most of the night, apparently from a new restaurant he and his girlfriend tried last night. I'd wanted to do an easy ride to Pescadero and back via Tunitas, but on my own, I really didn't feel like heading over the other side of the hill. But I did need something "real" and about the only thing "real" is either Page Mill or Highway 9 via Redwood Gulch. Page Mill wouldn't be long enough (and I'd done it just a week or two ago anyway), so Redwood Gulch for the win. Or loss.

I wasn't even going to pretend to have any speed or power today; I literally took it easy, without wishing it were otherwise. A rare thing for me. However, I did note that I was 52 minutes into the ride when I hit Purissima, which is noteworthy because, back in the day, way back in the day, it took 54 minutes to ride from about where I live now (just a few blocks from where I grew up) to visit my then-girlfriend in Sunnyvale, quite a few miles further-on. Was I that much faster then? Dumb question.

I did the mandatory stop at the Los Altos Peets, getting a medium (OMG did I call it a "grande" when I ordered it??? How gauche to do that at Peets!) Caramel Macchiato and an egg & ham thing, fuel for Redwood Gulch. And then on to Steven's Creek and a relatively-leisurely pace up Redwood Gulch. I told myself I wasn't going to push it, I was going to start the climb in my lowest gear and just leave it there... and I did. And I survived! The climb from the end of Redwood Gulch up 9 to Skyline... that seemed to be the toughest part. Just seemed to take forever. But eventually, I got there, and it's always a pretty easy run heading north on Skyline.

Overall I was pretty happy with the ride. My weights in about the right place and I never felt like the next pedal stroke would feel like one pedal stroke too far.