

## Threading the needle between storms



It's been anything but normal lately, with all the rain; I've missed several rides to work, which shouldn't be a big deal at just 3 miles each way, but I use the longer ride home (longer because there's a 400ft climb at the end) to decompress. And both Tuesday and Thursday's ride were shortened due to getting a bit of a late start and being slow in the rain. While it's true that I did get in the traditional New Year's Day Mt. Hamilton ride last Sunday, Kevin wasn't with me, so it's been an even longer time since a "real" ride for him.

But we did have a nice window to get in a ride, and symbolically, there's something about heading out to the coast. Ideally to Pescadero, but not enough miles in the tank to make that practical.

We negotiated how slow we would be going up Old LaHonda; somehow we never ride as slow as we believe we're going to, but at 27:58 it was anything but fast. Actually got passed by a woman on a heavy mountain bike at a speed that make us think it must be an e-bike. Nope. The rider might been bionic, not the bike. Kevin was still stronger than me on Old LaHonda, despite his lack of miles. Might have something to do with his being 30 and me 66. Hate that.

West Old LaHonda... oh my, what a mess! The road was posted as being closed, but I invoked the Jobst Brandt rule that says... well, I'm not sure what it says or actually allows, but back in the day, we rode a whole lot of closed and semi-private roads in the area with that guy. The worst part isn't noticed until you are on a section of road below where you can look up and notice the roadway's been undercut and just hanging a foot or so off the cliff. Not a good thing. Could be another long closure of a favorite for road cyclists. Almost forgot the Bobcat sighting on the lower part of West Old LaHonda.

The run out to the coast was surprising. Surprising in that I went to the front and stayed there, delivering more power on the flats than I could muster up Old LaHonda. That's very unusual for me! Actually dropped Kevin a couple of times (not intentionally; that's not my style).

At San Gregorio we had our usual coffee and hazlenut pasty sort of thing. As we entered a woman warned us to watch out, lots of crazy people on the road. I asked if she meant us? I overheard her mentioning to someone else that she'd been out of power for 5 days, as she ordered her Bloody Mary at 1pm.

I didn't expect the climb up Stage Road to Highway 1 to be fun, but unlike Old LaHonda, I was able to keep pace with Kevin, maybe even a little bit better. Tunitas, on the other hand, went much better than expected. On my own I probably could have done 55 or so from the coast to Skyline, but ended up with a 1hr 2 minute time because Kevin was in a bit of trouble. You'd think I'd take advantage of feeling better when I can...

Overall a good ride, beat the rain, and felt better at the end than the beginning.