

Last ride of last year, followed by first ride of the next. Refused to wimp out!

Tuesday, Dec 31st. Last ride of the year. Did not seem like a good idea to make it anything less than the full distance, all the features of the normal Tues/Thurs ride, partly, perhaps mostly, as an act of defiance to age.

Ex-pilot Kevin came along for the ride. Two 68... no wait, I'm 68, Kevin turned 69 in October! So two guys nearing 70 heading at an easy pace up Kings, noticing what a nice clear day it was, enjoying the usual very light traffic and noticing a nearly complete absence of a breeze. Well that changed on West Old LaHonda, where we caught quite a headwind heading up into the little valley, before making the big U-Turn.

We finished the ride over 25 minutes slower than way way way back in the day. But we did it, we rode the exact same ride we did several decades ago.

New Year's Day is always supposed to be a climb up Mount Hamilton. If too cold or too wet I'd find a way around it, but the weather cooperated, actually warmer than forecast. Karl, from the way way wayback days, joined the adventure, catching the 9:08 Caltrain from Redwood City to San Jose. Those new faster trains are pretty cool, but I don't like the layout of the bike car as much as what we had before, and it's true, even the longest trains have just one bathroom, which seems really inadequate. On the other hand, did the old cars have any bathrooms at all?

It was the usual ugly ride out of downtown San Jose, with the endless stoplights for miles. The only thing worse is the return, when you wonder, at each red light, if this is the one that's going to cause you to have to get the next train home.

The climb... same as it ever was, everything seems so familiar, which makes sense given how many times I've ridden it. I held on until close to the end, maybe two miles from the top, when Karl pulled away and there was nothing I could do. That's OK; it wasn't going to be a competition anyway.

You can see from the video how nice it was up on top. Monterey Bay, SF Bay, snow-capped mountains in the Sierra Nevada all within view. And not as cold as it was supposed to be (it was probably mid-50s).

So I'm not giving up in 2025. No plans to cut back on anything, and 2024 really wasn't that bad on the bike. Got in that really good ride up the cliff road opposite Alpe d'Huez without falling apart, and a couple other tough rides in July while in France. Time will tell.