

## Riding in the real world is much better. I can handle 32.6F.



I had the world all to myself.

Last week I wimped out; on Wednesday, when I saw that it was going to be cold Thursday morning (about the same temp as it was today), I set up the trainer and rode inside instead. And, like all past trainer experiences, I couldn't develop anywhere near the power I can in the real world... maybe 160 watts instead of 200, and even that 160 feels a lot tougher than 200 in real life. And the wattage numbers aren't suspect; I'm getting them from my Speedplay Power Pedals in both cases, not from the trainer itself.

If wimping out didn't come with a price, other than pride, it wouldn't be so bad. But when the scale showed me topping out at 169 pounds, a number I haven't seen in YEARS... so there's no way around it, you play, you gotta pay.

I knew it was going to be cold again this morning, nothing near record cold, but cold enough. Not that big a deal; made sure my heated glove batteries were charged up, located my warmest baselayer, wore a long-sleeve thermal jersey AND topped it all off with one of those amazing lightweight Bontrager rain/wind jackets. I knew it was going to be just me (ex-pilot's got a cold and the other Kevin is going to be off the bike for a while recovering from his knee procedure). Would I rather ride with others? Generally, yes. Keeps my mind in good places. But not an option, and it's not like I don't know my way around these roads.

But oh my was I slow. Up to the first timing point on Kings, I was wondering just how much slower than 40 minutes I might be, and as I hauled my heavy butt up the hill, I was thinking, more than once, if I'd be turning back on the way up. Trouble is, it would be even colder riding on the flats, and I was generating just the right amount of heat to stay warm but not sweaty-warm.

Somehow I did make it up under 40, just barely. Figured no way would I be doing the full ride, including the West Old LaHonda loop, but as I neared each of the two bail-out options (first at Swett road, where I'd head down toward Tunitas and then back up to Kings, and second at Skegg's where I'd double-back to Swett and do the Tunitas thing), I found myself continuing on Skyline instead. Slow, but not broken.

In the old version of normal, I'd have to hit Sky L'onda by 8:43am to have enough time to do West Old LaHonda, vs heading straight down 84 back into Woodside. But without the West Old LaHonda section, it really isn't that much of a ride. About 24 miles instead of 31, and that extra 7 miles, with another 800ft or so of climbing, really makes a difference. Makes it seem like a "real" ride. Like you're not quitting. You can still do it.

So nowadays, the new cutoff is 10 minutes later, 8:53. Makes for a fast shower and problematic eating before the shop opens, but at almost 69 years old, my thinking is, if anything's gotta change, the shop's gotta open 10 minutes later on ride days! No, that's not going to happen. I'll probably just have to start riding 10 minutes earlier.

In the end, very glad I did the full ride, especially when the scale showed a much-more-reasonable 164.5 post-ride weight. Only snag was that my Garmin started acting up 2/3rds of the way through the ride, no longer scrolling through screens and not responding to pushing buttons. While I was in slow motion today, my Garmin was acting super-slow, agonizingly slow, like taking 5 minutes to respond to a button push. My biggest fear was that I'd lose the ride, and on a day like this, that ride was important!!! Fortunately, I was able to get it to finish recording the ride and download about five hours later. After rebooting, the Garmin's acting normally

again.

At least the Garmin has the ability to return to its pristine new shape with a reset. Too bad I can't do the same!