

BREAKFAST RIDERS

Mines Rd 2009: The weather was nice and pleasant -- in the morning. We had nine bikes

show up with regulars Steve Berger, Ed Buckner, Gary and Beth Helm, Skip Moffatt, George Schjelderup, Tom Van Zuiden and passenger, and myself. New to the group were John Mellquist and Mark McCoy. Mark agreed to be tail gunner -- thank you. We left the parking lot and started our hour of freeway riding. The best I can say is the traffic wasn't bad. We got to Livermore and topped tanks, got snacks, drinks, and used the facilities. I reminded everyone to be using their mirrors as well as their windshields and to really watch the road surface for debris once on Mines Rd. We had barely got on Mines Rd when we ran into slow traffic. Good news is most went straight when we had to turn left. The vehicle that did turn our way was slow, but we found a nice spot to get around and start the fun. After about 6 miles, we ran into a couple of very slow trailers from Illinois. Oh well. I picked a spot to pull over and gather the group. Once together, we started out again, but as expected we hit the trailers too soon. We front runners found our way safely around them and had some spirited fun...until we ran into a caravan of cars -- from Illinois. There were too many to get around, so I pulled us over for another roadside break. As we rested, we all enjoyed the glorious skies framed between the clouds. The clouds were bright white and the sky was deep blue. After a good 10 minutes, we took off. We passed some of the vehicles yet again...it was starting to get a bit funny. We also passed a couple of cows munching alongside of the road. This added to the army of squirrels, wild turkeys, and other birds of lesser impact that were using the road with us. We finally made it to The Junction and took a short break. There were not many bikes there -- unexpected on such a nice weekend day. We got back rolling and started down Del Puerto Canyon Rd...and we quickly ran into a slow trailer (from California) in the steepest section. It made for a safe roll through a section I have never been comfortable on. When he could, the trailer pulled over and let us go by. I pulled over one more time down in the flatter section to gather the group before heading for Patterson. We got to Patterson and while most chose Quiznos, a couple chose different fast food joints. The temperatures were expected to be in the 90's, but it only felt like mid 80's...not

too bad. It seems the clouds had held back the higher temps. Before we had finished eating, Tom rolled by and said he was running on home. Once done with lunch the group split into two main groups. Steve, Ed, Gary and Beth, George, and John headed up Hwy 5 for home. Skip, Mark, and myself went back up Del Puerto Canyon for more twisties. Del Puerto is much better going uphill, than downhill -- duh. I backed the spark down just a wee tiny bit (not much at all) and was able to keep Skip and Mark in my mirrors most of the time. We took a quick stop at The Junction before heading north. We encountered a couple of deer and had to come to a near stop to allow them to leave the road. And we also came across a small herd of goats that panicked and scrambled through the fence to get off the road. Just to top off the animal menagerie, we spotted a domesticated turkey using the road. We ran into traffic about 10-15 miles up from The Junction, so I again pulled us over to let them roll away. We made it down out of the hills and into traffic -- sigh. After a stop for gas, Mark said he was going to head home via Hwy 580. That left Skip and me for a last bit of narrow fun -- Morgan Territory Rd. After following the straight zig-zag, we got onto Morgan Territory and ran into a slow vehicle. We just stopped in the middle of the road (no place to pull over for him or us) and allowed him to get gone. The bad news is they had chipped sealed the road. The good news is it had been long enough for the loose gravel to be swept off. As we got into the real tight area that follows the creek, we found the repave job had filled in the worst of the pot holes and ground down the worst of the up-wrinkles. The real great news is the road retained its character. It was rough enough to be used to stir a gallon of paint -- quickly. It was narrow to the point that a Yugo might fit. The road went up and down and left and right -- mostly second gear. Skip thought the road could have been paved better. made wider, etc, but I tried to tell him how much improved it was. Alas, the twisties came to an end in Clayton. We made a stop in Walnut Creek for some more fluids before heading for home on Hwy 680. The temps were just reaching the 90's.

