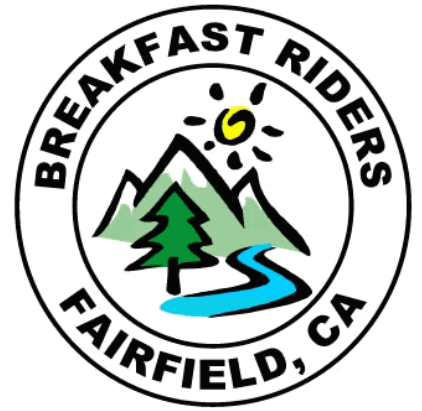


BREAKFAST RIDERS

Goat Rock: The day had the forecast of rain...but just 30%... and light at most. There

were four of us at the gas station to start the day and some were expected to join along the way. We had Steve Dodini (who was going to leave us early for the 49ers -- they won), Skip Moffatt, George Schjelderup, and myself. I was expecting more bikes, but the chance of rain and wisdom kept most away. As we left, we navigated the newest, not quite ready road changes on N Texas and got on Hwy 80 where we experienced some of Cal Trans' greatest incomplete work -- a roller coaster almost worthy of Walt Disney. We took the Hwy 12 exit, where the road construction was done and nice. Just as we got on the Southern Crossing bridge, a bike passed us and we waved. When we came to the stop light, the biker proved to be Greg Leopold, who literally joined us in flight. Then along Hwy 12/121, we were treated to more road construction -- uneven road surfaces that our bikes just loved. James Mickens met us at Big Bend (Hwy 121 & 116) to make us a total of 6 bikes. The traffic up until Arnold Dr was moderate and moving along nicely. Oh well, then there was Arnold Dr and traffic -- sigh. We made our way to Glen Ellen and onto Warm Springs Rd. The traffic disappeared! We were able to run at a nice sparky pace over the often rough road surface almost to the end of Bennett Valley Rd. We took our first stop at the gas station on Farmers Ln. I looked at the clouds that were poised above our goal. They were getting darker. Dang! We got onto to Hwy 12 and as planned, Steve left us for the 49ers. And as usual, I got a little confused in Sebastopol where Hwy 116 cuts through downtown, but we made it through and onto to Bodega Ave. Again traffic lightened up the farther we were from town, but not quite up to the speed limit. Making the turn onto Bohemian Hwy, we started having a bit of fun. The road is nicely twisted and mostly well paved. A brief slow down in Occidental and then we again were able to open up and have a bit of mild sparky fun. We got onto Hwy 116 and had slow traffic and increasing fog until we took a break at Duncans Mills.

The deli has just recently closed, but the gift shop next door had sodas, snacks, etc. As we rested, a very light mist started. It was not heavy enough to dampen the road. So with caution, we headed towards the coast. Now we were not having any traction problems, but the road was starting to show some shine from the combination of fog and mist.



While in the climb just before Meyers Grade Rd, we crossed a cow catcher. Boy was that slippery! We made the turn onto Meyers Grade Rd with hope for some respite from the mist. Not only did the mist get thicker, but so did the fog. It was getting very hard to see the road. I stopped the group to let them know I planned to shorten the route by taking Fort Ross Rd, but James was not in sight. While we waited, the plan was changed again. We were going to just head back down and run for home. We waited. Still no sight nor sound of his bike. Dang! We headed back, fearing the worst, but we soon saw him coming along very, very gently. We passed on the narrow road and James was up and out of sight before we came to a stop. Greg did an about-face to gather James and soon returned saying James was coming right behind him. We waited. No James. He had stopped to change face shields before joining us. Eventually we had everyone pointed downhill, so we aimed for Hwy 1. The mist and fog made a thick gray veil. This was some very intense riding at slow speeds. We struggled to even see the yellow reflectors on the road. Lift your face shield and your glasses got fogged. Lower your glasses and rain spattered into your eyes and caused them to close. I pulled the group over to allow some RVs and other vehicles to pass as we very cautiously made our way back to Hwy 116. The fog and mist had lightened up before we got to Guerneville and lunch at the Garden Grill. We sat outside, under a canopy, next to a heater. Nice. Good food and pleasant service. We left and headed for Hwy 116, planning to do it all the way home. The mist and fog was quickly falling behind us. So I pulled the group over and asked if they wanted to try the rest of the route, with the hope of dry twisties. James, wisely,

opted to run straight for home along Hwy 116. The rest were foolish enough to follow my lead. Almost as soon as we turned onto Guerneville Rd, the mist reappeared. But it was not too bad. As we made it through Santa Rosa and made the turn onto Calistoga Rd, I felt my tires slip big time on the slimy road surface. A couple of turns up the hill and my back tire lost drive traction. Oh boy. What have I done to us? We made it to St Helena Rd/Spring Mountain Rd safely and the road was again somewhat dry. Well dry-ish. Well not totally wet anyways. We did eventually get some dry road, but by then I was deep into my wet road driving behaviors and had to cover a few miles of dry before getting any modest gains in speed. We made it to and through St Helena and I pulled the group over for a stop on Silverado Trail. George asked if we were going to take Hwy 128 up to Lake Hennessey, but I declined. I felt the weather gods had dampened almost every attempt at our enjoying twisties. I was not going to tempt them again. We had dry road all the way to Napa and modestly paced traffic. I enjoyed the mental break. We headed up Monticello Rd for Wooden Valley and was finally rewarded with dry twisties. I made it home and hung my gear up to dry out. This has been a rainy year: Two complete rain outs, two rides with some rain, and one dry ride where rain was expected -- out of nine rides so far!