

Honolulu For Lunch Report by Rick Gordon

I turned out for Sunday's ride in Monterey Park despite the "iffy" weather.

As I pulled into the only available parking spot in front of the tennis courts at Barnes Park, I didn't notice anyone at the start. Arriving about 20 minutes after the called-for start time of 8:30am, I would normally not expect to see the group as they would have surely started. This morning was different: The streets were wet.

It was clearly a day where rain was imminent if not guaranteed. There was a wet chill in the air as I readied myself for the ride.

Perhaps everyone decided to skip the ride. I might be the only one foolhardy enough (David Nakai excepted) to attempt it.

I knew it was going to be an adventure. I would be riding alone in an area and on a route unknown to me. Armed with my Wheelmen route slip and my Garmin computer, I felt that I could pull this off without getting lost. Getting chilled (wet and hypothermic) was another matter.

When I began riding the first few residential streets, a cold light shower began, giving me shivers and second thoughts! I persevered hoping it would stop and, as luck would have it, by the time I made the first really important turn onto the Rio Hondo Bike Path, I knew I made the right decision to go for it; suddenly, I felt like the adventure had begun. It was still threatening "wet" and the air was chilly, but now I was warming to my own rhythm and excited by the unknown adventure of the trail and glad that I could follow the river's course. There was comfort in knowing that I could stay on route. Here I must remark on the importance of a well-written route slip to keep the rider on course. Just a little descriptor like: " U-TURN AROUND MEDIAN B-4 ROSEMEAD" made all the difference in finding my way. As the ride progressed, I was blown away by how beautiful the scenery was, especially noteworthy were San Marino, South Pasadena, Pasadena, the Arroyo and San Rafael Hills (Linda Vista Ave., Berkshire Ave. & Descanso). As I was about to pass by Descanso Gardens, I decided to stop and take a look around. I ended up visiting the gardens for a nominal fee. There I had a bite of lunch (hot chicken gumbo soup and sandwich) and took a nice walking tour of the gardens. Camellias were on exhibit and growing everywhere.

I decided, as the day was waning (mid-afternoon) and although I was not yet at Honolulu Street, that I would skip Honolulu for lunch (now unnecessary), and instead of doing the Long - which involved many more miles of riding over La Tuna Canyon and back through Sunland - I would instead ride more of the scenic splendors provided by the Medium's return route along the East Side of the Arroyo. Windsor/Arroyo Blvd., and the long stretch of El Molino Ave. were picturesque highlights which made for an enjoyable and eye-candy-filling return to Monterey Park. But despite the scenic wonders, I still had to contend with a relentless, mostly southerly gusting wind that at times seemed liked it was coming from all directions simultaneously. For a brief spell, I even was showered with what I would term a spray mist borne by those gusts. With temps in the upper 40's and 50's all day, I was glad to return to the warmth of my car at Barnes Park.

--Rick

Taken along the Rio Hondo - I counted about a dozen riders total for that stretch.

It seemed like I had the bike path all to myself for much of the ride.

I wonder if any others showed for the Club ride?