

Lake Wohlford and Lilac Road Loop Ride Report

2 November 2014

by Rob Verfurth

Route: Start at by Lake Hodges and ride to Lake Wohlford, across Woods Valley and onto Lilac Road. Cross the bridge mall over I-15 and descend West Lilac to Camino Del Rey. Return to Old 395 and head south to Jesmond Dene Road and back around Escondido to the mall.

Riders: Claus, Tony, Eric, Rick W, Jeff L, Bernie, Len (TE), Guido, Larry, Ernst, Flo, Garet, Rob and Neil

Weather: Bright sunshine and cool start in the low 50's. Temperature rose nicely throughout the ride, perfect fall weather for a fast group ride.



Group start

We had a nice turnout of 14 riders for another Lake Wohlford climb and speed fest. It was cool but sunny when we rolled after letting the Ranchos riders get out front. The pace up Mary Lane and across Summit Dr was controlled and a good warm-up. We stayed as a tight group, in a nice pace line, along S. Citrus to Bear Valley Parkway. Garet was out riding, getting a short escape from all his increasing family responsibilities. He recently added a new baby to his family so kudos to him for keeping road time a priority. Neil R made the ride; he has had to cut back on his mileage but still has some great riding form.

The usual banter and chatter carried everyone to the bottom of the Lake Wohlford climb. The line of riders pulled out in front and away from me as usual. I rode steady and used Claus to help pull me on the top half of the climb. We roped in Ernst near the rest stop. After a quick respite we all rolled out towards Woods Valley. The pace was fast but we kept mostly together climbing the last hill to get to the turn. The early guys stopped to regroup. I took the turn onto Woods Valley and started to slow as the other riders did. Claus rolled by me and looked like he wanted to start to pull away. I grabbed on his wheel and others quickly followed. Eric, Rick W and Guido passed Claus so I went to get on the wheel of those guys with Larry right behind me.



Eric, Guido and Ernst in pursuit



Bernie, Neil Jeff & Larry on Summit Drive

The pace was brutal with the three leaders pushing and passing each other multiple times over the next mile or so. As we neared the golf course Ernst flew to the front and another surge ensued. The pace line flew to the end of the road. I did not see who got there first as I had fallen off the back. A number of PR times were set on the Strava segment of Woods Valley for the ride. Ernst and Gareth had family responsibilities so they turned left onto Cole Grade while the rest of the guys rode to Lilac.



West Lilac Road Speed Demons

After a short wait at the light we all rode quickly along Lilac. Our smooth San Diego county roads are full of holes and bumps. Tony lost his water bottle bouncing through one of the rough patches in the road on one of the early

descents. He and I stopped to retrieve it as it rolled across the road. We were now behind the group and pushed to get back as everyone made the turn at the split to Old Castle Road. We continued on Lilac and had previously decided to skip Couser Canyon. That meant we had to turn onto West Lilac instead of continuing north on Lilac. This is a busy turn and I wanted to get to the front to make sure everyone made the right turn. My acceleration to the front just prompted a faster pace from the guys as we flew along. Everyone made the turn to West Lilac where thing really got going. We were riding as a group toward the big bridge that went over I-15. The roads are curvy and there were very few cars. A torrid pace was set by Eric, Rick W, and Neil. The group began to split. The front group was down to 7 riders for most of the next three miles. Joining the other mentioned speed demons were Larry, Flo, Guido and Rob. I hid at the back of the group while all those guys bombed along, the pace never slowing. It seemed like we were coming to the bridge but every corner showed another stretch of road. Most of the guys took a turn on point and kept the pace high. It was a beautiful sight watching those speedy riders push to the bridge. The hammerfest ended as we stopped after crossing the bridge to catch our breath.

The rest of the group came back together and we all descended down West Lilac. I guess the early slug fests did not tire out the boys as a few of the guys pushed the pace. On point were Larry, Guido, Rick W, Flo and Rob. We hit the curves hard and fast with little separation between the wheels. Rick W came in a little hot one corner but managed to hang onto the turn. I started to fall away on the final stretch but hung onto Flo's wheel. Larry, Guido and Rick W hit the corner first. My tank was now empty. The guys reformed a nice pace line along Camino Del Ray. I fell back early and had to be helped by Neil as the rest of the group rolled out of sight. Neil and I made it to the campground for our break.



Larry and Bernie resting at campground store



Neil thinking Corona or Monster Drink

I snagged some water from Eric and decided to get an early lead on the long climb up Old 395. Claus and Len rolled out with me. We put Claus on point and he pulled us along at a good pace. Len tenaciously hung on his wheel while I drifted back, the gap increasing slightly with each mile. I kept a sharp eye over my shoulder every so often expecting to see the guys flying up behind me; they never came into view. At the intersection we decided to continue to roll towards Jesmond Dene, again thinking the guys would be right behind us shortly. The three of us hung together back to Broadway and through our usual neighborhood loop in Escondido. The legs were still tired from the early pushes so we cut through downtown and back onto Bear Valley Parkway. We rolled into the mall with only 55 miles under our wheels and about 3,700 feet of climbing. I was happy to be finished. Claus continued to ride towards his home and get in over 100 miles for the day. The rest of the guys got back to the parking lot 5 minutes after we showed. Everyone accounted for, some great fast riding and a fun Descenders ride.