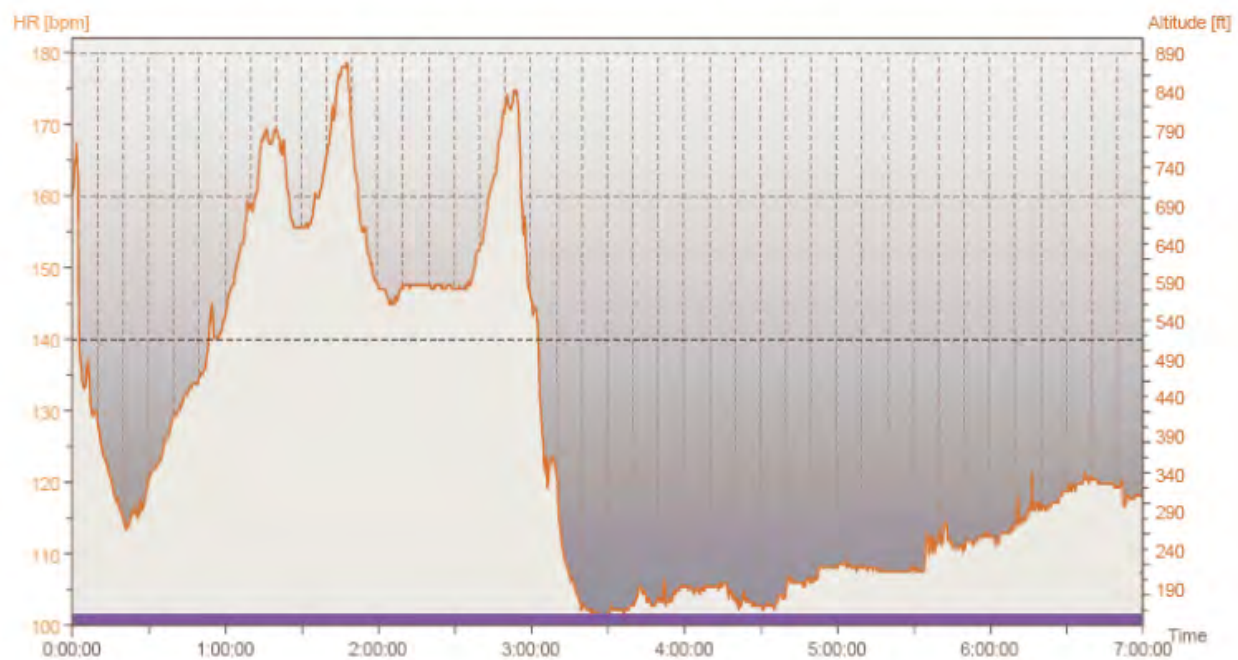


The Old Men and the Mountains, June 16 – 20, 2009

488 miles / five days

Day 1: Lafayette to Oakdale. Distance: 94 miles, Elevation: +1755ft.



Kevin, Heading south from Lafayette, to Livermore

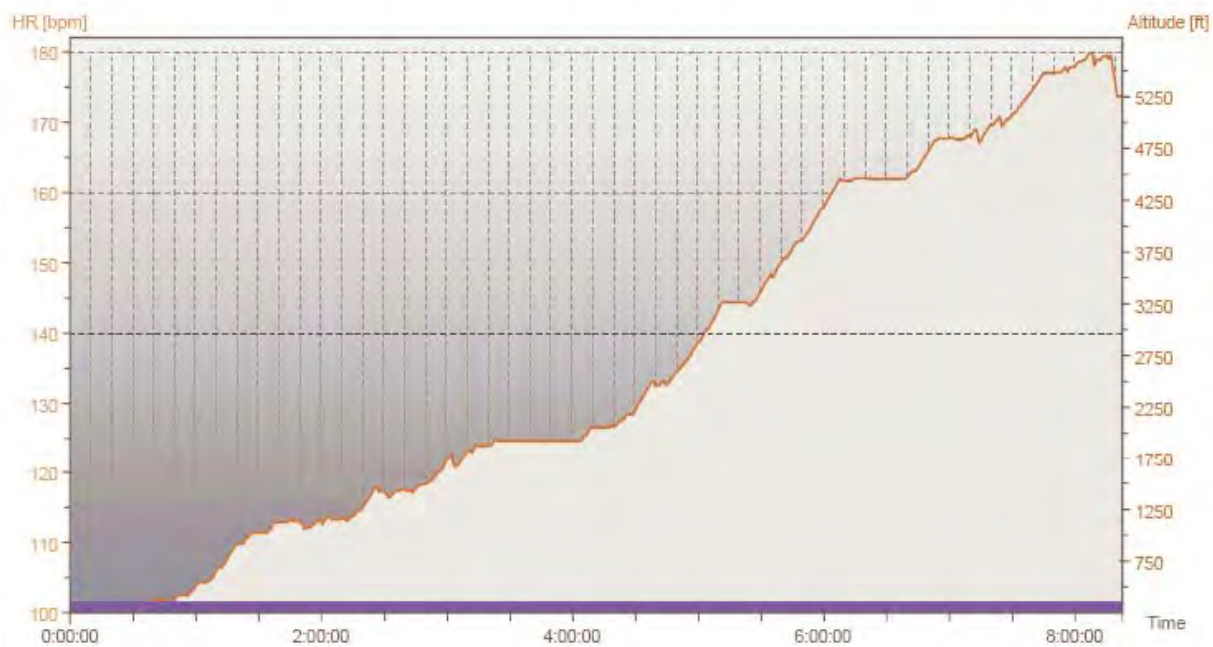


Kevin. Heading east after crossing Altamont Pass



Oakdale train station. I nearly got ran over on a narrow street for this shot.

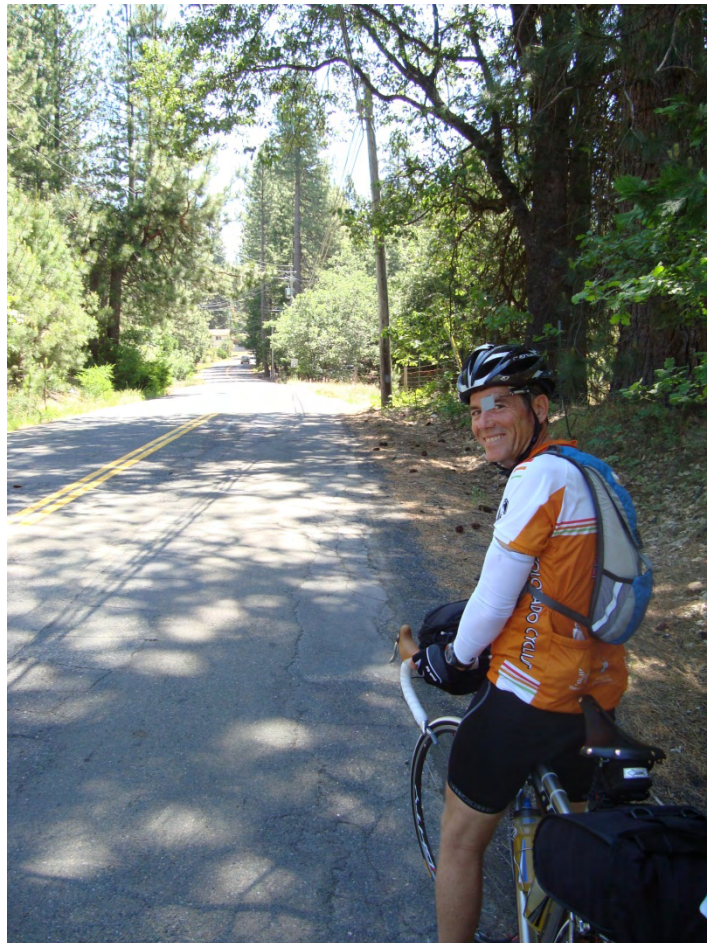
Day 2: Oakdale to Strawberry. Distance 65 miles, Elevation: +6645ft.



Moi. Heading towards the Sierras, east of Oakdale



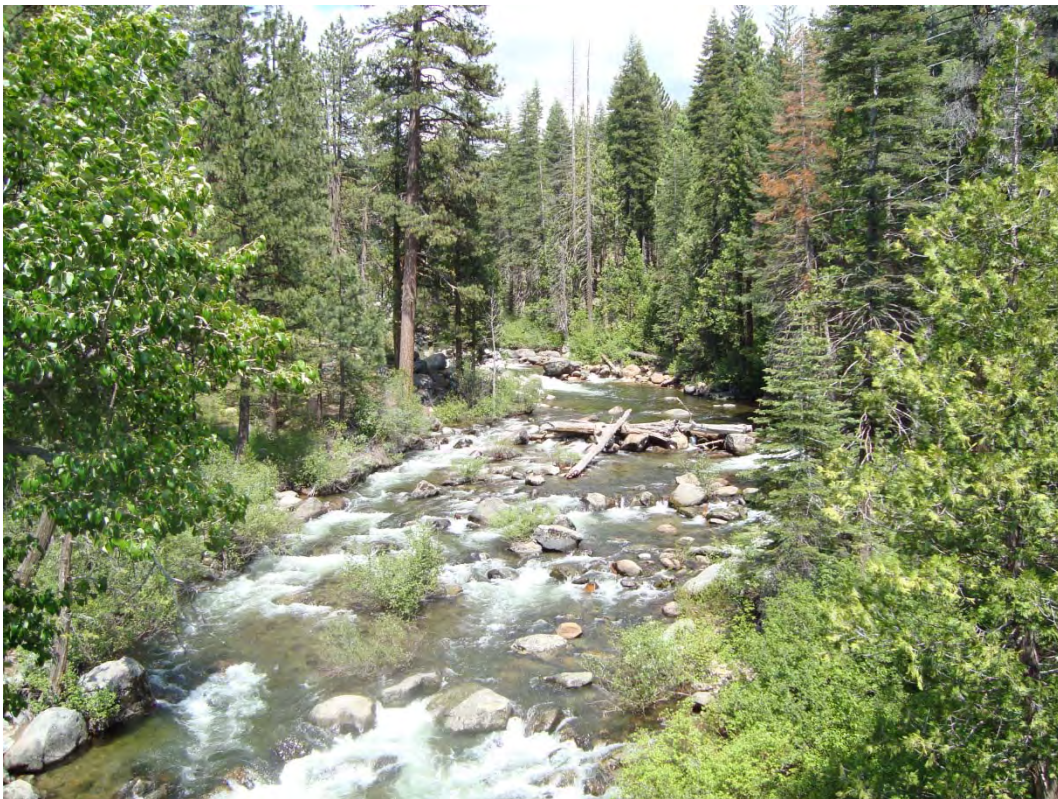
Steep grade on Phoenix Lake Road, east of Sonora. Kevin at top



Kevin, waiting for me at the top of the grade

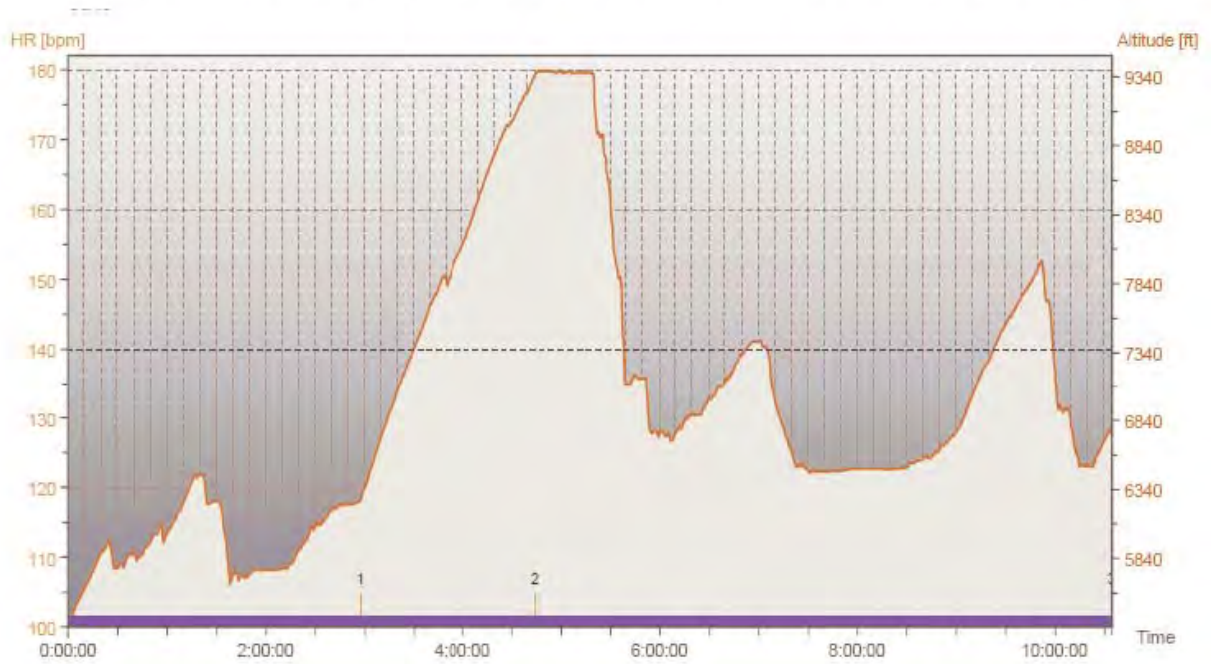


I'm enjoying our first vista of the Sierras into which we were heading



The South Fork of the Stanislaus River at Strawberry, 5,300 ft

Day 3: Strawberry to Lee Vining via Sonora Pass. Distance 94 miles, Elevation: +8255ft.



Climbing east of Strawberry in early morning



The Dardanelles



I guess this means all the climbing we've done to get to this sign at 6,300 ft elevation in Kennedy Meadow will be dwarfed by what's ahead...



Hmmm.... That's a pretty big sign trying to tell us something, though I can't imagine what. We were amused by the use of the 'downhill' graphic which applies to going down on the other side of the Sierras not climbing up on this side !



Kevin starting up the grade above Kennedy Meadow... this is now some serious climbing and does seem a bit steep but not too bad... yet ! We're pedaling about 14 pounds of bag weight plus a few liters of water in Camelbacks plus snacks



A bit further uphill from Kennedy Meadow... this was a VERY steep and VERY strenuous section of Sonora Pass.



Sonora Pass high country scenery as I pedaled along



Pedaling uphill towards Sonora Pass



Above Chipmunk Flat, between 8,000 and 9,000 ft elevation, the road pitched up really steep with some switchbacking. This was memorable climbing...



Still on that steep section before 9,000 ft, where I shot a photo as an excuse to catch my breath for a minute



I shot this pedaling by, in a daze from transiting the Chipmunk Flat steep climbing section, which I'm exiting joyfully here as the grade lessens



High country scenery approaching Sonora Pass



My 1972ish Mondia Special parked right before Sonora Pass. Its setup includes some vintage parts: Stronglight 49D crankarms, 28-53 TA chainrings, 13-32 seven speed IRD freewheel, Shimano XTR rear derailleur, Simplex Criterium lever front derailleur, Simplex downtube shifter, Edco Competition bottom bracket, OMAS hubs with Mavic OpenPro rims, CLB1 centerpull brakes with CLB levers, Lyotard 45ter pedals, Gipiemme seatpost, GB stem, etc. It is setup with a Carradice SQR Tour bag in rear and an Ortlieb handlebar bag.



The conquering heroes at Sonora Pass. Kevin said he waited about a half hour for me, but he may have been charitable. I'm slower than him but I am steady.



Kevin, as we're about to head down the eastern side of Sonora Pass... a steep, fast downhill, with the 'grade' sign correct for the plunge ahead.



West Walker River, going downhill on the east side of Sonora Pass





Approaching Bridgeport



Long steady grade up Conway Summit



Descending Conway Summit, overlooking Mono Lake



Mono Lake as I approached Lee Vining

Day 4: Lee Vining to Oakdale via Tioga Pass. Distance 139 miles, Elevation: +8100ft.



Sunrise, climbing the bottom of Tioga Pass into Yosemite



Looking a few miles up the Tioga Pass climb



Looking way up where I'll be on the Tioga Pass climb



Now I'm up there, looking back down canyon, up which I've climbed.



My Mondia, nearing the top of Tioga Pass



The high point of the trip. Starting in Lee Vining at 6,781 feet, we climbed thirteen miles up Tioga Pass to summit. Now we have 126 miles to Oakdale.



Yosemite scenery



Yosemite scenery from the road



Day 5: Oakdale to Lafayette
(No record of Day 5, 95 miles, +2000ft.)



Kevin and train. Riding across the Central Valley early in the morning



Heading north from Livermore towards Lafayette, and then... THE END !!