

It was a beautiful day for a ride.

I started mine in Kentucky. Milton hill was drenched with water from warm humid air condensing on the cold road. As I climbed Michigan Road, my first humorous observation for the day was a car passing me (on the bike), with a bumper sticker saying "I support a greener Indiana."

I caught up with John and Stacy Crawley, just on their way to the ride start. It soon became apparent we were the only riders so we set out North on Michigan Road and later, North on Graham Road. There were still quite a few cinders on the roads following our last snow events, but no tire mishaps today. The wind was supposed to be ~10mph from the Southwest today, but we were enjoying a stronger push than that, all the way out to Pleasant. We stopped at the store, which has changed management often enough that I can't confirm the name, but the last one I remember is "S&J Market". We arrived in time for Amish Rush Hour, as there were a lot of farmers with Amish workers getting the mid-day's food supplies. In spite of the crush of customers--the cash register tape was all the way over the counter and coiled up on the floor in front--service was still pretty quick. John and Stacy were just in for a snack, but I was ready for **LUNCH** and ordered a sandwich. Since lunch on this ride was not mandatory, I encouraged John and Stacy to go ahead if they were on a timeline, so they continued on the road with a 1/3 of a sandwich lead on me and I did not catch them. They ride fast; I eat slowly.

The headwind on 129 South was arresting. A man was feeding donkeys on the South side of Caledonia Road and I could hear them braying from quite a way away. On the Wolf Run climb out of Manville, the three-legged dog came on to the road and gave chase. He's older now, but still out there trying! And when you think about it, being chased by a three-legged dog on a ride is way better than meeting a three-headed dog, at least if you keep up with your Greek mythology.

Part way up the Wolf Run hill, I found an inviting still sunny spot and took a break. How often do you get to bask in the sun outside in February? I had not sat long when Rich Ries came by, out on today's edition of his 79 day exercise tribute (he'll willing you tell you about this if you don't know the background). We chatted for quite a while about life, writing, transforming vs. conforming and how the complex US tax policy weighs down individuals and small businesses with paperwork. I've heard it said that the tax policy can be either simple or fair, but this is the wrong place to rant about that! While we were talking, there were two guys on high tech skateboards flying down the Wolf Run hill, probably in excess of 20mph. They were wearing full-face aero helmets, pads and gloves and being followed by the team car. Over the course of time while we talked, they made 3 runs past us, with the car ferrying them back to the top of the hill, and were in progress on a fourth run when we ascended the hill ourselves.

Rich accompanied me through Ryker's Ridge and out to Telegraph Hill. He descends this hill technically and quickly, and it's a pleasure to watch, even if it's from one hairpin turn behind him. (I did not want to finish my ride in the brush and KDH!) Rich rode across the bridge with me to beautiful downtown Milton Kentucky. We had a near brush with potential collision together there due to a mis-understanding of

space-time in the roadway between us, but each avoided a crash through bike handling and steering away in the available roadway space. I guess this is the Bike Safety Moment for this ride to add to the riding etiquette seminar from earlier in the week.

Rich and I parted company and I headed East on KY36 with the wonderful tailwind, but suffered a bit on the final climb up the ridge to reach home.

I finished the day with 68 miles, and it was still so pleasant outside that I went for a 4 mile walk, a great post-ride stretch and wind-down.

I've no doubt that Rich reached his one hour riding goal and am sure that John and Stacy had at least 30-35 miles.

It was a beautiful day for a ride ! Hope you did something fun instead!

Jon