

Going Big

By: Curtis Taylor

Most people say I have my whole life ahead of me. Well I'm not 100% certain what lies ahead but I know for sure there are two little wheels laying on the ground when I look back. Yesterday, my dad took those "extra" wheels off my first bike.

Today I feel like a free man and chose to take the American River Bicycle Trail to the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. My dad tried to warn me that I was planning to go a long way in one ride, but I fail to see his point. My plan was a small fraction of the distance he tends to cover on his escapades. Besides, he's always talking about doing some ride with this buddy or that buddy and he hasn't taken me on any of them yet but I'm his buddy. Now that I'm on two wheels instead of four it is time for me to become a riding buddy too.

I didn't think it was too hard to ride down to the Fish Hatchery. It was harder to figure out what dad was talking about when he kept barking out "stay to the right" the whole way. Apparently, he didn't want me to get run over by any of those really fast bicyclists. I guess it's a good thing mom and dad took the pedals off my bike for a couple of weeks while I was learning to balance. I sure wouldn't want to fall down in all that traffic.

When it was time to leave the Fish Hatchery dad said we could ride to get my hair cut or ride home. I was having so much fun I wanted to keep going. Unfortunately, I think we all forgot about snacks and nap time. Somewhere around mile 5 when I was staying a bit too far towards the dirt on my right, I took a header into the gravel. Luckily someone had a band-aid to make it all better and we still made it to the hair cut appointment in time to grab snacks next door.

After the hair cut we continued on around Lake Natoma and stopped to see the ducks near Negro Bar. I think dad finally laid off a bit on the drill instructor like reminders to "stay to the right" because I don't recall hearing it so much after my header into the dirt. Hopefully, I didn't lose part of my hearing when I hit the gravel.

When we got to downtown Folsom, we took light rail most of the way home, which was a big relief. Riding to the the Fish Hatchery wasn't too far at all, but going all the way around Lake Natoma was kind of tiring.

After dinner everyone acted really surprised when I wanted to ride my bike on our evening run. Here I am 4 years old, having just done the most epic adventure of my life, and I was the only one in the family still planning to have our family run after dinner. No wonder they all thought the Fish Hatchery was too far. Do they go down to the corner and sit at Starbucks when they claim to be out riding?

Just before dad put me to bed he asked me what my goals are now that I've already ridden around Lake Natoma. He just doesn't get it, does he? Here's a man who rides every week

with his big buddies. Here I am now on two wheels. What else would I be doing except planning to ride 100 miles?

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The above are the likely thoughts of 4 year old Brian on his first two wheeled bike ride, just one day after removing the training wheel. (He really did say he wanted to ride 100 miles at the end of the day!)