

Riding Around the Sierra Nevada Roads



Kingsbury Grade
April 7th, 2007

Kingsbury Grade reaches one of the highest elevations a rider can get up to in the local area. It officially peaks out at 7334 feet at Daggett Summit. There are two sides to Kingsbury Grade: East and West. Although the East side of Kingsbury Grade starts at the intersection with Highway 88, the real climbing on the East side starts at Jack's Valley Road. The West side begins pretty close to the shores of Lake Tahoe itself. I use these climbs to gauge my condition. The climbs are long but the grade is relatively consistent. It was a cloudy day so I'm going to take some sunny pictures from my Emmigrant Trail exploration album. Here is the start of the East side.



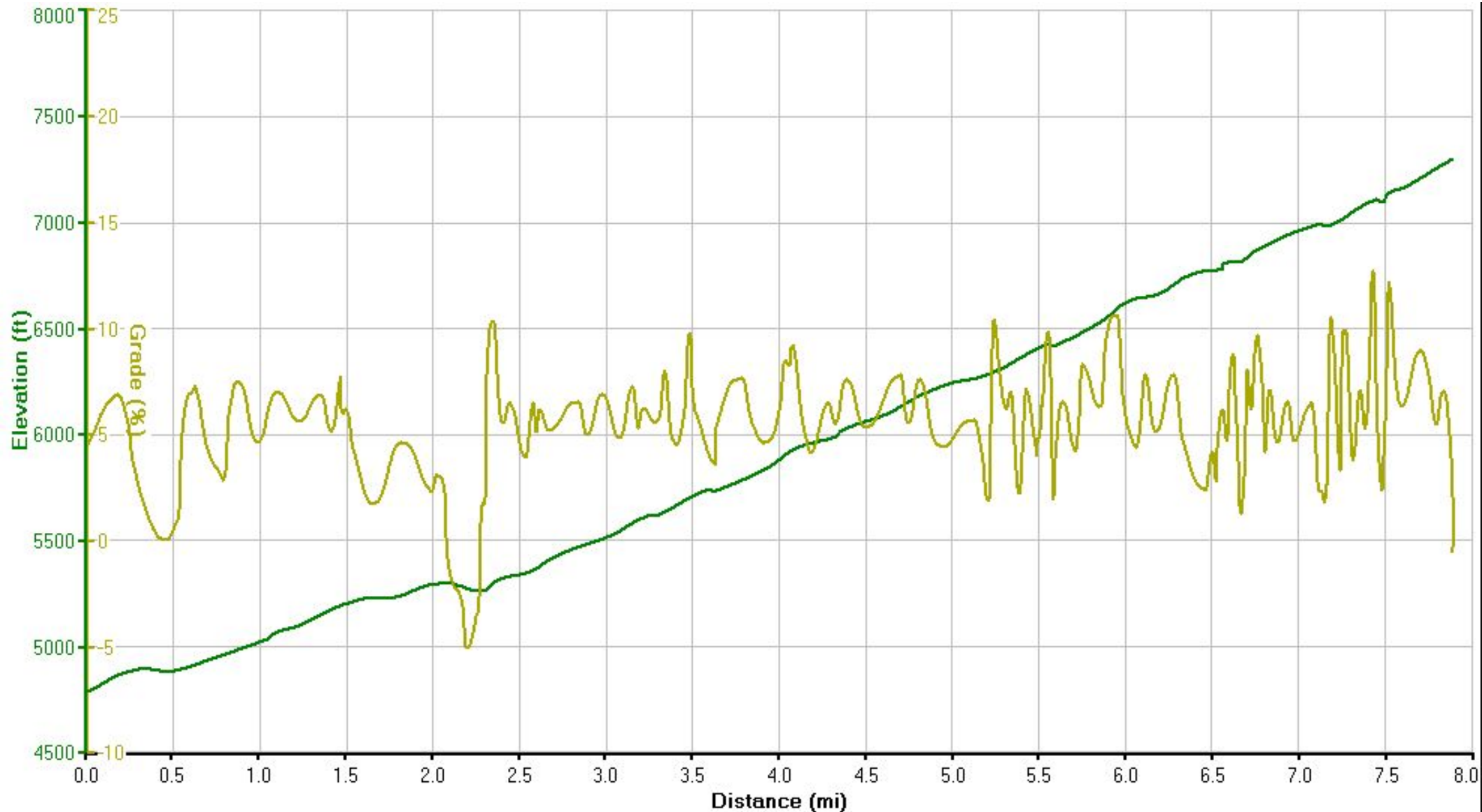
The East side starts to gain elevation pretty quick. A view of the nearby fields greets you on the left as you begin the climb. Look to the right and you can see your destination: the Heavenly Ski Resort. The East side starts at an elevation of 4783 feet and my Garmin gave a reading of 7299 at the summit which is pretty close to the official elevation of 7334 feet. That gives an elevation gain of 2516 feet over 7.90 miles which equates to an average grade of 6.0%.



The road on the East side is very smooth with a wide shoulder. Traffic varies depending on the season and amount of people wanting to ski. There are several terrific views of the valley and the road itself. You can usually turn to see where you were and where you will be going. Some parts of the climb can get windy which increases the difficulty of the climb. Be aware that there is usually a large temperature difference between the valley floor and the summit. Take a light wind breaker with you during the Spring/Fall.



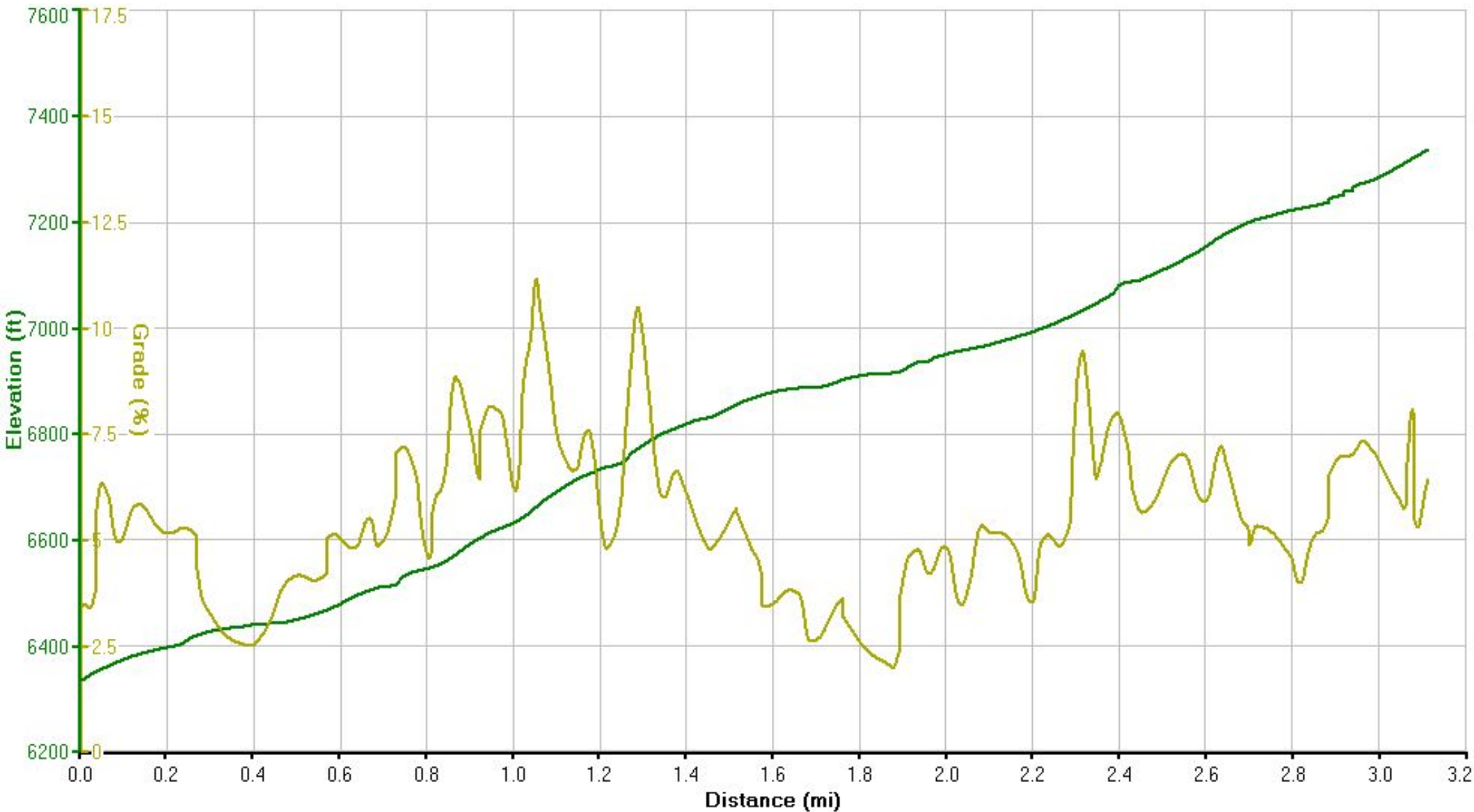
Here is the elevation profile of the East side. There are not too many twists and turns on the East side so it is pretty easy to reach some wicked fast speeds going down. There is a dip on the way up near 2.0 miles. I use that spot to sit up and stretch on the way down.



The West side is not so interesting to me but it is still a noteworthy climb. There is a small convenience store near the bottom where you can refuel on water and snacks after the long climb on the East side. The road is a little less open, has a bit more traffic, and is somewhat rougher. On the left hand side here is a view of the Lake as you descend from the East side. The picture on the right shows the West side as it begins to climb back up to Daggett Summit.



Here the profile of the West side. It has a starting elevation of 6333 feet and it topped out at 7336 feet which is closer to the official 7334 feet. The climb was 3.12 miles long with an elevation gain of 1003 feet. That gives an average grade of 6.1%.



This is my favorite view of the East side. I took this shot from Highway 88. You can see how the road is carved into the side of the mountains. It just begs to be climbed!

