

1st Interviewee: Jon Madsen
Occupation: KLA Tencor
Interview date: 4/28/2024
Location: My House

00;00;00;00 - 00;00;29;26

Evan

How long have you been biking for?

Jon

Well, I started biking again in 2015, so I've been biking for about nine years.

Evan

And how did you first start doing it?

Jon

Well, I got into biking because when we were at a party with one of our friends and they said, oh, we should do a triathlon.

00;00;29;29 - 00;00;47;20

Jon

And I didn't have a road bike. So I went the next day on Craigslist and I found the road bike for sale, and I bought a road bike. And we never did that triathlon, by the way. But I got into biking and I did a lot of biking since then.

Evan

And why is biking important to you? Why do you do that so much?

00;00;47;23 - 00;01;18;23

Jon

I do biking because I use it to as a stress relief. I work a lot and then going biking allows me to, like, clear my head and reduce my stress level.

Evan

And who do you go biking with?

Jon

I go biking with my friends. some people from work. and I also do, virtual biking too.

00;01;18;29 - 00;01;44;12

Jon

So some friends from work. and also some, people that I don't work with from outside of work.

Evan

And where do you go biking?

Jon

So we go biking in, Santa Cruz Mountains. So, and we also go biking. I like to ride up, Mount Hamilton. So in the Bay area, there's actually, like, four mountains or four peaks.

00;01;44;12 - 00;02;05;08

Jon

So in the southeast, there's Mount Hamilton, which is the tallest one. There's a there's an observatory on that one. So it's kind of cool. You go up there and there's a big observatory telescope. And then on the southwest corner of the bay, there's, Mount Hermon, which used to be a military radar post. Also very interesting. So we bike there a lot.

00;02;05;11 - 00;02;28;15

Jon

And then also in the northeast there is Mount Diablo, and in the northwest there's Mount Tam. So we both on all those mountains, and then we bike up the hills, just in, up and down the Santa Cruz mountain range.

Evan

And how often do you go biking?

Jon

I go biking about 4 or 5 times a week.

00;02;28;18 - 00;02;39;21

Jon

I usually try to go 2 or 3 times during the week. And then I do a long ride, one long ride on the weekend and one shorter ride in the weekend.

00;02;42;11 - 00;03;06;16

Evan

can you describe, the virtual bike rides that you've gone?

Jon

Yeah. So I do this, augmented reality cycling. I usually do that during the week because it's much more efficient. Like if you do a outdoor ride, you have to ride like a half an hour to get to the hill and then you climb the hill and maybe that's 45 minutes or an hour, and then you got to ride home.

00;03;06;16 - 00;03;30;17

Jon

So it's about two hours total. if you do augmented reality biking, you can still ride with your friends. so they everybody gets an avatar and you can ride on any virtual hill, in the world or mountain in the world. So you put your bike on there, and then it's got a, it's got electrical resistance on the motor.

00;03;30;19 - 00;03;49;08

Jon

And as you go up the hills, it makes it harder to pedal. And there's actually even some bikes that, like, move the bike up in on to like, imitate you going up the hill, but, it increases the resistance. And you can do it with your friends and you'll see an avatar of your friends, and you can talk to your friends while you're biking.

00;03;49;10 - 00;04;13;26

Jon

And the reason I do that is it's just way more efficient. **So you can do the same amount of climbing, which is what I'm interested in. And in about an hour.** And if you went outside, everybody take you two hours. So 2X4 efficient.

Evan

And can you talk about Strava like what that is.

Jon

Strava is is is an exercise tracking app.

00;04;13;28 - 00;04;35;19

Jon

And what it does is it tracks all your cycling and you can, you can also follow people. So it's kind of it's like social also when you talk and say like this, this thing or you can do this like I do this, you know? Okay. I like to use Strava because I can follow up with okay with that.

00;04;35;21 - 00;05;08;07

Jon

Well, **I like to use Strava because I can track all my activities, whether it's biking or hiking or even indoor activities like elliptical trainer, you can track all those. And the other thing, and the reason I like it is because you can like keep track of your progress over time and how well you're doing. And you can also like try to beat your personal records, and then you can also do it with your friends so you can like, follow your friends and then it'll show you all your times against your friends time so you can try to beat your friends.**

00;05;08;10 - 00;05;26;10

Jon

And then, of course, it tracks everybody who's done that, that, segment or, or portion of a route. **And you can try to get King of the mountain, which is the best for that particular segment.** And I

only way I'm not very good. So I can only get King of the mountain if I do like long endurance repeats.

00;05;26;13 - 00;05;54;10

Jon

So I have a lot of King of the mountains for like people that have done like six repeats on some very steep climb, in the mountain, about just because there's only a few people that are, I don't know, crazy or silly enough to do it. And then I and I happen to be the fastest one of those, small group of people that are like to do that stuff

00;05;54;10 - 00;06;17;13

Jon

I think Strava is just something, you know, I mean, the main competition is with yourself. Like trying to see you may track you to get better. also throughout the year you can see how you're doing, like if you're going to do some races or ride, you can see how you did versus where you were the same point last year and see how your fitness is.

00;06;18;00 - 00;06;53;01

Jon

so it's it's useful to keep you motivated.

Evan

What's been your most, like memorable, enjoyable experience? Biking.

Jon

so my primary most memorable experience biking is, most memorable experience though different, memorable and enjoyable. Probably different. So most memorable experiences when I did, this, race in Europe, it's called a tour de station, which is basically tours of the ski stations, and it's in this beautiful valley in Switzerland.

00;06;53;03 - 00;07;15;18

Jon

And what you do is you ride up to the mountain range and you stop, you get to the ski station and then you descend, and then you basically ride up the next one, and there's 11 of them that go around this huge valley, and it's, you do a lot of climbing. it's it's the Everest. It's called an Everest.

00;07;15;18 - 00;07;37;25

Jon

So you climb the height of Everest, which is 29,029ft, and it's a race. So it's pretty hard. You have to ride pretty fast so you can make the time cuts. And it's a very difficult. It's like, I started at 4 a.m. and I finished at 8:30 p.m., so I was on the bike for a very long time.

00;07;37;27 - 00;08;01;02

Jon

So, you know, 16 hours, 16.5 hours or whatever. So you have to make sure that you have good nutrition and you train pretty well for it because it's pretty difficult. So that's why the most memorable ride, and it was like

00;08;01;02 - 00;08;17;16

Jon

Like, I remember you start off and there's a bunch of people that start the race starts at 4 a.m. and it's and you go up to super long. So at the beginning of the race, first, there's all these crazy people that are dressed up like you see in the tour de France, like the devil guy running around with his fork.

00;08;17;16 - 00;08;31;27

Jon

He's there as well for this race. He comes with us. So it's kind of cool that they're cheering you on. And all the people in the crowd, a bunch of people dressed up like cheering you on, and then you see him later on in the day and they, like, run with you while you're riding. So that's kind of cool.

00;08;32;09 - 00;08;56;06

Jon

but the other memorable part is, I remember, at the start, it's like dark and there's like the, the official, the official car and the weirdo cars are in the front and those are like the guys that are like, professional racers, and they're they go out super fast. But we went up this climb and you could like it was switchback all the way up the mountain.

00;08;56;06 - 00;09;12;25

Jon

And I just remember looking up the mountain and seeing these guys, like, way up the mountain and like, I started with those guys. But by the time they got to the top of the mountain, they were probably already a half a mile a mile ahead of us. So it was really cool that like, watch all the lights go up the mountain, all the bike lights in the car.

00;09;12;27 - 00;09;32;23

Jon

And then the rest of the day, it was just very memorable. Lots of very cool little towns that you rode through and cool people that you meet along the way. you're, you kind of chat with different people around with different people. So it's it's kind of really fun. they're really a great base. beautiful scenery, just amazing scenery.

00;09;32;25 - 00;10;00;04

Jon

So every year, I do the tour de cure and I also do a habitat for humanity race and, 20 tour. I'm the, company sponsor for my company, and I put together we put together a team and, we all ride it as a team.

00;10;00;26 - 00;10;27;12

Jon

some years it's been done up in Sonoma, some years this year, for example, is going to be in the Bay area, and we try to get, people at work and their families to come and, and do the ride. it's a and we raise money for, the American Diabetes Association, which has done some really great work on making insulin available to everybody and sponsoring kind of fundamental research and applied research for diabetes.

00;10;27;14 - 00;10;48;18

Jon

And, it's a really great cause. And so we try to raise money for that cause every year. And at the same time, it's great to get out and ride your bike. they have different length races. They have, ten, 30, 6000 mile race or ride. And it's, for a really good cause. And I also do, habitat for humanity ride that's in Livermore every year.

00;10;48;21 - 00;11;14;09

Jon

So, it's great because you are kind of, supporting great causes. And also getting some exercise at the same time. Yeah, it's really great. Like the tour de the tour de cure is great because there's a lot of people that have type one diabetes that are actually riding, the race, and it's great to see them out.

00;11;15;15 - 00;11;35;04

Jon

and being able to do to live a normal life. I think the treatment for diabetes has gotten much better. but it's really good to see, those folks out on the course. They have, they wear a special color number. So, you know, that they actually have diabetes, and you can talk to them and, and interact with them and ask them about their story.

00;11;35;04 - 00;12;05;17

Jon

And, and, they're super, grateful for everybody out there supporting the cause as well. So it's a really great, event.

Evan

And, you kind of tell the story of your work and, like, the connection to biking. I know it's, like, popular, your company.

Jon

Yeah. So our company is, pretty heavily in the biking, I think, our CEO is a Rick is very avid biker, and there's a lot of people that ride their bikes to work.

00;12;05;19 - 00;12;24;18

Jon

So, Rick, he also does a tour de coeur with us. But in general, everybody's pretty into biking. So a lot of people ride to work. biking is a very common topic at work, and, we go on a lot of group rides together. in addition to the charity events, what we do a lot of group rides together.

00;12;24;18 - 00;12;37;18

Jon

And, it's a great way to interact with your colleagues and stay healthy and, promote fitness.

00;12;37;20 - 00;12;43;04

Jon

For us.

00;12;43;06 - 00;13;13;15

Jon

And I like to bike because it relieves stress. So that's one of the main reasons why I, like to cycle, you know, a lot of people typically do sport, do sports like golf or something like that. But I think, for me, golf is more stressful chasing the ball around and trying to get it to go where you want to do biking is very, you know, almost, you know, allows you to organize.

00;13;13;15 - 00;13;33;18

Jon

It's meditative, almost allows you to organize your thoughts, get rid of the stress, clear your head. think through things that are on your mind because biking, you actually, you know, on the weekend, I do like a 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 hour ride. So you have a lot of time to think on your bike and also a great time to talk to your friends.

00;13;33;18 - 00;14;01;11

Jon

But there's a lot of times when you're by yourself, you're biking, you know, like your friends are ahead of you or behind you or whatever. And, you have time to think on your own, and you're outside and it's just a great time to clear your mind and big stress relief during the week. It's if I don't ride my bike, I'm probably not as nice to be around because I'm grumpy and, a little bit more stressed out than I am after I go biking.

00;14;01;13 - 00;14;08;00

Jon

So that's the a really great benefit of of cycling.

00;14;08;02 - 00;14;35;22

Jon

Turns out you have a job in Silicon Valley, Silicon Valley. Everybody's pushing technology and working like 60 hours a week. And so you need to have some outlet to reduce your stress. Biking is my outlet. you know, I think it's healthier. I think some people would drink or do whatever else to reduce their stress, and I like to cycle and reduce my stress.

00;14;35;22 - 00;14;57;28

Jon

I also like to once I got into biking, I kind of got into these, ultra endurance activities. And those are good because they give you a nice focal point, like if you're going to assign yourself up for, a race in the summer. So you sign up at New Year's for a race in the summer. It's a really good focal point and allows you to focus and train to get ready for that race.

00;14;57;28 - 00;15;23;20

Jon

So it's also, I think, good goal setting and and motivation throughout the year. And do you think that biking is kind of like this for a lot of people around here? Because obviously a lot of people ride by or house and it's very popular thing around here. But yeah, I think, a lot of people, you know, ride, you know, to this, it helps them to get exercise.

00;15;23;20 - 00;15;48;29

Jon

But also a lot of people do it because it really relieves the stress that they're, you know, it's kind of a pressure cooker here in Silicon Valley high, you know, high pace. you know, everybody's working pretty hard here. So everybody, I think, looking for ways to kind of, unwind and relax.

00;15;49;01 - 00;16;12;04

Jon

That is the popularity of biking. Has that been increasing or is it kind of, it's interesting, I think, as everybody knows, during the pandemic, biking got super popular, because people weren't able to go to the gyms and stuff. so I think the interest, you know, if on the road you would see lots and lots of people on the road during the pandemic.

00;16;12;04 - 00;16;33;16

Jon

So I'd say it peaked during the pandemic and it's come down since the pandemic now that people are going back to the gyms. But, during the pandemic, it was really I. Was.

00;16;33;19 - 00;16;58;03

Jon

So I do you didn't ask me about the death ride, but. Yeah. So I like to challenge myself with. I like to do climbing on my bike, so I don't like, like the fast downhills. When I was younger, as a kid, I used to love to go downhill really fast, and I used to love the mountain bike.

00;16;58;05 - 00;17;14;25

Jon

And I would go into like Colorado and you could take the lifts, the ski lifts up and then just ride down and never wanted ever ride up. And now, that I'm a little bit older, I'm actually the opposite. I don't like to go down. I do it, but I don't like it. I like to go up. I like the challenge of going up.

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Jon

And so I try to find the steepest hills, either in the augmented reality or the real hills. And I like to do those, and I like to do, like ultra endurance, activities both for biking and for hiking. So I do every year I do a race called the Death Ride up in Lake Tahoe, where it's five peaks and it's about 15,000ft of climbing and 100 miles.

00;17;41;28 - 00;18;02;07

Jon

so that's fun. It's about 7 or 8 hours of riding. And then I did the tortoise option, and I do every week. I usually go to Europe and I do, a week of writing every day where you write about your car, about 10,000ft per day. So there's and you ride about 100 miles every day, and you do that for four weeks.

00;18;02;07 - 00;18;24;02

Jon

So that's pretty challenging to get up every day and do it. It's kind of like a mini tour de France. That's roughly the same amount that they ride in the tour de France, but they do it for three weeks instead of one week. So I do that. and I also like to do, like ultra endurance hiking and trail running.

00;18;24;04 - 00;18;45;08

Jon

So this next weekend I'm going to go do the Grand Canyon rim to room to rim. same type of thing. I like the steepest hiking you can find, and that's a B because I like the challenge. I'm motivated by the challenge in it.

Evan

And do you think you'll ever quit biking, or is it kind of these years of doing this?

00;18;45;11 - 00;19;08;00

Jon

The good thing about biking is it's, you know, kind of low impact on your knees and stuff like that. So you can bike until you're quite old. So I hope I can bike well into my 80s or 90s and keep doing it for a long time. Yeah.