



## **Coast Range Chronicles 24: “Weathering”**

by

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The reef is located along a steep and wild stretch of California coast. The mountains slowly weather to boulder, cobble, and sand that’s transported to the ocean by water and gravity, then reworked by waves and current to form the reef.

The setup isn’t the level mudstone shelf typical of the region, cushioned by kelp and surfgrass. Bouncing off the mudstone is like falling on thick shag carpet: more humiliation than pain.

But the reef here is composed of hard and jutting metamorphic rock. The wave is thick and hollow. Cracked fins are common, along with the occasional cracked head.

As the tide drops, the wave becomes a game of: “when should I exit?”

Juice and speed increase through the inside section. Good stuff that’s hard to abandon. But each second toward shore increases the chance of unwelcome maladies afflicting board and body.

It's all about timing.

The perfect time to exit is after you've milked it dry, pulling out safe and stoked as the wave crashes onto bare reef. But perfect timing is known only in retrospect. It's easy to get greedy and push the limit.

Push it a second too far and, as you crack and weather like the mountains, you'll learn a vital truth: geology's a bitch.