

Sunday, October 15, 2006

## Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 24

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Another good turnout for our ride this week with everyone hoping that the grey and overcast conditions would give way to the glorious sunshine of the previous day. It was not to be, but on the bright side we had no rain unlike the downpour on our last visit to Otley a few weeks ago. Today we had 2 tandems with us and they can certainly go downhill very fast! If there are any more tandem riders out there do join us.

Twenty three of us set off up Rayleigh Road and past St George's cricket ground through the estate and bike path to Green Lane. This then goes to Whinney Lane and almost to the end of Otley Road keeping away from most of the traffic, though we met horseriders and lots of other cyclists. Moor Park in Beckwithshaw provided us with another nice corner cut off and then the familiar slog up to Stainburn Forest which for many of us is now considerably easier than it was on our earlier rides in May.

By now we had 'lost' Dr. G as she was 'on call' and got called. Joe being a gentleman went back with her. Sue set Caroline and Max a challenge encouraging them to go beyond their intended turning point at Beckwithshaw, and to continue up to Stainburn. Well done to them all! Their reward was the nice downhill run back.

We continued on to Norwood and most turned down to Timble, the rest carrying on to Pennypot. We dropped down to Swinsty, and from there to Fewston, over the reservoir and to the car park where there is a visitor centre and public loos. Keith then led us along a quiet narrow lane with no traffic to join the road to Otley.

He and Denis left us to research a route for another day and we were left to gaze up at the long climb ahead which we could see crossing the moors. So we climbed steadily over Askwith and Weston Moor to be rewarded by a wonderful coast of 3 to 4 miles down to Otley and our usual café with mugs of tea for 30p and coffee 45p. It was heaving with cyclists and bikers.

The ride back from Otley via Leathley and Almscliffe Crag is a long haul but well worth the effort with fine views. A minor 'crisis' saw Steve from Spofforth and daughter Helen on tandem running late for Steve's orchestral rehearsals (French horn) in York. Malcolm on tired legs attempted to raise his pace and 'rushed' home to collect a vehicle to transport them back to their car at Hornbeam and give them some precious extra minutes. Eventually we all got back to Harrogate via various routes clocking around 34 miles, although Brian and Liz (Knaresborough) covered 45 door to door.

Photo below shows Liz, Brian, Helen and Steve, and tandems.

GM

