

Sunday, February 18, 2007

## Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 42

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### Long ride

The long ride was 43 miles and there was a good turnout with 12 riders willing to set a fairly quick pace. As it turned out we averaged 13 miles per hour over a route that was quite hilly especially on the return leg. By the time we reached Knaresborough we were warming up, and the day was warming up; it turned out to be a fabulous sunny February ride.

After Knaresborough we worked our way through the lanes and villages to Goldsborough, Arkendale and Marton, and into Boroughbridge. All the back lanes were quiet and traffic-free and our only traffic problem was trying to get across the A59 at Goldsborough where some of us were stuck for a good five minutes.

After Boroughbridge, we continued to Skelton-on-Ure, into Ripon, and up the road to Studley Park where we enjoyed National Trust food in the open air (February!). Exiting past the Fountains Abbey visitors centre, we continued to Bishop Thornton, Shaw Mills, Hampsthwaite and returned home to Harrogate.

**HIGHLIGHTS:** At Bishop Thornton the temptations of an ice team and a toilet (not necessarily in that order) lured away three of our riders to Ripley. This may have been because of embarrassment following a misunderstanding where Ken was offered a ride to the CTC dinner in our car - I said "We can have six in our car". Ken looked amazed and Yvonne had to repeat "No, he did say six". (Anyone who is tending mutt and jeff or doesn't get this joke may be interested in the free hearing tests currently on offer at Specsavers!)

Another highlight of the day was Dennis K (just the initial to protect his identity!) scrounging a few bob because he had no money for lunch. Did you all know he is an accountant?

Finally the curse of "Martin's Miles" has followed me from the Loiterers to Wheel Easy (courtesy of Dave Preston's good memory). Yes, the ride was a bit over the 35 miles advertised - but

would anyone want to cut a ride short on such a day? In fact half way around I was thinking of adding another 25 miles just to get a suntan.

MW

#### Medium ride

Thirteen riders followed the intermediate route. It was a glorious morning perfect for a leisurely ride with beautiful views. From Burn Bridge we went up Brackenthwaite Lane to North Rigton. The few hills were a challenge which we all enjoyed. We then followed the quiet road past Almscliffe Crag through Stainburn to Leathley. This is a lovely stretch, reinforcing what a beautiful part of the world we live in.

From Leathley we made our way through Castley, Weeton and Dunkeswick. We began to split up for various reasons finishing the ride at Kirkby Overblow. Those left made their own way home after an enjoyable ride.

#### Short ride

I suppose it was inevitable - word had leaked - it was to be the hard climb from Beckwithshaw in the direction of North Rigton. Clearly, contours had been checked and the route recce'd, but many felt they were not quite ready for the task, feigning interest in the long and intermediate rides - we do understand, really!

Four stalwarts set off at leisurely pace, conserving energy, along the gentle route to Beckwithshaw. A brief stop was made at Shaw Green to select appropriate 'layers' for the ascent and to psych ourselves up. Peddles were pumped with pulsating muscles propelling persons and machines to their limits. Then three of us opted for the harder challenge of pushing our bikes to the top whilst superman made it all the way. He was found at the summit in a state of shock muttering about rubber legs!

After a brief rest newspapers were unfolded and inserted into jackets for much needed insulation during the rapid descent to Daw Cross and the return to Hookstone. A good ride and again fantastic weather.

MG





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**Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 42 more photos**

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More photos of today's rides

