

Sunday, January 13, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 89



The weather forecast was so bad for today that only the most intrepid (most foolish?) even considered venturing out.

However, we started out with eleven in all for the long ride, and although we almost immediately lost two of our number to the medium ride they were brought back to the straight and narrow and we set off over Knox Ford and through Hampsthwaite and Birstwith till we reached the river crossing at Hartwith Mill. Then it was time for the major uphill of the day as we took the road straight to the top of Brimham Rocks - a road which distinguishes those who can talk and ride up a hill from those who can't...

Then, despite a rather blustery south wind, we enjoyed the descent from there to the Drover's road near Bishop Thornton and, after saying goodbye to one of our number, on to Markington. By now, voices could be heard asking "Are we nearly there yet?" - 'there' being the coffee shop in Cascades Garden Centre. But the more discerning nostrils in the group were already picking up scents of coffee in the air and fifteen minutes later saw us sitting at a table which seemed to have been miraculously reserved for us. After spending a half hour or so putting the world to rights and eating and drinking things that cancelled out any benefit cycling might have afforded us, we set off (minus one more, who headed for home) for Bishop Monkton and came back to Knaresborough via the fairly rough lane to Copgrove.

From here, we had a taste of the high winds which had been predicted and the remaining nine of us went fairly quiet for a while but we all made it back to Knaresborough and went our various ways in Starbeck. Astoundingly, we avoided any rain and the predicted gales never really came to much either so we went home feeling like we had sneaked through the day without being noticed by the terrible weather. About 40 miles in total. SP

Four riders set out on an impromptu medium ride following the well used route to Beckwithshaw, where unfortunately Phil developed a slow puncture and decided to pump and limp his way home. The remaining three continued down Pot Bank then along Penny Pot Lane to Burley Bank Road and across to Hampsthwaite.

We then went up Clint Bank (where Peter shed a few of his excess Christmas kilos) onwards through Shaw Mills and Markington to the A61. Crossing over and into the wind we made fairly slow progress home via Burton Leonard, Copgrove and Knaresborough. Just short of 30 miles on a day which turned out much better than promised by the forecasters. JDB

I am really pleased that I managed to get out of bed this morning and brave what the weather forecast had suggested would be horrific gale force winds and driving rain, because as it turned out today's ride set off in almost spring like conditions. Four slow gentle riders headed for Beckwithshaw the easy way, expecting to overtake the long and medium rides who said they would be going via Beckwithshaw towards Lancashire and all points west. That meant hills. There was not even so much as a flash of yellow, so we'd obviously left them behind as we speeded through Beckwithshaw towards Little Alms Cliff, and I was astonished to hear Max telling Ted that he would accompany him to the summit. Both Gaye and I were extremely relieved that they obviously did not want us to go with them. So we freewheeled at great speed back to Harrogate, via Harlow Carr and the Pinewoods to carry out our household duties, in the Sunday Lunch and Brunch departments. Max returned looking pink and exhausted reporting that the breakaway group had both got home safely. An excellent ride, with good company and conversation. CG

Concern about the promised Sunday storms prompted an 11th hour email late on Friday advertising an unscheduled medium ride the next day. This attracted nine members to meet up on a cold but sunny Saturday morning at Whinney Lane. The 25 mile route took in Beckwithshaw and Norwood and then crossed Fewston Reservoir for a testing loop towards Timble, before returning towards Pennyot Lane, and back into Harrogate.

