

Sunday, February 3, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 92



Twenty nine keen riders braved the blustery conditions with 11 opting for the long ride, having banished all thoughts of swapping cycling shoes for walking boots. Our route took us over Knox Ford, to Hampsthwaite, Shaw Mills, Markington, and then on to the garden centre on the A61 cross roads for hot drinks on what was quite a chilly day.

Moving on to Bishop Monkton the group decided that Boroughbridge was a possibility but on turning into the headwind, plan B was put into action and we headed across the bridleway towards Copgrove. Half way along we were met by a flood and two intrepid souls set forth through almost two feet of water, while the rest took a more judicious route over the fences in the adjacent fields.

Approaching Farnham, we met friends from Ripon Loiterers who were enjoying the tail wind to head back North to Ripon. Returning to Harrogate via Knaresborough we completed 30 chilly miles, but the rain held off and the crack was good.

HIGHLIGHTS

Norman turned up on his new super-light titanium bike and this was admired extensively. He was brave enough to offer a ride to Dennis and Martin and was lucky to get his bike back!

An interesting set of parts on Norman's bike - it is set up especially, as you would expect, to precisely as Norman would like it. However, we do think he is becoming an ultra cautious rider as the brand name on the wheels is "Durex"!

Paul led the way through the flood and we were all mightily impressed, but having seen the water top his cycling shoes, only one other was willing to have cold wet feet for the ride home.

Good to see Dennis Kaye back on his bike after a long spell away suffering from flu. MW

Malcolm and I spend the second half of each week anxiously watching the weather reports! Someone said we should "get a life" but there is something at stake when we have had 92 consecutive Sundays of rides. Despite the forecast of ferocious winds we woke up to a reasonably still day though as ten o'clock got nearer gusts of wind were blowing - sufficient to help blow me up Almsford Bank which must be a first.

The plan for the medium ride was to keep reasonably sheltered so nine of us headed for Copgrove via Knaresborough, Scriven and Farnham with a nice tailwind behind us. Max and Peter declined the hill out of Farnham and returned via Knaresborough so I guess they cycled about 20 miles.

As we approached the turn to take the track out of Copgrove (by the church) Phil and his son James appeared to tell us that the track was knee deep in water. They joined us, and Dennis suggested we take the road to Burton Leonard and then the bridleway through to Brearton which was an excellent choice. The stream was too full to cross but the lads lifted all the bikes over the stile to get on to the footbridge and we continued on along the well made paths of the Mountgarret Estate. We joined the Ripley road where in future years the disused railway path will be open for cyclists as part of the Sustrans Big Lottery win. We looped back via Scotton, Lingerfield and Scriven and on to Knaresborough where most of us went to the Riverside Café for coffee. An excellent ride which ended up being about 29 miles due to the diversion. GM

Seven Super Easy riders including new rider Lynn headed to the far end of Hornbeam Park and up Fulwith Mill Lane towards the Mallinsons and Rossetts. All went well until Malcolm found he had picked up a slow puncture which then needed more air every few minutes. Extending the usual route slightly, we reached Ashville via Harlow Avenue and the path by the Community Centre then it was downhill all the way to the cricket ground, round The Oval and along South Drive towards Rayleigh Road.

Here Malcolm headed back for his van to return home and swap bikes while Sue T took the group on to Oatlands Drive, Claro Road and the Dragon Bridge. After a short but chilly wait, Malcolm caught up in the van with the spare bike. From here most returned home, but together with Sue W and Charlotte he cycled to Bilton Lane and along the Beryl Burton to Knaresborough, joining the medium ride at the always welcoming Riverside Café. Fully restored with hot drinks and flapjacks, we pedalled and walked back up the Beryl Burton and through Starbeck to Hornbeam to complete a good circuit of around 15 miles.

Returning to collect the van I happened to meet another member on his bike who, delayed by a phone call, had missed the start at Hornbeam but more than made up for it with a 45 mile solo ride to Bolton Bridge. MM

