

Sunday, February 17, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 94



Wow another great ride! Travelling to Hornbeam I was concerned about the icy road condition but I needn't have worried. It turned out to be a lovely day with clear skies and sunshine. Eleven opted for the long ride and Martin led the way and the pace while the leader quite happily brought up the rear.

From Knaresborough we headed towards Farnham, Copgrove, Bishop Monkton and onto Ripon. It was a particularly enjoyable ride to Ripon and I am sure it would make a good medium ride, especially if the café in Spa Gardens is open! From Ripon we rode through Studley Royal to Fountains Abbey where we opted for the top café, which was busy, but worth the wait. Gia kindly massaged Martin's feet as he was suffering from the cold. Martin then led us to Brimham Rocks via Sawley, which proved to be a lovely stretch. It is surprising how different a route is when you do it the other way round. From Brimham we had the downhill stretch to Burnt Yates and onto Hampsthwaite and home. Altogether we rode 45 miles. Thank you Martin! PT

Another perfect cycling day. The medium ride planned was approximately 26/27 miles with an option to extend to 32/33 miles if the riders wanted it. Twelve headed to Spofforth, the roads being dry and ice free except only very small areas, then the cycle track to Wetherby, the track being hard due to cold and relatively mud free. Two riders turned back at Wetherby due to time constraints.

Then it was on to Sicklinghall and down the hill to Netherby. The Sicklinghall to Kirkby Overblow ridge is always outstanding especially on days like this with views over Wharfedale and across the Vale of York. One rider was unfortunate to have two punctures which caused some delays but no problems and influenced the decision to take the shorter route. Three riders left us between Netherby and Weeton, and the remaining seven returned via North Rigton and Burn Bridge. The only ice hazard encountered was previous melt water flowing across the road which had refrozen, but it had largely broken up by the time we reached it. DP

Seven slow short riders set off warily on the icy route to Beckwithshaw, via Rossett, Ashville and the Squinting Cat. As we reached Beckwithshaw without incident, we were faced with a decision - quality (hills) or distance. As Sue left us rushing back for an important engagement, probably with Champagne, we came to the conclusion that quality (hills) was (were) what we needed. So turning left and left again in Beckwithshaw we headed towards North Rigton (2 miles), with enthusiasm and confidence. We sped down a hill and then started THE hill. Luckily we had a team mechanic in the pack, and Max speedily dealt with Emma's chain as we motored up the hill. We all reached the top eventually and were so over excited and pleased with ourselves that we had a photo opportunity and a drink of water.

Buoyed up by our triumphs we glided/gled down to Burn Bridge so hyped up that we decided to extend the ride to include distance as well as quality. Max however felt clearing the garage needed his attention so the ride mechanic left us, as we crisscrossed the cycle paths of west Harrogate notching up a further 5 miles before cooking lunch and visiting Granny lured 3 other riders away from the distance making. Sue had to wait for her husband on the medium ride so we did a couple more miles before finally returning to Hornbeam. An excellent ride of 12 and 16 miles in superb sun and crisp conditions completed in 2 hours 'ish'. CG

