

Sunday, April 27, 2008

## Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 104

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Photo above is from Saturday's 0-30 ride.

So, whatever it is that brings out 18 cyclists on a grey, dismal, rainy Sunday morning (foolhardiness, commitment, Yorkshire grit?), all agreed it was worth getting out of bed to ride! Good routes, good company, and for the long ride an excellent coffee stop in Wetherby and eventually it did stop raining.

Dennis led a slightly "shorter" long ride but as usual at a good pace. Familiar route to Wetherby, turning off to Linton and Collingham before turning right up Jewitt Lane which for some of us was a new route and the only real hill of the day. As Steve brightly mentioned that the rain was easing off it started coming down heavier, Paul thinks any weather is fine as long as he is out on his bike (and Sunderland have won the previous day!) the rest of us just got wet! Steve redeemed himself later by offering to lead a ride with tea and scones at his house (offer accepted!).

We passed a field full of healthy pigs who ignored us but Dennis must have been distracted because he led us round the block twice before picking up the right route out of Bramham towards Clifford. We rode to Wetherby through Boston Spa and Thorp Arch and picked up the bike path near the race course. Unfortunately the other Denis picked up a puncture but he was happy for us to carry on to the sanctuary of the café in The Shambles where the staff welcomed us without batting an eyelid at our dripping clothing. The lattes must have been good, new Malcolm had two!

Home in the sunshine, 36 miles for the day. Excellent, thanks Dennis. GM

Owing to the rain and the rather dismal weather forecast, our numbers on the medium ride were rather smaller than of late. In fact, only 5 of us, including the ride leader and ride follower, set off in the steady light rain along the now-familiar route from Hornbeam to Woodlands Corner, Calcutt and into Knaresborough, along the river and then round the outskirts of Knaresborough onto Boroughbridge Road, then left towards Farnham past Gibbet Farm (Anyone know when it stopped providing this rather gruesome service?).

Everyone managed the short steep Farnham hill, turned left and then sailed down towards Staveley through the unsigned hamlet of Occaney. Staveley and Minskip were negotiated without problems and Boroughbridge heaved into view in the continuing rain. The usual café provided coffee and bacon and egg butty for the ride leader, and rather healthier fare for the rest of the group. Max's lovely fluorescent yellow jacket provided a very good argument for having rear mudguards on bikes. Because of the continuing rain, we debated going straight

back the way we had come, but our intrepid party decided unanimously to press on to Roecliffe, Bishop Monkton, across the A61 towards Markington.

At the derelict Drovers Inn, which Caroline told us was the site of some of her miss-spent youth [Details please! - Ed.], we turned left and zoomed down the hill towards Ripley. The rain was just beginning to show signs of stopping, and we realised in Ripley that we had not taken the obligatory photograph, so Ripley Church provided the perfect background for this. It was not ice-cream weather, so we then braved the few hundred horrid metres of A61 to the Old Bridge over the Nidd, used the Crawford Bypass round Killinghall (did I see a reference to the Crawford Couloir in last week's report? What about the Crawford Cul-de-Sac?) and then back via Knox Ford, and up what was probably the steepest hill of the entire 31 miles. JS

Now, the short ride consisted of just two, first timer Barbara originating from Virginia, USA, and old timer Malcolm, somewhat hobbled by the effects of his marathon ride the previous day. This may sound limiting, though in fact it was anything but as they put right most of the world's problems while steering their mountain bikes through the rain over Dragon Bridge, up and over the Beryl Burton down to Knaresborough and the sanctuary of Riverside Café. After tea, they returned back up the BB which Barbara managed surprisingly easily, despite claims of being out of condition. Then it was over the railway crossing at Starbeck, the horrors of Morrisons car park, round Stonefall tip and past Sainsburys for the final hill up to Hooky Woods, which Barbara again conquered. A good introductory ride. MM



