

Sunday, May 11, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 106



Long ride - What a brilliant day for cycling. Twelve riders 'volunteered' for my debut as a Leader - and I had warned them about how I like hills! We cycled to Masham via Ripley (overtaking the Car Boot Sale tailback), Sawley, Kirkby Malzeard and Grewelthorpe. This was pronounced to be the 'hilly way', but didn't stop three Young Turks from storming ahead - you know who you are !

Outside refreshments in Masham Market Place were enlivened by sun, scones and a sermon, it being Sunday after all. Also, Yvonne eating all those chips should go down as a miracle.

Peter (another one) headed off for home over the moors but was replaced by Liz from Summerbridge who had cycled to Masham having heard we might be there from Malcolm. Sue and Dennis also headed for home the quick way to attend to pressing needs but the remaining ten agreed they were up for some more hills and settled on Plan A to tackle the Mashamdale Moor road to Nidderdale.

We then had a truly wonderful ride in blazing sunshine on quiet roads, enabling us to while away the miles chatting in good company. The three 'beasts' were overcome by all (I had told Gia there were only two), and we enjoyed a rest at the top before descending the 1:4 into Lofthouse, watching out for overheating rims.

The ride to Pateley and then Harrogate repeated last week's route but without benefit of rain and spray and with the advantage of a second tea stop in the lovely teashop in King's Court off Pateley Bridge High Street. Liz veered off in Summerbridge and Dave sprinted for home from Birstwith, leaving the rest to disperse at various points through the town. After 56 miles of classic cycling, I was sun bathing in my garden with a glass of pink wine by 16:30; so for me it all went perfectly to plan. PL

Medium ride - Sixteen riders set out on an impromptu ride to Eccup reservoir. The route took us through Burn Bridge and Kirkby Overblow which provided a long down hill swoop to the A61 where there was a mad dash for the safety of Harewood Estate. A leisurely trip through the park brought us out on the back road to Eccup reservoir, where we stopped for a photo.

Here Joe discovered a puncture, and quickly removed the wheel, took off the tyre and inner tube, carefully checked the tyre for damage, put the inner tube back, wheel back on, and started to pump. Strangely there was no improvement. Maybe that was because he refitted the old inner tube rather than the new one!

Continuing the journey, we went round back of Leeds Grammar school and on country lanes to East Keswick. Up

over the hill and down the bridle path to the river. Eventually we returned to Kirkby Overblow, where the temptation of the pub was too great. Some stayed while others returned to Harrogate by a variety of routes. PH

Short ride - Five riders set off somewhat reluctantly for, yes, Little Almscliffe. One person wanted to be at home in bed, two people were focused on retracing Malcolm's short ride steps to Knaresborough, and the leader had just had an altercation with a large removal man and his van. However as we sped over Leeds Road onto the Mallinson Estate the mood lightened and Linda revealed the state of her cycling shorts, deciding there must be a better design for ladies cycling shorts, as even two pairs didn't seem to do the trick. There appeared to be many cycling groups out and several individuals today, it must be the weather. As we headed past the Squinting Cat it was quite clear that the two new riders would be up for the whole ride if not more. We rushed on towards Beckwithshaw, the sun shining, no wind, a perfect summer day. A now enthusiastic Max decided to continue and beat the main group to half way up Norwood Lane (I think that is the name of the road), where he met the main group who had enjoyed an amble through the park. The group speeded onto Little Almscliffe being overtaken by a rainbow of colour from the Wetherby Wheelers. The view and atmosphere was spectacular as we stopped and bottled the scene, the horizon incongruous with the golf balls of Menwith and the four wind turbines giving an almost science fiction feel to the surroundings. We felt we could go on for ever, but decided to do the speedy downhill journey home instead. Only Lynda was brave enough to go straight back to Harrogate by the Otley Road, as she had new doors on her mind, whilst the other members of the group wound their ways back through the Pinewoods, on the path marked footpath, without a no cycling sign, which is a little confusing, but a lovely lovely path. We ended up back at Hornbeam after a satisfying ride and 15 miles. CG

Philip's Off Road Ride - Five riders met at the car park in Pateley to start the first serious off road ride undertaken by Wheel Easy.

The weather was set fair, if a little on the warm side, as we rolled out of the car park heading for Wath along the quiet top road starting off with a steep climb past the police station and Museum to be followed by the rolling road to Wath.

At Wath the first serious off road section began with a steep walk up the hill, followed by a beautiful ride along the side of Gouthwaite Reservoir. The next steep section began at Bouthwaite, and after a steady push we reached the open Moors. Then we were able to enjoy a long rideable section around the back of 'Jenny Twig and her Daughter' with a stop at a remote shooting hut for a well deserved lunch break.

When we reached the Masham road out of Lofthouse two of our group departed down the hill for an early return to Pateley on the road. The remaining trio continued along the track around Dale Edge (where we had a chance meeting with some of our members enjoying their alternate Sunday walk) to reach Scar House reservoir for another short break before we decided to take the Water Board road for a fast descent to Lofthouse. The road return to Pateley was done at a fast pace (for Mountain Bikes) in true chain gang formation with each rider taking a turn on the front.

The ride was rounded off in traditional Wheel Easy style with a stop at a delightful coffee shop in Pateley. (Total ride distance 25 miles.) PS

