

Sunday, October 19, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 130



Two for the price of one! The long short ride combined with the short medium ride to offer a slowish, flattish 25 miles to 20 souls. The instruction to split into two groups of ten with "the first ten following me", lasted about 10 seconds, and the whole group headed north through the streets to the first photo op at the Spruisty Bridge over Knox ford.

There to Ripley where the rough track option was deleted due to the presence of some delicate/expensive looking bikes. On to Nidd and the quiet but metalled tracks of the Mountgarret estate to Burton Leonard, and then to Copgrove and the long drag up to Farnham for the banana break.

At this point, Dan leant on a gate and the big fat gate post fell over. He didn't quietly slide away, but in the true responsible, caring, helpful Wheel Easy way he jammed the gate post against the gate so maintaining the security of the field.

It was downhill from here to skirt Knaresborough via Bar Lane (loads of Greylag Geese on the waters of the old gravel pits) and the river route. At this point the ride began to disintegrate as a couple stayed for a caff stop, and various routes were taken back to homes/Hornbeam. Paul B

Long Ride. I am not quite sure how I came to lead one of the long rides yesterday but Martin was there all prepared with maps and routes but no bike! So nine of us chose his route to Thorp Perrow via Ripon. Well, having been on holiday for two weeks and cycling over 400 miles I thought this flattish route would be a cinch. But I forgot the Wheel Easy pace! and this wasn't even the fastest group! So 60 miles later, home and dry, I was suitably pooped. We did however have a strong head wind to deal with on the way home.

Paul, Denis, Phil and Steve left us at Ripon for refreshment at Spa Gardens whilst the rest of us headed up through Thornborough to Thorp Perrow. Here we were greeted by the owner who was pleased to welcome and chat to us. We were probably a week too early for the full impact of the changing colours of the trees but the place was busy and we had a good lunch. We wimped out of Martin's suggested route back to Ripon via Masham and varied it slightly returning via West Tanfield.

At Ripon Paul R and Sue rode straight back to Harrogate (Sue to watch Andy Murray) and Paul to prepare for his cycle ride next week to Perth! Malcolm, Gia and Jill headed off to Spa Gardens, Gia and Jill for a cup of tea and Malcolm to join Martin, Yvonne and Bill who were supporting Ripon Loiterers at their AGM.

Malcolm and I definitely missed the warm southern France temperatures but nice to be back in the Wheel Easy fold along with some 40 riders who turned out today! GM

Extra Long Ride. Seven riders left Hornbeam for an extra long ride over Coverdale and down Rark Rash. Passing Knaresborough and then Ripon, where we lost one rider who needed to be home early, we followed the main road past Lightwater Valley to Masham which was reached at 11.15am. Ben whose mountain bike was giving off some odd noises decided to play it safe and not venture into Coverdale so just after Masham he turned right and headed over to Bedale.

At East Witton we turned left into some fantastic country lanes leading up Coverdale with Penn Hill in site and looking rather forboding. The wind had started to increase and was now on the nose. Ten miles to Kettlewell the sign said as we started to climb the lower foot hills. We reached Horsehouse and decided to call into the Thwaite Arms for food and drink only to be told by an unfriendly landlord that we had muddy boots and could not sit inside. We replied by walking out and telling him we would continue on to Kettlewell. Gone are the days when people treat cyclists and walkers as second class citizens.

With the wind increasing and the foothills now starting to get serious we soon were at the foot of Park Rash. The wind on the top must have been in the region of 60mph making it extremely hard work. However we all made the summit and descended down to Kettlewell, a well earned lunch and then on to Grassington and Stump Cross. Peter and Alec missed the turn at Greenhow and went on to Pateley Bridge which left the 3 of us to battle a side wind back to Harrogate. 85 miles in total. Well done to everyone a really hard but great day on the blke. Malcolm Y



