

Sunday, March 8, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 150



Long ride report - The tour of the reservoirs.

There was good turnout and I could sense the air of expectancy as I revealed the route for the long ride - a tour of 5 reservoirs Swinsty, Fewston, Thruscross, Gouthwaite and Scar House. If I'd expected applause and a queue of riders keen to participate I'd have been disappointed. Eventually however 7 riders set off including new member Tim (aka Chris Hoy).

I soon realised this was going to be one of those rides where the leader leads from behind, but there's nothing wrong with that particularly when faced with the strong winds as we passed Little Almscliffe en route to Timble.

After Timble we deviated from the usual Wheel Easy route and turned right down to Blubberhouses. Here we crossed the A59 and headed vertically upwards to Thruscross. Fortunately the spectacular scenery meant nobody seemed to notice the extreme gradients (or at least Tim didn't). In the distance the weather was looking menacing to say the least and we were just hoping to make it to Pateley Bridge before the rain. Fortunately the rain didn't materialise and we reached The Lemon Meringue Café warm and dry for a welcome lunch.

After lunch 4 hardy souls headed up the valley to Scar House Reservoir. Eric rather unwisely commented that the sun had come out and the wind had dropped, and so it appeared until we arrived at Scar House. Here the weather decided to show us a thing or two. First the wind got up. We took some hasty photos and set off for a quick run back to P. B. (note the average for the 35 miles so far was 10.6 mph). Then it began to hail, driving into our faces at about 40mph, turning to snow and finally rain. Fortunately the extreme weather only

lasted about 15 mins, just enough to be a great test of the Wheel Easy Windtex jacket - it passed with flying colours, truly a great garment. We returned to the café for a dessert course and a much needed warm-up, then headed back home by the easiest route, splitting up at Burnt Yates where Chris and Pete went via Ripley and Eric and I via Hampsthwaite.

About 60 miles in total with all the hard bits at the beginning. Phil St

Brisker Half of the Medium Ride:

Your Leader was in two minds - no change there then! Should we stick to the route as planned out to Knaresborough, Bishop Monkton and home via Shaw Mills and Hampsthwaite or cut it short in view of the weather forecast. The medium ride was pretty big, probably around 30 riders, so at Knaresborough we split into "brisk" and "steady" groups, there being 14 riders in the brisk category. The sun was shining and my optimism improving, as usual, with each turn of the pedals so we went for the original route through Farnham and even added a bit more along the bridleway from Copgrove across to the Roecliffe Road.

Our break was at Cascades for a coffee and a few opted not to stop and to continue homeward. The general opinion was that the stop was worth it and the service was good and price reasonable.

Then we headed up to the Drovers cross roads at Bishop Thornton where Charles and, I think ANOther, turned for Knaresborough, anyway we seemed to be 2 less! There was some good climbing on the hills up from Shaw Mills, and particularly noteworthy was Sarah who had never done this distance previously. Perhaps her energy came from the toasted tea cake, something she said was not common on the other side of the Atlantic.

A quick dive down to Hampsthwaite then it was home via Knox village. We did about 29 miles so how did the other medium group clock up 32 miles? Time for a re-calibration Malcolm! Now how many miles do you claim to have done this year? Martin W

The slower medium group generally followed Martin's route, with a small extra loop along the lovely road through Lingerfield. Apparently there were 13 of us from Low Bridge, but my unscheduled detour caused some confusion and briefly reduced our number to 9. Dennis and Crawford waited patiently for us at the top of Sandy Bank, which meant we were 11 strong as far as the Cascade café stop, then they left us to return home for lunch, so we had a good group of 9 again for the rest of the day.

On the way, we were overtaken by two lots of Otley riders (including Malcolm Y), and one of their members kindly took a joint Otley/Wheel Easy photo at the northern end of the Copgrove track.

After Cascade we had a fine run to Markington, where thanks to Alison's more reliable sense of direction we correctly turned right and overcame a series of steady hills and welcome drops to Hampsthwaite and Knox Lane. All day the black clouds had threatened much while producing only the odd drop of rain, but as we approached Skipton Road we were pelted with an impressive burst of hail which continued most of the way back to Hornbeam and our homes.

A minimum of 32 miles for all those returning to the car park and as Lynda noted, it was a

fairly demanding ride which several of us would have struggled to complete a few months ago. Malcolm M

Seven for the short ride today. A ride round the cycle network in Harrogate, a voyage of discovery for some! The main disappointment is the amount of glass on the cycle paths which is a major deterrent.

However we circled the town, took in the fields to the showground, used the Bilton path, down in to Knaresborough and back up the Beryl Burton. Up Bilton Lane we crossed over the Skipton Road making our way through quiet roads to Luchon Way and down to the Ripon Road. We climbed some steep roads out of Oakdale before dispersing at the Pinewoods. Some of us carried on to Harlow Carr, past Cardale Park and on to Whinney Lane and home. 19 miles and home in reasonable sunshine and not too battered by the wind. Gia



