

Sunday, July 12, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report 168



WHEEL EASY DALES RIDE

As the forecast promised the rain was clearing as we arrived for the 8.00am start at Beckwithshaw, and with the odd light shower the day gradually improved from there. So 10 riders started to be joined soon by 2 more latecomers catching up as we headed over the moor and then climbed up to Greenhow.

It was too early for the Stump Cross Caverns tearoom so our first stop after battling the surprisingly strong head wind was at Grassington. After the break it was clear that we were going to split into a fast group, a quick group, and "lets enjoy the scenery" group. The leader being in the latter, it was a case of leading from the back!

A steady ride through Kettlewell and Buckden along Wharfedale and then steeply over the top of the pass near Cray, was enhanced by a sheep traffic-jam and a Velocette vintage motorbike rally. Then we had a long fast downhill through the delights of Bishopdale. From there we crossed the Aysgarth falls and made our way to Redmire.

Earlier in the ride Eric had mentioned that there was an alternative route from Redmire, which would avoid the A684. The five of us in the back group took this alternative to discover that it was more suited to crampons and climbing ropes than to cycling. The road took us up on to the moor above Leyburn and at a recovery stop various threats to Eric's future existence were being sounded out. Down in Leyburn we met Eric at the café, only to discover that he had opted out of his alternative and taken the easy-peasy route!

The ride back through the lanes to Snape and Ripon was a delight with the wind behind us helping the hill-weary legs along. We had a celebratory stop at the Ripon Spa Gardens tearoom with a brass band playing and some of us enjoyed Carol's bread and butter

pudding.

As we arrived in Harrogate we realised we were a bit short of the 100 miles but Peter Bradley was not to be beaten and set off with Glyn up to Beckwithshaw where Glyn had parked, thus ensuring a full century. As for Yvonne and I we decided four Yorkshire Dales, three big climbs, three good café stops and 96 quality miles will do nicely (until next time).
Martin

P.S. brief report on the progress of the faster group on the Dales Ride.

Dave, Jeff, Chris and myself battled through the wind across Duck Street and onto Grassington deciding to carry on to Kettlewell for our first coffee stop. Lunch was taken at Jervaulx and on reaching Ripon we decided to head to Boroughbridge to try to make a total of 100 miles. We didn't quite make the magic century and I had to do a couple of circuits of the Duchy area to make my first 100 mile run. A momentous occasion! Phil S.

Medium Ride

First news of our national and international travellers. We had a text today from Caroline and Max riding in the foothills of the Pyrenees whilst looking out for the Tour de France. Later a text from Jill who, on the first leg of her Land's End-John O'Groats journey, encountered many hills and a rainy day. However she concluded that it was challenging and enjoyable and fabulous scenery.

Martin led away the long ride at 8.00am and those who arrived at Hornbeam all elected for the medium ride. This got Dennis B (now renamed Boy Racer) out of leading the short ride as no-one wanted to do one.

Paul R and Peter J kindly agreed to lead a faster group and we didn't see them again until we got back to Harrogate.

We took the usual route up to Stainburn Woods daring to go through Moor Park and then battled with the wind against us up to Little Almscliff where we saw for the first time of the day a peloton of riders in a road race preceded by flashing cars and motor bike riders. It was quite exciting as they sped past.

At the junction of Penny Pot Lane they were due to arrive on one of their six circuits, Gaye was lured by an early sight of them and sailed off towards them (and a barbecue lunch) whilst we waited for a photo opportunity and watched as frustrated drivers didn't understand the words NO YOU CANNOT PROCEED FOR ABOUT 3 MINUTES! Anyway the cyclists flew round the corner and we carried on our way. The rewards of the swoop down from High Birstwith are always a treat and no-one complained at the incline out of Hampsthwaite. They were probably all still talking about the scarecrows of which there were many dotted about the village. A few of us made it to the Catwalk café for coffee, meeting a few of the faster riders who were just leaving. A lovely ride, we didn't get wet. A good 25 mile medium ride. Gia

