

Sunday, September 6, 2009
Wheel Easy Ride Report 176



Short Ride Report

Having eaten leftover pizza for breakfast I was feeling super strong and raring to go when I went to see the Sustrans riders off on their journey from Harrogate to the Vale of York. However having followed Gia to Hornbeam, I realised that I was lucky to be able to lead the short ride today. It soon became obvious that the short riders were all really long riders in disguise as all of them raced up the hill towards Ridding Park as if it were a down hill, I followed at an appropriately slow pace. Thankfully non of them knew the way, so they had to slow down and wait for me. We crossed the by-pass with ease and entered Follifoot triumphantly. Although going Spofforth was alluring it was decided that it would be interesting to see a new way to Knaresborough, without actually having to go into Knaresborough and leaving its hills out. So we took Dennis' path across the Harrogate Spofforth road, noticing the hedges were full of all sorts of goodies for jam and jelly making, (must make a return trip with plastic bags). Risked life and limb re crossing the by-pass to Thistle Hill.

I had promised them a coffee stop at Forest Moor Garden Centre but Lynda was so keen on leading the group away from their struggling leader, we whizzed passed. When I suggested another loop, the excellent back marker Sue T said she had important things to do, and would not be joining us as we sped onwards to the Harrogate end of the Beryl Burton and back to Bilton and along the Asda path, where Ted was keen to join me in a little light shopping in Asda. Sadly I knew we had to get Allison and Peter back to Hornbeam so we missed that joy. All returned safely and well to the start after a very jolly 15 miles taken sedately but quite speedily. Caroline G

Medium Ride Report

18 riders started out on the medium ride, heading out via Knaresborough & Lingerfield. Unfortunately Bridget had mechanical problems which were not possible to rectify at the roadside, so after a short ride out to Farnham she faced a long walk back home. The group continued through Arkendale, Marton cum Grafton and on to Aldborough. Phil & Tall John left us at this point to head home by a more direct route. The remainder continued on to Boroughbridge where 3 managed to escape furtively into a coffee shop. They caught up as we passed through Roecliffe and we continued via the bridleway to Copgrove.

We disbanded in Knaresborough all going our separate ways after a very pleasant ride of around 30 miles at a nice leisurely pace. Dennis B.

Long Ride Report

About 19 of us set off to do a hilly long but steady ride through Nidderdale, with most importantly a first coffee stop set for Darley Mill. Making good progress to Darley meant that we waited for 10 minutes for the café to open, but this seemed to set the mood for the day, and we enjoyed a relaxed coffee and tea stop. But this relaxed mood was a little fantasy set-up by the leader because we then set off up to Thornthwaite and around the top of the dale to reach Yorks Folly via some serious gradients.

The mood remained buoyant, however, and plunging down Yorkes Folly everyone seemed full of enthusiasm as we stopped at Bewerley to discuss the route. Getting high on adrenalin and coffee Malcolm and James decided to go for the end of summer "big one"! They set off to Lofthouse and to climb the fearsome hill before dropping down into Masham. We heard no more of the intrepid pair and if they ever return home we look forward to their ride report.

For the rest of us, the fun really started from here as we set off towards Brimham Rocks. Climbing the hills we got the message that Debbie had missed the turning to Smelthouses. After several phone calls and sitting up near Brimham Rocks for a while we decided to proceed without Debbie to Warsill and the fabulous long descent down to Bishop Thornton. This descent of about 3 miles was attacked with relish and we arrived exhilarated at the T-junction at the bottom. But then the leader's phone rang. Debbie was back on the route!

So the leader suggested that all the fast descenders should head off to the café at Markington. Half of them were having none of this and they said "If you're going back up to meet Debbie, so are we - we want another go at that downhill!"

We met Debbie after two miles of climbing and took in another great descent this time all the way to Markington where copious quantities of everything sticky and delicious were consumed on this the last day of the Sticky Wicket café before winter closure.

Home with about 45 miles covered, an awful lot of hills, and lots of fun. Martin W

Additional Report from Long Ride

For James and myself, the unconquered climb to the moors over Lofthouse beckoned irresistibly. We were soon in Lofthouse, stopped for a banana and chocolate break, and then started the very long haul up to the top, with James naturally moving steadily further away. In the end it was a very slight anti-climax, not nearly as steep as it seemed to be last time, hopefully thanks to some increased fitness and no doubt mostly to my Hewitt. James had no problem, even though his lowest gear was nothing like as low as mine, and arrived at the summit several minutes ahead of me. The rest of the ride was fabulous. With advice from

residents of several villages we went from Healey to Swinton, over Roomer Common above Masham to Kirkby Malzeard, Grantley, and a very late lunch at Studley Visitor Centre. We coasted down to Studley Roger and Ripon and finally cycled through Littlethorpe to Bishop Monkton and the usual route home, about 70 miles in all. Malcolm M

