

Sunday, November 22, 2009
Wheel Easy Ride Report 187



Short Ride Report

10 of us assembled in the appointed Short Ride corner of the Hornbeam car park, blocked in behind all the other longer rides counting down their blast offs to distant parts of the galaxy. This delay to our own launch window was very useful as the ride leader hadn't done his homework and his planned ride - a clockwise circuit via Army Apprentice College, Hampsthwaite and Spruisty Bridge - turned out to be a repeat of last week's short ride. So minutes later, with the Hornbeam launch pad now clear, we were able to embark on our Plan B: Squinting Cat, Beckwithshaw, Little Alms Cliff, Sun Inn, Penny Pot Lane, and returning into Harrogate over the Oakdale Bridge. The weather was better than the forecast, but our tactic was to keep moving, keep warm, to combat the wind chill, and hopefully get home before the rain started.

It was great to see Lawrie McW riding with Wheel Easy again - his first outing after 18 torrid months fighting a serious achilles tendon injury. Charles also returned after injuring various delicate parts of his anatomy last week due to repeated gear failure, and not prepared to take any further punishment he had acquired a new bike (a Chris Boardman, no less!) in the intervening week! We lost one rider due to a black hole in the Beckwithshaw area of the nearer reaches of the solar system (OK - it was a puncture!). With a short shower starting, we paused briefly for a photocall at Little Alms Cliff with Menwith Hill and Knabs Ridge turbines in the background. The return along Penny Pot Lane was delightful with the strong tailwind speeding us home. At Cornwall Road we separated and took our various routes home. Most would arrive home by 11.45 before the rain started, having completed 18 miles. Another mission accomplished! Eric W

Medium Ride Report

The 32 mile medium ride to Ripon was a popular choice today. The route on the website allowed riders to join and leave at different points. Phil S joined the ride at the beginning of the cycleway at Asda and Paul B joined at Knaresborough. After meeting a horse on the Beryl Burton cycle path we continued through Scriven, Farnham and Copgrove where Phil left us and headed towards Burton Leonard. Just after Bishop Monkton, Debbie had a puncture which was quickly repaired by Terry with the help of Mervyn. We were soon up and going again with the sight of the second medium group approaching and Phil mentioning the possible coffee queue at Spa Gardens.

Dave Preston said in all his time cycling he has never seen so many cyclists at Spa Gardens! After refreshments Phil led us home along the canal, Littlethorpe and the usual route back to Knaresborough. It was an enjoyable ride with good company and it is always good to hear about future challenges that Wheel Easy riders are planning. Mervyn, Karen and Gary are planning to cycle in Peru and Karen is planning to walk 100 miles in two days! Paul

Better weather than forecast brought riders out in force, about 55 by the time people had joined the rides at various places. Malcolm and Sam raided Steve's garage to find a suitable seatpost and saddle as Sam's seatpost was well and truly cracked! Thanks Steve! Clearly the replacement was of such calibre that despite the delay they arrived at Spa Gardens long before the rest of us.

Paul's route taking our group of nine out of Harrogate via the Asda path was a welcome change as was the fact that the path was mostly clear of glass. We were also able to marvel that Harrogate Borough Council have at last tidied up the gate along Bilton Lane beyond the kennels and caravan site. Picture to prove it is now on site. There is a new A frame, a gate for horses and a tarmac path. Excellent.

On to Knaresborough, Lingerfield and Farnham where the weather deteriorated but Crawford donned his rain jacket enough to ward off a real downpour and with his new bike he was off like the wind. We passed two long riders beset by punctures, caught up with Paul's group with similar problems but did the decent thing and let them get to the café first. At Ripon there must have been about 40 Wheel Easy cyclists from the various rides, but they coped well and we left Ripon with Malcolm and Sam in good sunshine to get home before the skies started to threaten again. Well done everyone. 34 miles round trip. Gia

Also thanks to Sue C who chivvied the council to clear the cycle path up from Knaresborough which had been swept since last weekend!

Medium Plus Ride Report

Seven riders chose the Medium Plus but alas no ride leader. Gia shoved a piece of paper into my hand, "that's the route" and Sue C spotted it and said "aha the Black Spot, so you are now are leader...". Ambushed or what?

We wiggled our way through Harrogate and spotted Paul the Tiler in his drive on Knox Lane. He had got two yards this morning when the Puncture Fairy had paid him a visit. He only had his back wheel to put back when we went past so we waited 2 minutes for him at the bridge and off we went. Seven became eight. Hampsthwaite, Clint Bank down to Shaw Mills and up to Cut Throat Lane. How would you like to visit a house called The Gallows on Cut Throat Lane? Back to the ride we went through Bishop Thornton and nearly lost three riders as they wanted to go straight on at the Chequer's Cross Roads instead of turning left. Right turn down to rear of Fountains Abbey. The wind seemed to be picking up and we were sure it must have been on our backs because even with the hills we were making very good time.

One of our number decided to take a comfort break and wished he'd checked the wind direction before he nipped behind the hedge. Experience counts for a great deal when you're out cycling you'd think I'd know better. Sorry he'd know better, we're not naming names!! A lovely swoop down through Fountains Park and on to Spa Gardens Café in Ripon. We got there just in time as half the Long Ride seemed to be there and we got in just before the Medium Riders appeared.

Lots of tales of woe with a lot of visits from the P. Fairy, she for it must be a she, was out in force today. One of our riders didn't wait at the Café so we became seven but Dave Preston and Peter, (in Wheel Easy if unsure of a name use Peter, you'll more than likely be right) from the Long Ride joined us. Off we rode home via Bishop Monkton, Peter (guess!) rode off in front, must have had a date, Copgrove and Knaresborough. We parted company at Bogs Lane and went our own way home and I was home for 1.30pm Approx 35 miles. Great ride thanks Sue, Bridget, Paul, Dave, Peter, Peter, Peter, and John. Apologies if I got your name wrong!!

The weather had been great compared to Saturday, the wind not too bad on the way home and we managed to keep everyone together. Now who do I pass the Black Spot on to... Steve W

Long Ride Report

15 riders left Hornbeam Park on a better weather day than forecast, to cycle to Ripon Spa Gardens via Knaresborough, Lingerfield, Arkendale, Dunsforth, Boroughbridge and Marton le Moor.

Unfortunately two riders punctured only a few miles out, one of which, Charles, had to walk home. Most of the riders pushed on not wanting to hang about getting cold, leaving James, Steve, Jill and Geoff to try and catch the main group. They met Phil at Boroughbridge who also had had bike problems, making a group of five who cycled to Ripon at a quick pace. No sign of the main group at Spa Gardens Café. Where did they get to? Are they still out there? Anyway, the intrepid five having enjoyed food and drink at the café had a picturesque ride back to Harrogate passing through Studley Roger, Fountains Abbey, Ripley, Knox Mill and into Harrogate - approximately 50 miles covered. Geoff

