

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

## Wednesday Rides

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Mowgli, Baloo and King Louie on Lofthouse Moor

Poddlers' Ride Report - Little and Big Eager to attract the maximum number of cyclists to participate in the Poddlers' ride, fulfil my role as ride leader to the full (and being a little fearful of encountering the wrath of Gia if I didn't take my turn) and improve my IT skills, today's ride was planned using Bike Route Toaster. I would like to say that this is a fantastic package and provided all that was needed; but I can't! Yes it provided a printed route - but I fed that in - a route of way points with no joining lines! It did provide an elevation chart which showed that the finish elevation was 25 metres higher than the start elevation, what!, and that there was an initial up followed by a down then another gut wrenching up before a slight down followed by a steep up, a short nice down and a final ascent (steep).

As a predictive tool it failed miserably (score 1/10). The package didn't show that the route would be muddy in places and that Trevor's bike and Sue W's new lovely pale blue and white, drop handle bar-ed number would suffer the ignominy of being covered in mud spots. There was no indication that Jenny's rear tyre would explode after a mile with a noise that would have had seasoned soldiers leaping into ditches for cover (due to a trapped inner tube losing the will to live. Thanks for the quick repair Tall John). Sadly it didn't forecast that the forlorn Trevor, with his mud splattered steed, would take his seasons tally for punctures into the millions at the bottom of the long ascent from North Rigton to the "Top of the World" (Thanks to Smaller John for standing by). It also failed to predict that we would be waylaid by the Acorn lady promoting some 100km charity ride later in the year. Finally and by far the worst failure, there wasn't the slightest indication that Sue W would take a wrong turning and head for Leeds (she could have been mugged) before being chased back towards Harrogate by a friendly local. Rubbish package - give me a map, pencil, a length of string and a crystal ball for route planning anytime.

Just for the record 11 opted for the normal, windless route to Little Alms Cliff Crag, the scintillating swoop to Leathley, the climb to Stainburn and Big Almscliff Crag followed by the drag from North

Rigton to the "top of the world crossroads, the weeeeeoow down to Burn Bridge and the final flog back to Hornbeam. On paper a short ride but Toaster tells us we ascended 380 metres. It felt like a lot more. Quote of the day by Richard "This is the hilliest bl\*\*dy Wednesday Poddlers' ride I've been on". The ride had to start exactly on time as Trevor had a dental appointment and Alison "had to be back sometime today". 11 x 21 miles in very good company. Max

Wheel Easy Ride Report

A huge number of Poddlers left Hornbeam very promptly as we were still arriving but without much ado Martin suggested a ride to Wetherby. This clearly was a coffee stop with a bit of a ride but as he, Yvonne and Malcolm had to be back in Harrogate by 12.30 this was a good idea. We raced along to Wetherby using the Burn Bridge and Walton Head Lane route and enjoyed a pretty traffic free day. We all commented on the fine views this route gives, how we used to think 16 miles was a long ride and that the hills have got less steep than they used to be! After coffee in Wetherby where poor Martin was outvoted and denied his Costa, Yvonne bought some bargain fish at the fresh fish shop and headed home with Malcolm and Martin. Sue, Gia, Sarah, Simon and Peter B carried on along the cycle paths to Thorp Arch, Rudgate and the loop to Tockwith. There Sue had a chance to catch up with her son who was doing a fine job working on the restoration of Tockwith Village Hall. Back to Harrogate via Cowthorpe, Little Ribston, Spofforth and Follifoot.

Lots of new territory for new rider Simon who will no doubt soon be joining the medium plus riders on Sundays.

Finally the Wheel Easy generous spirit was in full evidence today with Sarah lending Sue her brand new road bike for most of the return journey from Wetherby. Sarah battled on behind with Sue's bike but was encouraging Sue to race up them thar hills! This reminded me of the time Eric lent Bridget his bike and never got it back! (She did buy it off him!) So when you next see Sue she will definitely be in front of you! Lovely ride, home in time for lunch. 5 x 36 miles. 3 x 21 miles. Gia

EG's Ride Report

It was my usual last minute dash from home to Low Bridge, Knaresborough: this time with David Rowson in hot pursuit, which meant I wasn't last to arrive for a change!

The scene at Low Bridge was reminiscent of the vultures in Jungle Book. Dave Preston wasn't there to whip the EG's into shape - he's on a 4 week tour of the fleshpots and massage parlours of the Far East. "How does he get away with that?" I hear every Wheel Easy male with a pulse ask. Well apparently he told his wife he was going on a 4-week course of Tai Chi. Likely story - but it seems to have worked brilliantly! No doubt if Celia reads this ride report, he'll arrive home to find the locks have all been changed and his clothes dumped in the middle of Otley Road.

Anyway - back to the story. So there we were at Low Bridge. "What we gonna do?" "I dunno, what do you wanna do?" "I dunno, what do you wanna do?" "I dunno, what do you wanna do?" So after 5 minutes of these circular questions getting us nowhere, somebody mentioned Masham, and then a second person also mentioned Masham. 2 votes for, and 5 abstentions, so it was overwhelmingly decided to flap over to the north side of the jungle and see what the action was like up there - knowing damn well that nothing much changes up there in geological ages and it would still be pretty much the same as it was on Sunday! Nevertheless we set off flapping in a northerly direction, agreeing to stop off en-route at Ripon Spa Gardens for a bit of in-flight refuelling.

We'd gone about 100 yards before it emerged that 4 out of the 7 EGs had got to be back in Harrogate by lunchtime so there was no chance of them ever getting to the northside of the jungle. Then we hadn't even got to the end of Abbey Road before Norman discovered a puncture, so the progress of the committee (the collective noun for a group of vultures) was delayed whilst his undercarriage was repaired. Eventually we arrived at the Spa Gardens cafe, and whilst Roy, Bill,

Norman & John planned their return to Harrogate, Mowgli (aka David Rowson) persuaded Baloo (aka Alec Welham) and King Louie (aka EW) to take the long, hilly, scenic detour to Masham and then climbing the heights of Lofthouse and Yorke's Folly on the way home. Oh well, I haven't been over them for 3 days so I might as well do them again, but perhaps this time it could be a little slower than Sunday as my legs haven't yet recovered. So the committee parted and went our separate ways, 4 flying south to Harrogate, and 3 heading west into the sun past Studley Park, before turning north to Winksley, Kirkby Malzeard, Grewelthorpe and Masham, where we didn't stop for food, which must be a first for an EG's ride. We then climbed through Healey to Leighton Reservoir, where we chatted with an angler who seemed to be pulling out trout faster than vultures could eat them. He'd already caught an 8 pounder, and fished out a 2½ and a 3 pound trout whilst we were talking to him. Then onward and upwards, past some lapwings, & pausing for photographic evidence on the summit before the rapid descent into Lofthouse. We stopped for tea in Pateley Bridge, then onwards and upwards again, to the top of Yorke's Folly, admiring the curlews in flight, and back to Harrogate by 5.30pm, completing a lovely ride in weather reminiscent of a summer's day. I even got down to 2 layers of clothing for the first time this year. According to my OS map, we'd crossed 10 uphill chevrons this afternoon (5 on each climb), which made it 20 chevrons in 4 days for my aching legs. Dave Preston - get back here quickly - the EG's can't go on cycling up hills like this! Come to think of it, what my legs really need now is a massage, Dave could you recommend somebody?

Note for the Captain's Log: 4 riders completed 35 miles, and 3 riders completed 64 miles. 332 miles total today Eric Waters

2010 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 806 YTD 27613



