

Sunday, May 2, 2010

Wheel Easy Ride Report 210



Short

Ride

Report

The committee's decision to ensure the short ride would be no more than 15 miles was clearly a popular decision as it attracted Petra, Beth and Sarah back to Wheeleasy, as well as two new members Will and Rachael. It was always popular with regular members who just want a short ride in order to be back home late morning. We hope it will attract new riders in the weeks ahead. Thirteen riders set off from Hornbeam and rode through the showground and along the cycle path to the Travellers Rest. A few were not aware of the new pathway and made it known they will be using it regularly in the future. Everyone managed the hills up to Rudding and out of Follifoot to Wetherby Road. Phil Hall backmarked ensuring no one was left behind. Unfortunately he had to leave us at Calcutt but passed on his responsibilities to Linda before leaving. Linda was on her new 'super bike' which enabled her daughter Rachael to come on her old one. At Waterside in Knaresborough we all agreed to stop for coffee and refreshments. Fully refreshed no one was looking forward to tackling the Beryl Burton cycleway, but were all pleasantly surprised they managed it easily. As we approached Harrogate, riders left the group and went in different directions home. Arriving back at Hornbeam just before mid-day it was clear everyone had enjoyed their 14 mile ride. Thank you everyone! Paul

Click on slide show for all today's photos

Medium

Ride

Reports

"Mainly flat to Otley. Climbs on the way back". What this actually meant was more hills than a trek over the lumpy bits of the Himalaya. Still it gave me plenty of opportunity to study the scenery while walking up the hills trying not to overdo the recently repaired knee - lots of bluebells, dandelions and the occasional road kill. We set off happily from Harrogate towards Kirkby Overblow. Before we had even got there Sue was the first casualty retiring with a slow puncture. Malcolm's persuasive skills were not enough to get her to carry on, even with the offer of a change of tube. However later he did manage to

demonstrate that Mark Cavendish is not the only one to know that special two fingered wave that cost him a 6000 Euro fine recently in the Tour de Romandie. In Malcolm's case it was for a dangerous piece of driving when somebody squeezed past us much too close and too fast on a narrow road. Still we soldiered on towards Otley losing another rider on the way there who was going to visit friends and getting a lift back with her husband in the car (think that is definitely cheating).

Our break was at Weston, at the Cockpit Farm café, with a plastic sheep wearing a hat. I must admit that I did not realise at first that the sheep was plastic and wondered how the owner managed to keep its hat on (really must get some new glasses). Caroline did a sterling job as a waitress as the staff were somewhat overwhelmed by an excess of Wheel Easy, together with some other lesser cyclists, especially as we met one of the other groups there. We lost a few more there and also gained one. The lady at the café gave Malcolm her number and asked that in future we gave them some few minutes' notice of the imminent arrival of a horde of hungry cyclists so that they could cope better - not too sure what they would do, expect possibly run away. At least that was Malcolm's excuse for getting her number (honestly, Gia). It had been somewhat of a climb up to the stop so Max and I were looking forward to the downhill on the way back. Unfortunately, gravity had reversed while we had stopped and it was still uphill although only briefly before a great downhill into Otley (nothing at all to do with the large slabs of cake). When we got to the bottom Malcolm asked if anybody else had noticed a cow with its head apparently stuck in the fence. We decided to do the proper thing and go back to check but all was well and no sign of a stuck cow (what was in that cake Malcolm?) The climb out of Otley seemed to go on forever with Caroline trying a sneaky weaving manoeuvre on the bike to stop me passing while I was walking. Shortly before Stainburn we turned right along a route that Malcolm assured us all was less hilly and headed for North Rigton. By now I was looking for the Sherpas with the oxygen supply and thinking that we were soon going to be in danger from passing aircraft. A loss of three more at Beckwithshaw to Harlow Gardens and eventually back to Harrogate. According to my computer it was 33 miles. The weather stayed dry so was definitely a bonus compared to the forecast. Thanks for a great ride Malcolm. I will be away from Wheel Easy for two weeks as I will be on holiday in Croatia. As I will be hiring a bike I am hoping to find some coastline where God has remembered to do his ironing and it is flatish. Mervyn

We had six takers for the quicker pace medium ride and we followed the same route as the medium ride. All went well with our group until we stopped at the farm at Weston for coffee. At this point Dennis and John said they needed to get back and I was a little concerned because I only been on this route once before and I was counting on Dennis's vast knowledge of all cycling routes to guide me. However, Gia pointed us in the right direction and with an additional 3 riders from the medium plus mystery tour we set off. This new group of six only lasted for 3 miles when the medium plus riders kidnapped Debbs and dragged her kicking and screaming towards Pateley Bridge. This left myself and Darren to complete the rest of our route via Leathley, Stainburn, North Rigton and Beckwithshaw. On our return to Hornbeam there was Debbs who had been released by her captors before we had even managed to raise the ransom money. All in all a good ride, I will say 5 riders rode 32 miles. Terry

Medium Plus Ride Report
As there were about 21 on the medium plus ride heading towards Ilkley we decided at Walton Head Lane to split the group up in to two and head for the Cockpit Farm café. Our group of eight enjoyed the run down through Kirkby Overblow to the Leeds Road and over to Dunkswick. It was very refreshing to do the ride this way round for a change. Up towards Farnley our group were separated but most of us made it to the café at Weston. Sorry Sarah that we lost you especially as you came back to look for us! At Weston, Sue and her girls were skilfully serving the hungry, thirsty Wheel Easy throng which by this time was full of medium and medium plus riders. Then a group announcing themselves as the GTX super fast Wheel Easy medium plus posed for a

picture, decided Ilkley was an unnecessary diversion and headed home via Askwith and Timble. The rest of the medium plus did the same except for Peter N and Bill who wanted more miles, more hills and we expect more food so went to Bolton Abbey. The medium plus touring pace also abandoned Ilkley and pedalled up from Askwith and over the moors to Timble. We reckon that the hills today were more important than the miles. It was really chilly but good to be out and it really is a fine ride. Mileage? Bill and Peter will prob have bagged 40+. Martin's flock of five about 36 and Sarah prob did similar. Hope that helps! Gia

Hordes of cyclists opted for the Medium Plus option possibly after discovering much better weather today than was forecast. After a winding tour of the back streets of Pannal and Burn Bridge like a swarm of multi-coloured bees trying to find the sunny spot in the garden, we decided to split into two groups at the bottom of Walton Head Lane and my group headed for the Weston cafe at top speed - perhaps we were the 'Medium Plus Major' ? There are a surprising number of hills between Kirkby Overblow and Weston, but I reckon that while cyclists are still chattering away to each other, the hills can't be too much. for them, so I decided to include one more by taking the Farnley Road to Otley. The climb up the hill fulfilled my master plan of a phased arrival at the cafe, although with us and the Medium Ride and the other half of the 'Plus' group ('Medium Plus the Lesser?'), the cafe was soon bursting at the seams with rainbow lycra. I must say, sitting in the sun outside the cafe, was blissful - does Otley really get more percentage sunshine than other places? The warmth seemed a mirage once we left the cafe for Askwith. The icy wind blew stronger and into our faces as we turned uphill (again) towards the Otley Blubberhouses road. A good suggestion was to go straight ahead at the top and weave along the far side of the ridge before rejoining the Otley road and head towards Timble, Fewston Reservoir, Norwood, Little Almscliffe, Beckwithshaw and home. 36 miles on the clock, on a better day than expected and successfully over some enormous hills, as usual a most enjoyable ride and company. Peter

Long Ride Report
Eleven people gathered for the long ride to Skipton Waterways Festival on a rather chilly May morning. Even before we had left the car park at Hornbeam we were down to ten as Phil discovered he had a broken spoke & headed off home to swap bikes, planning to catch up en route. The rest of the group set off on the planned route via Burn Bridge, North Rigton & Almscliffe Crag heading for Otley. At Askwith Dennis turned for home heading up the hill towards Timble & Fewston while the rest tackled the first of the big climbs of the day up to Beamsley Beacon. I'm sure everyone agreed it was worth it for the views? From here it was a quick down hill run for a cafe stop at the Abbey Tea Rooms. While enjoying refreshments a phone call from Phil indicated he had somehow got to Skipton before the rest of the group. As we discovered when we met up with him a short while later he had somehow missed out the Beamsley Beacon climb! On reaching Skipton most people didn't want to linger too long at the Waterways Festival so it was a quick walk along the canal to view some narrow boats & enough time for some more food before starting the ride home. Three of the group decided to stay & see more of the festival so it was a group of seven setting off for the ride back. It was soon time to tackle the other two big climbs of the day, from Eastby over Halton Moor & then from Appletreewick up to Stump Cross, a new routes for a couple of people on the ride. Everyone coped well & we were soon speeding down Duck Street & past Menwith Hill heading for home. A hilly ride of approximately 62 miles. Jill

Footnote to Long Ride Report.
Peter, James and I stayed in Skipton for a further 90 minutes so we could have a more extensive view of this year's Waterways Festival - it was well worth it! The theme of this year was the Second World War, and all the vessels were decorated appropriate to the theme - including anti-aircraft guns, searchlights, ration books, Dig for Victory, etc. The bridges and tow paths were lined with hundreds of people, especially when the raft race was on. We were delighted to have stayed longer and would recommend returning in future years, when hopefully the weather might be a little warmer. The photos give an indication of the great atmosphere.

Final comment in praise of Cock Pit Farm Tea Room. On our return journey, it was 4.45pm when we arrived at the tea room, only to find the notice board in the garden said it closed at 4pm - but the front door was open, so we ventured in. The good lady said the coffee machine was switched off, but she could do instant coffees. We sat in the garden eating our cakes, and the owner brought our coffees to us and said she wouldn't charge for them as they were instant. What fantastic service!
Eric.

In addition to the above, a faster group of 5 did the Medium ride (Photo 12: Terry, Debs, Darren, Paul and Ian). A total of 21 cyclists did the Medium Plus route.

2010	Wheel	Easy	Miles	(approx)	Today	2130	YTD	38994
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