



#### Short Ride Report

Sadly there were no takers for the carefully planned and immaculately presented short ride today, which could have had something to do with the once more foul, cold, damp, grey, slushy weather, or more likely no one wanted to risk a ride with me leading them across the many busy main roads into Harrogate.....understandable and sensible. So it was with a saddened heart and a tear in my eye that I regretfully joined Sue W. and some other ladies on her jolly jaunt to Darley Mill, and what a lovely time we had. Thank you Sue W. Caroline

Click on slide show for all today's photos

#### Medium Ride Report

The "slow" medium ride started off with just 3 riders - Liz, Jean and myself. Luckily, Caroline was released from short ride-leading duties, due to lack of takers, so then we were 4. We set off at a leisurely pace towards Beckwithshaw and by the time we reached Little Alms Cliff we had nearly warmed up. Approaching Menwith Hill we paused for a photo stop, in front of the golf balls looming out of the mist. At Darley Mill we met up with half of the "fast" medium group and enjoyed some lovely cakes and coffee, which Jean regretted, when we were soon faced with a nasty hill heading up towards Birstwith. Impressively, we managed to fix Liz's chain problem and my brake malfunction, without the assistance of a man!! Fortunately, no one had a flat tyre, although of course we can all mend a puncture (in theory)! The return route along the valley was lovely, and new to some of us; then a few more hills through Hampsthwaite, returning via Grainbeck Lane and Knox, a total of 24.5 miles. A

lovely ride and great company. Sue W

Report of the somewhat very much faster paced medium ride splinter group.

After what was for me the fastest ever ascent of the Col de Menwith Balles (perhaps in celebration of Alberto Contador's reinstatement into the peloton of drug free professionals) five riders opted for a speedier return home. Well it was getting colder and a rumour was spreading that the café at Darley may require a wait for it to open. Dennis's life was on the line if he missed a 12 o'clock deadline and Justin was looking as if he regretted not going "avec les bavarders". A swoop down from Menwith to Hampsthwaite was enjoyed before the climb out to Knox and to our various homes.

NB The Spa Cycles video (go to their website) on how to fit a Schwalbe Marathon tyre without using tyre levers is very informative and IT WORKS! Max

#### Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

Fourteen riders left Hornbeam for Easingwold via Knaresborough, Farnham, Ferrensby and Arkendale and we picked up Steve and Sally at Great Ouseburn.

Gia and Malcolm spent last night at the Velodrome and Gia was certainly influenced by Sir Chris Hoy, Victoria Pendleton and Anna Meares as she drove us on to reach a record average speed of 13.6. Gia's speed was supported by our back marker Terry on his new Scott which he was keen to test as well as returning members Chris and Sandra Delf, who must have returned from a professional training camp. Apologies to the other riders but I am sure it was a one off and we will never reach the heights of 13.6 again. I was certainly glad of the long rest at Café 21 and so was Ian who was out for his first ride in six weeks after a chest infection!

We split into two groups for our return ride via Helperby, Brafferton, Milby and Boroughbridge where it took real will power to resist the Laden Table. Chris, Sandra and Martyn left us as this was their home patch, while four of us sped back to Knaresborough. 'Oh no we set off from Easingwold with eight, so where was Peter'?

Well done everyone for covering 49 miles on a cold day. Thank you Gia for bringing a group back and Terry for being back marker. Paul

#### Second Half report of the medium plus touring ride!

Ian and Ruth joined us at Temptations (formerly Café 21) at Easingwold having left Knaresborough with the aim to meet up with us. Nice to have you back with us Ian after a bit of a sabbatical.

Sarah was keen to let Monica try her bike on the return journey (this is all part of the triathlon and Wetherby-Filey training!) so together with Steve and Sally, and Debbie we came back with Ian and Ruth. I was glad that we stuck to the prescribed route back via Helperby as we met Peter repairing his puncture so he was able to join our group as far as Boroughbridge. There he left us for Bishop Monkton, Steve and Sally left us for Great Ouseburn where we promised that we were not going to sneak in to Laden Table, and the rest of us headed back to Harrogate with a very slight drizzle in the air. I clocked 49 miles so a bit more than advertised but a great ride and well done to Ruth who hadn't ridden since Wetherby-Filey, to Monica for mastering Sarah's bike (joining Wheel Easy is a costly business!) and Debbie for stepping up to medium plus rides. Gia 2x39, 2x 30, 4x 49, 1x 55

#### Medium Plus Ride Report

Well, for what seems for ages, once again we set off under slate grey skies for our ultimate destination of Easingwold and Cafe 21.

It was nice to welcome old (Rocket Ronnie and Andy) and new faces (Simon and Michael) to the fast(er) ride, but it ultimately proved difficult to recall how many we started with as people were coming and going like the start of a sale at Primark! (or so i am told). Upon getting to Ouseburn, it was great to see Darren who joined up with us, and despite feeling under the weather was giving it the "Cav" to the best of us, while also doing his Knight in Shining armour bit, sorting out the puncture fairy that attacked Alison's front wheel.

Just before Easingwold William and Simon had to leave us for a lunch date (not together you understand) and we then arrived at Cafe 21 a few minutes before the medium ride came in en masse. At this point Roger joined us for the trip back, telling us of various rides he had done, putting us all to shame. The pace increased after refuelling in an attempt to keep out the cold, but it was at this point

just after The Bridge Of Boro, where we lost Andy, The Rocket, and Michael as they sped off into the distance missing the turning right to Knaresborough, and despite my best "come by, come by" impression I could not bring the flock back, so the remaining four of us made our way back via Minskip Knaresborough etc. A steady, not too fast pace and approx 45 miles of winter cycling. Mark

#### Long Ride Report

5 of us (the three Ds: Dave, Dennis, Dan plus Peter and Eric) set out on the long ride. We made good progress through Ripley to Fountains Abbey, where although it was a little early, it was prudent to have a refreshment stop, as there would be no other café until Pateley Bridge. As we remounted bikes, Dave discovered he'd collected a puncture so our break was extended by another 10 minutes or so whilst it was fixed. If only all punctures could be at such convenient places as outside the NT loos, with soap, hot water and hot air dryers available! Then it was onwards and upwards: Winksley, Kirkby Malzeard and Grewelthorpe, where the decision was confirmed that the conditions were good enough to tackle Lofthouse and Yorke's Folly. Good enough? Well all things are relative: the temperature varied between 0 and 3C which wasn't exactly tropical, but at least it was dry and there was no wind. So onwards and upwards again: Ilton, Healey, Leighton Reservoir, and the long climb to Lofthouse. We paused in the low cloud, snow and freezing temperature on the summit for a brief photo call before the downhill run to Pateley Bridge. We stoked up well in the Lemon Meringue café (5 breakfasts!) to replenish the calories before climbing Yorke's Folly. No matter how many times you do it, it never seems to get any easier. It was even more demoralising today as Dave - well into his training for his imminent 3,200 mile ride from California to Florida - left us all floundering in his wake. There is a rumour circulating that he might have changed down out of top gear somewhere on the climb, but we couldn't verify this as he was a blur disappearing over the horizon! We then came through Darley, Birstwith and Hampsthwaite and climbed up to the Army Apprentice College, which shouldn't pose a problem, but my leg muscles were complaining big time by now. We arrived home at 4.45pm having completed 58 miles from Hornbeam. With the mileage to and from our homes the total mileage today would be  $60 \text{ miles} \times 5 = 300$ . Eric

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 1945 YTD 20697



