



Short Ride Report

It was a good thing I arrived with a few minutes to spare for a change, as Bill had brought some photos to show me of a magnificent full size canoe he made and sailed some years ago. It took him two years, with sections of ash, pine and marine ply, and had the (to me) unusual feature of a large sail. It was a fine vessel, which had given him much pleasure before he eventually sold it.

There were just 3 for the short ride, with slightly out of practice Sarah A and Sally C happy with an easy ride today, and looking forward to more challenging cycling in the months to come.

For a while until well after Beckwithshaw we were to all intents and purposes part of the Medium Plus touring pace group, but they had gone on ahead by the time we coasted down into Hampsthwaite for our eagerly anticipated stop at Sophie's new café in the heart of the village.

It was every bit as good as Martin, who went when it opened on Friday, and Gia, who went on Saturday, said it would be. We expertly Egon Ronay-ed, or Wheel Easy-ed (much the same thing) assorted coffees, cake and scones, as well as the service, all of which got top marks. The décor and ambience are very good, and it was quite busy, with quite a few evidently making it their first port of call after church. It could well become a regular Wheel Easy watering hole, especially for the short ride as the distance is just right.

Eventually we ventured out onto the bikes. It had started to drizzle, but this eased off as we pedalled up Hollins Lane, and back to Harrogate along Grainbeck Lane and Knox Lane. We diverted down Bilton Lane, with Sarah returning home along the cycle path to The Avenue while Sally and I checked out the path over the Dragon Bridge and back to Asda. The Council has recently cleared this path which was in much the best state I've seen for a long time. 3x15=45 miles. Malcolm

Click on slide show for all today's photos

Medium Ride Report

A puncture from Claire after 10 secs and persistent rain starting after 60 secs set the tone for the day. A beshorted Crawford headed home from Knaresborough, rain dripping from his knees. New bug Sarah wasn't clad for rain either and she, too, left us at Farnham, vowing to return (hope so; she hasn't paid her subs). Jean vacillated but in the end stayed the course and was glad that she did. As the rain cleared, we persevered to Boroughbridge via Marton and the Dunsforths and, as instructed, watered at the Laden Table caff where we met up with the slightly faster group.

Nine returned via Roecliffe, Copgrove and Farnham to Knaresborough where, in traditional fashion, the ride disintegrated. Paul B

Cycled over from Leeds today to lead my first ride of the year, in what looked like was going to be a dry day. Well that's what the forecast said. Fourteen in the group today opting for the slightly quicker pace. Lost one rider at Low Bridge (he had to make an urgent phone call and said he would catch us up later, but never did unfortunately). The rain started to fall as we set off again (I wished that I had not taken notice of the BBC weather forecast and brought my rain proof jacket)! Everything was going fine until we reached Marton-cum-Grafton where Darren, who was leading by now, as I had waited behind to round up any stragglers, decided to take a detour, thus missing out Upper Dunsforth. However he did redeem himself later by getting us back on the right track to Lower Dunsforth and then Aldborough. We did have a bit of a mutiny and lost 3 riders who decided to go straight from Marton cum Grafton to Boroughbridge. Well it was shorter and the rain was still falling! Now down to ten and on to Boroughbridge and the delights of the Laden Table (well done Malcom and Gia for recommending this fine establishment). Obviously not enticing enough for two of our group who decided to continue home - silly them. Now fully dried out and the weather changing for the better, we made our way home, together with a new recruit from the other 'medium' group, down the bridleway at Roecliffe and on towards Knaresborough, where Andy (another Leeds lad) and I, headed back to Leeds and said our farewells to the rest of the group. Thanks to every one who helped to make it a most enjoyable ride. Mileage (assumed 1 x 58, 1 x 53, 11 x 30, 1 x ?? = 441 miles at an average speed of 12.6 miles per hour). Glyn

Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

The route on the calendar looked to be a very hilly 45 miles - serious stuff, so I introduced it as a ride for the hill climbers, but there was no shortage of takers. Ten of us set off from Hornbeam to ride out through Beckwithshaw and then, unusually for us, down Pot Bank and onwards via the Army Foundation College to Hampsthwaite. This was a refreshing way out of town and we put on a good pace proving the old adage "a change is as good as a rest". The Nidderdale villages were ticked off nicely as we went via Birstwith, Darley, and Dacre Top.

Gia realised that she had completely worn away her brake blocks so accompanied by a few others she took the route from here to Summerbridge where she stopped at Stiff Cycles who promptly and helpfully fixed her bike. All those who were with her commented on the scale of the business and the superb stock. Looks like a visit to a new toy-shop coming up!

The rest of us headed up towards the top of Yorke's Folly, but at this point Paul opted out and returned home the flat way with a knee problem. As a fellow sufferer I wish him well and hope it doesn't spoil his riding.

We reassembled at the new Teacups Café near Pateley Bridge Auction Mart where we ate and drank very well for a moderate charge, and also found three refugees from the faster group plus the Long Ride passing through on the way to higher altitudes. Then it was onwards and upwards via Glasshouses, Wilsill, Smethouses and Brimham Rocks, before the glorious long descent via Warsill to Bishop Thornton Cross Roads, then Markington, Bishop Monkton, Knaresborough and Home.

Terry on his new super Scott has a Garmin and told us we had climbed 2,300 feet, just a bit more than Snowden then! The distance was 44 miles and did I smell a whiff of Spring in the air making the miles whizz by just that bit quicker, despite intermittent rain. Mileage for the day (best estimate as people left us and joined us all adding to the interest): $44 \times 6 + 35 \times 4 = 404$. Martin W.

Medium Plus Ride Report

Five riders started off on the Medium Plus Fast ride, by the beginning of Penny Pot Lane the group was down to four and with Andy Close off the front we quickly caught up the long ride group, and then it was down to two - Andy Close and Mike Bissell, with the others opting to sit in with the long riders. Andy and Mike pushed on hard and made good time along the switchback road from Fewston through Darley to Summerbridge.. Pretty evenly matched on the flat Andy was clearly currently in better shape than Mike on the hills and pulled away a bit up the rise midway from Summerbridge to Glasshouses (yes we missed out Yorks Folly!) and on the steeper climb up from Glasshouses to Pateley (yes we stayed on the main road) although he was still close enough for Mike to catch on the descent (full aero tuck etc) into Pateley

We found the cafe at the auction grounds - very good value - £s;1.50 for a mug of tea and a large slice of cold tea fruit cake - excellent, and set off again just as the first of the other WE riders arrived.

Making good time on the main road back, we swung left riding side by side for the first half of the climb up to Brinham Rocks. Half way up Mike had an Andy Schleck moment as he slipped his chain as he dropped onto the inner ring (must be winter then!) and Andy Close was off and away. Reunited at the cross roads we had a great high speed ride along the switchback towards Fountains Abbey - great view of the FA barn on the hill top with the light at just the right angle, and then we surged down to Markington and across to Bishops Monkton and through Burton Leonard.

It was at this point the fact that this was Mikes first hilly ride since November started to take effect and Andy pushed on alone. Just towards the end of the ride, near to the Stray, it started to drizzle but both riders got home without getting soaked - so not a bad day for February. Ride stats: 44 miles; 14 mph average (Andy would have been faster), time moving 3 hours 12 minutes, total ascent 3,080 feet and (for Mike) 2,949 calories used. Enjoyable ride, just need to get my climbing legs back! Mike

Long Ride Report

The long ride followed a similar route to the medium plus ride but with a few more twiddly bits. We added in Kettleasing, Thornthwaite, Padside and Middlesmoor. Surprisingly the ascent to Middlesmoor ends in a short section of 1 in 4 but all riders got there without any problems and to prove it we took a photo outside the beautifully situated St. Chads Church. 6 riders covered 55 very enjoyable miles, the height gain was about 2,500 feet but felt like about twice that figure - perhaps I should re-think my plans for a 200k hilly ride. Phil

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 1678 YTD 23398



