



Short Ride Report

Many years ago Johnny Cash had a hit song called A Boy Named Sue. Well, today it was my turn to be Sue, though unfortunately without the financial benefit of being on Top of the Pops. Around 9am Sue T phoned us to explain she had just discovered her bike had a puncture so she wouldn't be able to lead the short ride as planned. I said no problem, we would find a replacement, i.e. me, which is how I came to be Sue.

Seven joined me for a most enjoyable ride to Hampsthwaite: Sarah and John, Monica, Caroline, and relatively new members Susie, Natalie and Robin, who has been cycling only 4 weeks and is improving at an extraordinary rate, motivated by his goal of a challenging charity ride in India later this year. We were soon in Beckwithshaw, and then along Pot Bank tackling our first hill up to Pennypot Lane. Then it was down into Hampsthwaite and Sophie's splendid new café where we were made extremely welcome, tables moved so that we could all sit together in the window with the sun streaming through, and chatted over outstanding coffee and cakes with the result, as I think Susie said, that it was a very long time indeed before we emerged for the return trip.

The second hill of the day, Hollins Lane, again proved no problem for any of the group. The crossing of the A61 at the bottom of Grainbeck Lane was more difficult, but eventually there was a gap in the traffic and we were in the safety of Knox Lane. At Spruisty Bridge another group of cyclists appeared just in time to join us for a final photo opp before we climbed up to Crab Lane, Skipton Road and back to Harrogate. Sarah and John kindly offered to take a couple of riders back to Hornbeam allowing me to spend the rest of a perfect day doing the Medium Plus route 'backwards' so that I would meet Gia's group on their way home. 7×15 and $1 \times 61 = 166$ miles. Malcolm

Click on slide show for all today's photos

Medium Ride Report

It was glorious spring weather for this hilly ride. At Hornbeam, the medium ride split into two groups from the outset, with William leading a faster group, and Geraldine and I a slower one. William took his group to the bottom of Penny Pot Lane by one route, while our group of 12 went through the middle of town and up Cornwall Road by the Valley Gardens. Paul Blackham was waiting for us at the roundabout, greeting us in Latin, and we all met up there. Although Penny Pot Lane was closed to motor vehicles, there was no problem for us to pass the barrier and enjoy the good surface and lack of headwind. Apparently, the closure of the road is a consequence of work being done to build a new recycling centre (or 'tip' as some cynics called it). The wind turbines were almost, but not quite, stationary as we passed when we beheld in the distance ahead a lone cyclist in non-cycling shorts loitering around, eating a banana and looking as though he was about to accost us. It was Crawford, who swore blind that he had e-mailed Geraldine the previous night to forewarn us of his joining the ride in this way (but we could find no evidence of aforesaid e-mail when we got back). So we had gained 2 members of the group by the time we had reached the end of Penny Pot Lane. We turned south on the B6451 towards the bikers' pub (The Sun Inn; indeed, several motorbikes roared past us on the way). The hills at this stage were not too demanding, but there was very little flat going. We then turned right into the unmarked Brat Lane, downhill to start with, along Jack Hill Lane (or should that be Jack Lane Hill?) but soon with plenty of uphill to balance it out, and lots of gravel and potholes to keep us on our toes. The views, however, over the reservoirs and hills, were magnificent. We lost about 3 tail-enders in the back lanes because Geraldine is semantically challenged and doesn't understand what the word 'follow' means. She went back and found the stragglers, and we re-grouped for the short (but uphill) section of the B6451 to the gated road towards Stainburn Woods. By this time, we had done most of the climbing, and the dirt road through the woods was dry and easy going. We got our reward for all our hard work coming back down from Little Almscliffe to Harrogate via Beckwithshaw and the Squinting Cat, and various members of the group peeled off and went their own ways home. Around 13 members x 24 (rather hilly) miles. Joe

Taking the slightly faster Medium group via Rossett and Squinting Cat mingling with Malcolm and his short group before meeting up with Joe and Geraldine at Penny Pot Lane. We then were politely asked by local school 6th formers if we would help their school project on cycling - they needed to be filmed sprinting past a group of cyclists. Being the first time anyone has asked permission to pass me on a bike I was delighted to oblige but perhaps we shot off at too fast a pace as we never saw them again!! The rest of the ride was a delight. We were delighted to have two new members, triathletes, Nicky and Kerry and look forward to seeing them again. On a route new to me we viewed a stunning vista looking back along the Washburn Valley, a couple of big climbs and one heart stopping descent it was a wonderful morning ride and back for noon. 8 riders x 22 miles. William

Medium Plus Slow Touring Pace Ride Report

Another beautiful Wheel Easy Sunday and plenty of takers for the 45 mile medium plus ride to Wetherby, Whixley, Great Ouseburn and Boroughbridge. The slower group of Gia, Alison, Bridget, Brenda and Debbie's only concern was that we had no man on board if we had a puncture or other major mechanical! No matter Phil Snowden joined us at Wetherby and tootled along with us to Boroughbridge. He left us to go on to Ripon, thanks for chaperoning us Phil! Along the Harland Way we stopped to admire the excellent work done by Harrogate Borough Council to do some serious cutting back of trees in one of the cuttings. This has opened up the path considerably with lots of light now coming in and less chance of falling trees in the gales. The ride out of Wetherby to Cattal was made even more pleasant by the closure of the road due to bridge repairs. We arrived in Boroughbridge after a lovely ride through great Ouseburn, one of the Dunsforths and Aldborough. Excellent to see lots of riders cycling the Way of the Roses route. At Boroughbridge we met medium plus groups and some EG's and after lunch headed back via Roecliffe and Copgrove with Paul, Karen and Jim joining us from Martin's pack who were keen for some extra miles and no doubt another tea stop!

On the way back we met Malcolm who had led his short ride, and enjoying the sunshine was doing our ride the other way round! Lovely ride, great company 40 miles x 8 Gia

Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

Today we played a new game - it was called "Find the Leader". We started with 16 riders from Hornbeam, all smiling in the wonderful weather, and all raring to go. To help with traffic we split into two groups and headed out through the Showground and on to Follifoot. A puncture caused the first breakdown in communication, and then I lost everybody from both groups between Spofforth and Wetherby as I set off down the A661 in pursuit of some cyclists in the distance. I couldn't catch them until Wetherby but soon discovered they were only a small splinter group and still I could not find the majority of my ride. Anyway, the sun was shining.

We eventually reformed at Wetherby, minus a few taking a shorter route after the puncture, and we followed the cycle track to Walton. I then promptly lost four riders! So I agreed that the rest of the group should go on to Boroughbridge with Stephen Price as a stand in Leader (many thanks Stephen) while I waited at the cross roads on the B road to try to relocate my four lost riders. Anyway, the sun was shining.

The four eventually found me, and we sped north to Cattal, Whixley, Great Ouseburn and along the beautiful back lane to Aldborough, and Boroughbridge for a café stop. Here we rejoined quite a few of the group, but by this time I was not sure who was in which group as we were also keeping company with Gia's slower group. It was noted that Gia's style of excellent leadership kept at least the majority of her ride together whereas my lot were having a jolly time all over the Vale of York! After a break we headed out towards Roecliffe and turning around I realised that half my group had again disappeared before we even left Boroughbridge. Anyway, the sun was shining.

After reforming we made it to Copgrove where a small party took advantage of the weather to do a longer loop through Burton Leonard, Markington, Shaw Mills and Hampsthwaite where three of us stopped for extra fuel before heading home. It was interesting and I hope everyone made it back. I believe we had in the order of 16 riders and they did anything from 40 to 56 miles (and some even more if they got really lost!). So at an average of 50 miles we totalled 800 miles - give or take the odd hundred either way. Anyway, the sun was shining! Martin W.

Medium Plus Ride Report

Eight riders were dispatched with haste on the medium plus flavour of the week. A couple of suspicious looking wheel easy riders lurked en route and one of them joined us. Welcome aboard Nick. Mutterings of tempting fate with the puncture fairy on the Harland way proved to be prophetic as Darren ran flat just after the masonic hall at the Wetherby end. A quick rest then in the sunshine whilst Darren did his best F1 wheel change impression. Then onwards and upwards to Whixley with Andrew particularly enjoying the smoothest tarmac of the ride near Cattal bridge. (Who needs a roubaix anyway?). The puncture fairy returned for a second bite at Darrens wheel. Debs and Andy laid a trail for the remaining peleton to follow and beautiful timing ensured that the group reassembled in Aldborough. There was no luck involved. Honest. After the usual banter at the Laden table six followed the prescribed route back home with Debs staying for seconds (and girlie chat), Roger off to Easingwold and our Boroughbridge home boy sensible staying in Boroughbridge. 43 miles for nine riders at an average of 15.6. Great day, great weather, great company. Steve B

Long Ride to 'Krakow' (you had to be there!)

It is a truth universally acknowledged that cyclists prefer cold, wet, miserable weather so the dry, sunny wind free conditions proved to be real torture to the 11 hardy souls who opted for the very long ride to Krakow.

In fact things were so tough that 3 of the group had to leave us at Askwith while the rest soldiered on towards lunch at the farm shop in Cracoe. Here we met a 9 year girl and her father on a cycle camping tour of the dales, it's good to see young people being introduced to the delights of cycling.

After lunch not so young Peter, with typical stoicism decided to extend the suffering and lengthen his ride via Kettlewell and Park Rash! Surprisingly nobody volunteered to join him which much be a good indication of just how poor the weather was. The rest of us carried on with the easy option to Burnsall, Appletreewick, Greenhow and home. Phil

For the record 7 riders completed 62 miles, 1 Rider 95 miles making a total of 529 miles.

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 2690 YTD 46490



