



Friday 29th April. Royal Wedding Day Ride Reports

Refuseniks' Ride

Assembled riders were treated to the World Exclusive (before the Beeb got there) that THE FROCK was by the Alexander McQueen couture studio.

Eleven traitors eschewed the televised blubfest in favour of the Refusenik's easyish, flattish ride. Two EGs joined us in Knaresborough for the 30-odd mile round trip to Boroughbridge via Farnham and Marton-cum-Grafton, and then on to Roecliffe and the bridal (geddit?) path to Copgrove. Three left here "to talk bikes" and the rest travelled towards Burton Leonard and on through the Mountgarret estate to Nidd, Ripley and back to Harrogate. Only two rain showers (What hell they? Ed.) but more traffic than had been expected. Maybe there are more refuseniks out there than we think.

To strike a balance, perhaps Sunday's rides should be dedicated to our dear Queen. Approx. total mileage : 400. Paul B

Click on slide show for all Friday photos

Not the Royal Wedding Ride.

A good crowd turned out at Hornbeam thinking they were out for a ride, but only to be told by Paul Blackham that they had now all been classified as traitors and were under arrest. But 10 riders escaped by making a lame excuse that they were going to the wedding, but not saying which wedding.

So we headed off to Kirkby Overblow through a surprising amount of traffic (more traitors?) and along

the Wharfe Valley back roads through to Weston and our first stop at Cockpit Farm. At this point we realised that there was a serious depletion in numbers. Could it be that having made there escape they actually wanted to go and enjoy themselves?

Four of us decided on a short circuit of the hills above Ilkley before returning to Cockpit Farm for the Wedding of the Year between Cyril the Black Sheep and his bride Shirley the White Sheep. Shirley set the fashion trend in some fetching lace, while Cyril looked decidedly down in the mouth (lamb to the slaughter?). A crowd of 40 to 50 people turned out to support the happy couple and to hand over donations for Macmillan Cancer Care. Then we returned home up and over Timble to Harrogate in the evening sunshine. Mileage I guess was 2x40, 4x48, 4x55 = 492. Martin W

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 892 YTD 56655

Sunday 1st May Ride Reports

Short Ride Report

Well what a glorious May Day. The short ride people included three young mums new to Wheel Easy who had made an escape for the morning (well they would be a bit too fit), Dave, a new gentleman who had cycled round Britain (that did not bode well for a gentle stroll of a ride), Allison who used to poddle.....far too quickly and with great fitness, Sarah, Matt and Madison who used to ride as two and are now three, Bob (who confessed to doing ninety miles already this week) and Rob who is going to ride round India very soon(again this smacks of speed and length..) So my thoughts of a pleasant meander evaporated.

The route was the revived Super Market Sweep of old with a loop to Follifoot. A gentle meander, in theory. We negotiated some of the bike routes of southern Harrogate, and having been intercepted by the crossword queen Sue D., who abandoned her car at the Library traffic lights, to pass me Saturday's crossword answers, we sped on to Asda...forgetting to use the cycle path by the Odeon. Sarah and Matt, whose daughter Madison decided it was all very well being Wheel Easy's youngest rider, but enough was enough, and she wanted go home, left at this point not wanting her to have too much of a good thing. The group of now nine continued along the Asda path, back along another Path towards Starbeck, up onto Bogs Lane, down along Forest Moor something to the mini round a bout after Morrison's. At this point they all insisted they would like to experience the additional loop to Follifoot, and with verve and great gusto headed up Thistle Hill, negotiated the by pass without killing themselves, to coast along the old road to the crossing over the Spofforth/Harrogate Road. At this point we headed down and up to Follifoot, noticing the cleverly concealed rapid response emergency ambulance vehicle I had arranged to stand by, on the brow of the hill into Follifoot. It was not needed, however, as Liz, one of the y... mums, surged to the top of the slope without a single thought of dismounting. By this point we had covered 10 miles and I had to lure them onwards and homewards with a casual we are nearly home and that was the last hill, rather than letting them continue to Sheffield or somewhere south. All the group seemed far to frisky and seemed to want more hills. This they got going along Rudding Lane and up the hill at the show ground. They, without any influencing from me.(as by this time I had worked up a strange coffee and cakes craving), all insisted they wanted to get straight home.....had the experience been that bad.... I had thoroughly enjoyed myself...no punctures, no people wanting to ride too fast, no one over-taking me on hills...(well that is not strictly true Carolyn, Rob, and Heather and probably everyone, in fact, did),no rain, no head winds, no crashes, no mechanical failures and not too much exhaustion. Very well done to the three new young ladies, BRILLIANT, (I hope the husbands and children let you spend the afternoon in the bath or sunlounger), and well done returning people, and thank you everyone else for making it such a lovely ride for me.....particularly the little yellow daffodils Bob and Rob who back marked so efficiently.... thanks. 15 miles for 9 people and 4.5 miles for 3 people. Caroline G

Sarah, Matt and Madison made a new tune for Wheels on the Bus

The wheels on the bike go round and round...

The pedals on the bike go up and down...

The mud on the tyres go splat splat splat...

The gears on the bike go screech screech screech...

The chain on the bike goes squeak squeak squeak...
The baby on the bike goes wah wah wah...
Caroline leads our fearless group...
The wheels on the bike go round and round...

Click on slide show for all today's photos

Medium Ride Report

Group 2

Once the leader had reconciled himself to the notion of spending the rest of the morning in the company of seven ladies, Team 2 set off in good order. The ride progressed in a leisurely and convivial manner. A charming off road detour allowed Team 3 to get ahead, but on such a glorious day no one really cared. The Yorkshire countryside put on its Sunday best and the 'gentle breeze' could not detract from the overall sense of enjoyment. Naturally there was much 'conversation' and many, many topics were discussed. (The leader, poor male that he is, still does understand how ladies can talk constantly whilst pedalling uphill against a breeze.) There was the obligatory photo call at the top of Cutthroat Lane, before dropping into Hampsthwaite for refreshments and a sublime 'Mrs Overall' moment.

This was a most delightful bike ride - it is days like this that Wheel Easy was made for! Now all that is needed to 'ice the cake' for the day is for United to lose and City to win!

Which they both did of course! Chris M

Medium Ride Report

Group 3 (one less than prison guard status)

At Hornbeam there were about 26 riders opting for the medium ride and judging by their appearance there were some "fast looking ones". Paul and Julie were press-ganged into taking control of this group and swiftly despatched. Those remaining very efficiently split into two groups. Chris M leading group 2. The weather was expected to be bright and windy and I was concerned about the prospect of facing head winds and uphill terrain at the end of the ride. I remembered what an old French lady had shouted to me once "C'est très dur contre le vent" and had thoughts of reversing the ride. However the plan was followed. At Knaresborough, group 2 followed the scenic route and we sneaked past them on the main road. Between Copgrove and Bishop Monkton my rear light fell off but was scooped up by the peloton. Between Bishop Monkton and Markington I received news from our very efficient back marker (thanks Joe) that Adriana (?) was felling unwell and that Les was escorting her back home (hope you are feeling better). Much to our surprise and delight the wind appeared to be behind us and the hills from Markington via Bishop Thornton and Shaw Mills to Clint were a breeze! (ok sorry). If I ever see the old French lady again I shall reply "Mais au contraire madam c'est moins dur avec le vent!". One Knaresboroughion took the direct route home from the Drover's Inn.

Such was the speed generated downhill from Clint to Hampsthwaite that we almost overshot Sophie's Cafe. The fast group were just leaving as we arrived. It was the first visit for me and I was impressed. As we were preparing to leave group 2 arrived but we couldn't stay long to banter with them as the lure of the climb out of Hampsthwaite was all compelling. At Knox the remaining six of us took our leave. A great ride, thanks for your company. Max

For the captains log 6@26miles, 1@24miles, 2@guesstimate18miles

Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

The scenery was scintillating, Wharfedale never looked so good, the sky was a deep blue, all the fields were vivid green, we felt as if we could reach out and touch Simon's Seat from the Appletreewick Road, and, oh yes ... we went for a fantastic bike ride!

There were 13 at the start from Hornbeam and the two returnees from major operations, James and David, were among the group setting off past the Sun Inn and up Duck Street towards Greenhow. There was a seriously strong easterly wind blowing us along and we made good time to Stumps Cross Cavern for the first stop. From here on we dropped to a party of 10 as a three riders decided on shorter options.

Leaving the café we were booted in the back down the steep hill by the phenomenal tailwind. I clocked

well over 40 mph without pedalling and rapidly overtook a vintage tractor chugging down the road - are there any thrills that come cheaper than this? We made our way along the lanes to the Cavendish Pavilion and Bolton Abbey, before heading along the back lane down to Ilkley. The vote was for a stop at Cockpit Farm and we all sat in the sunshine, while Tim was assaulted by a cheeky chicken who stole all of his banana and raisin cake. The café made good his loss and I suspect that said stroppy bird may be in the roasting dish by next Sunday.

Then it was a bit of a battle against the mighty wind to come home up the hill and over the top to Timble, Fewston and down Pennypot Lane.

Well done to several riders including Monica, Trisha, and Tim who were on their first really hilly Medium Plus Ride. A great ride, a sense of achievement and super company. Thanks everyone for making it memorable. Martin W

Medium Plus Ride Report

10 set off on the faster paced medium plus ride which was soon reduced to 9 west of Harrogate. We maintained a good pace with hardly any breaks to regroup and following a brief intermission for the 'banana incident' we reached the Yorkshire Dales for the best part of our journey. There was talk of 48 miles per hour together with plenty of excitement from Andrew as a serious tailwind took us down the descent from Stump Cross Caverns. We lunched at the Cavendish Pavilion Café and having agreed to stick to the prescribed route prepared ourselves for the hardest part of our journey into the headwind and the climb from Askwith towards Timble. Geoff was today's 'King of the Mountains' and just got stronger and faster the more hills he faced. But we all made it to the top which we thought was a good effort for a bunch of middle aged blokes coming towards the end of what had been a hilly ride in very windy conditions. There was some debate as to what age actually constitutes middle age but perhaps with the exception of Darren felt that we all fell into this category. We caught our breath and prepared our limbs for the final push to Harrogate with various members heading off on their home routes until the balance of the party made it back to Hornbeam at 2pm. Another great day for cycling and one of those rare opportunities to see Wharfedale at its best in bright sunshine under clear blue skies. Great ride, good company, fantastic scenery and plenty of chat between those hills. 9 x 52.5 miles (and one at approx. 15) at an average of 14.7 mph. Martyn B

Long Ride Report

It was a gloriously sunny morning as everyone gathered at Hornbeam & 9 people opted for the long ride to Skipton with the added attraction of the Waterways Festival. Amongst the riders was Steve on his first Wheel Easy long ride & Dave A who had just returned from his 3000 plus miles riding across America. We had a relatively easy wind assisted ride out to Skipton only really feeling the effects of the strong wind as we came down hill from Langbar towards Beamsley where the side winds buffeted riders. Just before Skipton Steve suffered a puncture followed by Peter R discovering he had also got one. Some of the group had been ahead at this point & had arrived in Skipton. On making their way to a café for lunch there was some confusion about where everyone had gone, but eventually all the group arrived in Skipton, managed to get some lunch & meet up again afterwards & we also met up with Malcolm & Gia who were having a non-cycling day. After lunch Richard & Dave decided to head straight back to Harrogate while the rest of the group spent a little time exploring the sights of the Waterways Festival.

The route had been planned to avoid going in the same direction as the medium plus rides which were heading for Bolton Abbey via Stump Cross & Appletreewick & our return route would have involved a couple of big climbs into the now quite strong wind. It was agreed that we would change the plan & stay on lower roads heading back on a similar route to the outward one. It was a fairly hard ride back, but people took it in turns to be on the front of the group with Eric & Phil doing a noble dash to the Cockpit Farm café arriving two minutes before they were due to close at 4pm to ensure the whole group could get served a very welcome cup of tea. It was a great ride of approx 64 miles - good company & glorious scenery. Jill

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 2482 YTD 59137



