



Wheel Easy on Tour

Fourteen members left Harrogate on Friday for the 145 mile Coast to Coast challenge from Workington to Sunderland. The group, led by John Russell, cycled 55 miles on Friday from Workington to Penrith via Keswick. Saturday was a challenging day with 46 miles of constant climbing to Consett. The final day started with a long climb out of Consett to Waskerley and then down hill to Sunderland.

Rather than a report the members are going to write about their experiences of the ride, so you may read more about a night in Consett! A big thank you to John Russell for organising an excellent ride!

Paul

[Click on slide show for all the C2C photos](#)

Comments on the C2C Challenge

'The recent C2C ride was a great success with everything being well organised and well run. But most of all the ride was made more enjoyable by the company of the other the riders, especially during the wetter moments of the ride'.

'A tough but thoroughly enjoyable experience with great company and the best B&B ever (Brandelhow in Penrith), and perhaps the "most interesting" pub B&B in Stanhope with Max, its huge, full-grown rottweiler ("he's soft as grease" Yeah) and a few human rottweilers.

We ate those hills. We hate those hills.'

Some memories and thoughts from a fellow traveller.

Friday the 8th July, this was serious stuff, two alarm clocks for a 5-00am wake up, must get up, must get there before JR, if I don't then I have missed the transport. Scanned the road very carefully, must not puncture between home and Sainsbury's car park. Soon all there inc JR, loading begins, Alec carefully checking out bike security. Then away to the North West, the weather looks promising, a comfort stop taken on the way with some travellers hiking to get a coffee.

Soon we were in Workington, a staunch Rugby League town (Gus Risman and son Bev who played RU for England and RL for Leeds.), then cycling down to the Lighthouse for the start (wheel dipping was missed out). A pleasant and easy ride to Cockermouth for morning coffee, splitting into two groups to prevent cafe shock. Here Paul B had an Eric style sausage sandwich (we have photographic evidence). Moving out into the classic scenery of the Lake District the descent

through Whythop Woods concentrated the mind especially them on skinny tyres (bare rock and rubble). A sharp right turn on the descent if not negotiated could have meant some of us having an early bath in Bassenthwaite Lake. A short break was taken in Keswick before moving north east to Threlkeld, above us Blencathra loomed ominously, it seemed to be saying do`nt be so cocky I`ll get you yet, and get us it did, real Lake District stair rods. Despite being cold and wet a cafe stop in Greystoke was declined and it was into Penrith for the night. In our B&B we were greeted with hot drinks and home made cakes (brownie points to JR) and wet gear was taken away to be dried.

By the time fingers and toes were back to normal it was into Penrith for a pub meal (the Cumberland Sausage was delicious, nice one Terry)

Commiserations to Sarah who was expecting to go clubbing or was it ballroom dancing as her escort for the evening had forgotten his dancing shoes, and cleats don't do a lot for the Tango (he shall be nameless but he had a fair line in socks), and Bridget also who had no chance to get out her Tiara and Stiletto high heels..

For breakfast there was Full English, Hunters Breakfast and Elegant

Breakfast Paul B probably feeling guilty about his sausage sarny had the Elegant Breakfast. In the morning John R (with a grin) announced the route, it had Beacon in its title and they don't put them in valleys. Sunshine through Langwathby and the bumpy bits before the climb to Hartside. When climbing the hills fellow riders shout encouragement to you, but when oxygen depleted it was difficult to thank them or even curse the hills. Paul T would speed past in his desert wellies shouting Rolhoff Rules OK (actually the sandals proved themselves on this ride. The North Pennines have Magnificent scenery, but they could not be described as "chocolate box pretty". On reaching Hartside summit one thought of Jane Russell, this was not the fantasizing of an oxygen depleted EG, but a reminder of Howard Hughes's description of Big Jane " Mean, Moody and Magnificent". The descent into Leadgate and Garrigill and the climb and descent to Nenthead the North Pennines looked Moody, but when we climbed to Killhope Law they became real Mean. The rain, or was it hail was horizontal and we had just passed the highest point on the C2C. The descent into Allenheads was wet but we were going with the flow ie the water off the hills. Warm, wet bliss in the cafe before the climb, against the stream looking out for bow waves from the cars. On the descent from Wolfcleugh Common to Rookhope and Stanhope the weather started to improve. We have amongst us some high tech riders who are in communication with satellites they tell them how far, how fast, how high and what we have done, they are looking at us?. Some of us older non tech people are now becoming nervous of taking a comfort break behind a wall or hedge, knowing you are being watched can have an effect you.

The night was spent in Stanhope. The Bonny Moorhen was in a class of its own, its guests were Alec and Sue, Dave P (the elder) and Al and Paul B, Peter J and Terry, their room did its bit for cycling by displaying a Wheel Easy jersey in its window. It was "lively"! when we arrived, but our bikes were stored in a cellar (no probs there). It was here that Jane and Bridget discovered they had a common interest in birds, Hens to be precise and especially if they were Old and Speckled. Taxis took us, I know not where, to an Italian restaurant for a very nice meal. On returning to the Bonny Moorhen it was now "Lively plus". However we were very tired and it was straight to bed. "Singing" could be heard coming from the the bar. Al being Welsh and coming from a musical nation slept through this, safe in the knowledge that if that is English singing, the Welsh have nothing to fear at the National Eisteddfod. A further occurrence involved a Lady? and Gentleman? discussing? a request to leave the establishment, a window, a bottle, a wardrobe, a saw, a hammer and nails. This is best left to Terry and his roomates to

describe. This is Reiver country and though sheep and cattle rustling is now over? potted plants vanished.

After breakfast the first climb of the day was getting the bikes up the cellar stairs under the watchful eye of Max? the Rottevieler, very friendly? licks people, taste testing?. What was to come in the way of hills, the bonny lads in the pub laughed when we said hills and JR had a grin on his face. A walkers pact had been made with Sue, Paul B and Dave P (the elder) this payed off and oxygen was not needed at the summit. It was then on to the Waskerley Way wich gave an easy descent all the way to Sunderland. On entering Weardale Paul T displayed his linguistic talents and translated or us, going from his normal regionless accent to an unintelligible patois. Paul showed us the sacred sights of Weardale pointing out the Stadium of Light to the pilgrims (see photo). We also learnt about the colour problems

in the North East ie the Red & Whites and the Black & Whites (aka barcoded Geordie B....) Somewhere here we managed to loose JR, Bridget and Dave P (the younger) but a phone call from Kathy had us reunited at a riverside cafe before we all arrived as a group on the sea front. Photos and all round congratulations being the order of the day.

It was challenging, and you can `t be on top form all of the time, but there would always be someone to help you through, either in words or deeds.

Many thanks to Paul T, his friendly calm cheerfulness and his sandals.

John R, his leading, his organising and his cheerful grin Terry, his frequent one liners, his descriptive powers, making us laugh and his socks. And thanks to all for your company. Dave P (the elder).

Saturday Ride Report

Six of us enjoyed a beautiful Saturday afternoon ride on one of our classic routes, Beckwithshaw, Little Alms Cliff, Menwith, Hampsthwaite and home, stopping - obviously! - at Sophie's for the very best coffee and tea, chocolate cakes, lemon meringues and flapjacks. Not cheap but excellent, and of course we deserved it! Lynda and Peter M, Jean, Alison S, Steve B and Malcolm. 6 x 21 miles.

Sunday Ride Reports

Short Ride Report

8 riders, none novices, set off for a 'rural ramble' today. We sped off to Low Bridge where Dan kindly took a photo before whizzing off back to Beckwithshaw. The rest of us circled round the gravel pits, onto Farnham, Lingerfield and Scriven enjoying the banter along the way. At Scriven, all but Phil elected to go back to Harrogate via the Beryl Burton, thence to Asda along the cycle path and then to drop-in on the cafe Rosso. Half way the Beryl Burton the leader earned a black mark by letting her chain loose. Fortunately, Trevor was on my back-wheel and quickly sorted the problem. However at the top, Trevor decided to make his way home on his own----. So if you see someone wandering around the Stray muttering about the Grand Prix- it could be Trevor. The remaining 5 of us continued along the cycle track to Asda where Arthur and Harriet had to depart. So, 3 intrepid ladies continued over the railway bridge to check out the cafe Rosso where --- we lighted on a whole group of cyclists. They were, it turned out, the Cappuccino cyclists who had done 30 miles, had coffee and apple strudel by 11.30. [They cheerfully recommended the strudel, but thought they might have not left any!] Just as we settled to order there was an enormous cloudburst, so we sighed with relief. Sally, Linda and I all enjoyed this cafe - good coffee and cakes- and would certainly recommend it as an end of ride stop. 17miles X 7 + Dan's 9ish. Alison N.

Click on slide show for all the weekend photos

Medium Ride Report

It looked like around fifteen of us would be doing the medium ride, however Sarah E, leader 1, had decided the route was too hilly for her, and had devised an easier ride for those who might prefer it. This turned out to be very popular with most of the riders, and only two decided to take to the hills! So Robin, Bob, and Leader 2, set off for Brimham, with fair weather forecast. The last time I saw my companions was when I led the short ride in March, they have come on a long way since then, and

were up for the challenge. We made good time to Brimham with a hint of sun. On our way to Bishop Thornton and the long drop down, we happened upon a field full of vehicles, and people miles from anywhere. Bob shouted for us to stop, he then entered the field and started talking to them. It turned out they were a group with their metal detectors from Barnsley. Bob had been given a MD by his grandchildren, and wanted to find out if these people ever found anything of value. The answer was positive, especially round the Harrogate, Knaresborough York areas. Bob can't wait now to get started, and find his fortune. While all this was going on it decided to rain, so on with the weatherproofs for the descent. Water,water everywhere from now on, so we decided to press on back without a stop (I'm an EG unheard of!!) We still enjoyed the ride and made good time, 3hrs at 12mph, in these conditions. I look forward to leading Bob and Robin again probably on a long ride next!

For the record 3x 36miles 108 miles. John E

Some gentle negotiation took place before the start of the rides today! With the threat of a hilly route advertised as 26 miles, but rumoured to be really 36 miles, some urgent action needed to be taken! The result, with the blessing of John E., was an additional gently undulating ride of around 23 miles. We had 15 takers, one of whom was sporting his expensive cycle mounted GPS. The ride leader had a less expensive version - a large post-it stuck on the handle bars with the route details listed - who would get us safely home?

We took in Kirky Overblow, Sicklinghall, Wetherby, Kirk and North Deighton, Little Ribston and onwards to Spofforth, where the mandatory photo was taken. Discussions took place and a plan was hatched for a visit to Fodder for well earned treats. However, by this time, rain clouds had sufficiently gathered to do some damage, and waterproofs were quickly scrambled. A very soggy 20 minutes later and somehow, Fodder was forgotten for the thought of hot showers and dry clothes. I am pleased to say that, despite being a little soggy, the post-it coped admirably. The more sophisticated GPS also got us home safely! 23 miles in total. Thanks to John E. for leading the advertised ride with great enthusiasm. Sarah E

Long Ride Report

Ten riders, including Marvin on his first Wheel-Easy Sunday ride, set off on the long ride to Ampleforth. Once past Knaresborough it was a flat ride for some miles & a brisk pace was set. At Thornton Bridge Geoff & Dennis headed back due to other commitments while the rest of the group continued on towards Coxwold. There was a brief stop here as we were making such good time we were going to be in Ampleforth before the tea rooms opened. We soon reached our lunch stop which turned out to be excellent timing, just 5 minutes to wait until it opened at noon & our stop there meant we missed the only rain of the day as by the time we were ready to leave the rain had stopped. Roger & Glynn took a more direct route, back to Harrogate in Roger's case & back to Leeds for Glynn. The rest of the group continued on the planned route to Nunnington & Hovingham & then on to our second stop of the day for tea at Temptations café in Easingwold. Nick then set a brisk pace leading the group back via Aldwark Bridge, Arkendale & back to Knaresborough where James & Eric managed a final sprint to the top of Knaresborough Hill leaving the rest of the group to follow in their wake. An enjoyable ride of approx 73 miles. Jill

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Weekend 3387 YTD 95753



