

Sunday, December 30, 2012
Wheel Easy Ride Report 348

A Happy New Year to everyone at Wheel Easy, it has been another amazing year. Everyone will have their own tale of the Wheel Easy effect, we cannot thank you all enough for the achievements, fun and companionship we continue to experience with all our members. Malcolm and Gia



These ride reports will no doubt all question the mindset of a group of people who will come out to play on a day like today. Maybe we are following the examples of our Olympic champions who have to train in all weathers. Gia

Short Ride
To follow



Medium Ride

Once again 09.15 on Sunday found me struggling to get ready in time for Wheel Easy, and then the rain started increasing my reluctance to abandon the comfort of the central heating and causing another delay as I went back in for my rain trousers. So now I was wearing 2 pairs of trousers and 7 tops plus other accoutrements, some of which I did eventually shed when it got slightly hilly. As expected I found about 40 other cyclists gathered at Hornbeam, and the magic of their enthusiasm soon had its usual effect, making me glad that I'd come out, albeit today largely because I had to as I was leading the medium ride. Sixteen of us wanted to do this ride and with a little encouragement 5 agreed to go ahead in a faster group. Our team of eleven made steady progress, except where Dennis and Alison decided to race up the hill to Sicklinghall, Dennis taking the honours at a speed our Olympic medallists will do well to emulate when they are his age in 50 or 60 years' time. At Wetherby he, Marion and Alison carried on home for lunch, the rest taking the A1 cycle path almost to Bramham where a more or less democratic decision was taken (by Caroline) to follow the more direct route to Boston Spa, a welcome tinkle stop for some, before we returned via Thorp Arch and the cycle path to Wetherby. Caroline and Max carried on and the rest of us took an excessively long break at North Street Deli as the rain

pattered down outside. Eventually it eased a little and off we went under rapidly darkening skies and strengthening wind and rain to Kirk Deighton, Spofforth and Follifoot, which meant home for Graham and Nicky and was also where Lynda left us for Pannal. The compensation for getting very wet was a glorious complete rainbow which kept appearing and disappearing as the sun came and went. Geraldine and Paul left me and my tiring legs for dead through the showground but waited for me at the top of the hill. About 30 miles, fine company as always, not my favourite cycling weather but an excellent antidote for all those excess seasonal calories. Malcolm





A funny sort of start to the day, rain, hail, some sun, some blue sky, some black clouds and some riders, either daft or do anything just to get away from turkey and pud. Malcolm`s Med ride had a lot going for it, in terms of distance and flatness and the uncertainty of the weather, this of course attracted a fair number of riders, which meant splitting up. Calls for a fast group seemed to go unheeded, however on being given a route sheet Bill W was on his way, so four riders set off after him, thus a faster group was formed (fait accompli). The Kirkby Overblow and Sicklinghall ridge was done with sunny spells while dark black clouds could be seen over York way and up t`dale. On to Wetherby and Bramham, where some good local knowledge from Debbie took us south of Bramham missing out the village centre and subsequent traffic and on to the high ground for the swoop down in to Clifford and Thorpe Arch, then on the cycle track in to Wetherby, where it started raining, but refuge was near in the shape of Morrisons cafe and undercover storage for our bikes. So the five riders, Bill, Bob, Dave P, Debbie and Ian had a leisurely break, hoping the rain might stop when we emerged from the warmth and dry of the cafe. Some hopes, but considering Decembers record we had done OK so far. On the way out Debbie spotted Geraldine in a cafe, so the others were not far behind us. Everybody agreed that the cycle path to Spofforth was a no no, so it was back viaNorth

Deighton, Spofforth and Follifoot. A good ride, dampish towards the end, wind not too bad, back in Harrogate for around 1-15pm with 32 miles in our wheels. With one rider climbing up to Harlow Hill (that is Harrogate's answer to Mount Ararat). Dave P



Medium Plus Ride

I suggested a ride to Brimham and I was always going to be the back marker in the group who elected to take this ride. At Hampsthwaite I found three riders already supping at Sophie's with bets as to whether the rest of us would stop. Peter and Robert soldiered on to who knows where, and the rest of us embraced the warmth and comfort of an early stop. Terry had achieved his milestone of cycling every single Sunday of 2012 so mission accomplished Dave escorted him back home. Paul, Jill, Justin, Nick and Gia decided there was enough brightness to carry on. At Clapham Green Paul did the reverse Menwith route with Sunday lunch beckoning while the rest of us rode on. Nick had Ripon in his sights and I expect a good lunch, Jill, Justin and Gia cycled to Brimham then Warsill, Ripley and home. 28 miles in wet, windy, sleety, sunny conditions. I wonder what happened to the others who started at Hornbeam?? Gia

At Sophie's some were seductively offering a rapid transition to bliss. I did a walk through to test my resolve and with counseling from Rob, I saw that the correct path was back on my bike and towards Birstwith and beyond. The rain eased and the smugness grew. At Brimham there was a hint of good weather and we took the main road to Ripon. A breakfast at Morrison's and we were on our way -- but in heavy rain and a strong cold wind. The road back via Bishop Monkton showed most fields resembling boating lakes. The bright side is-- things can only get better. 44 miles Peter Bradley

Four of us persevered forward from Hampsthwaite despite being abandoned by Dave and Terry. The uphill s to Brimham were in to the teeth of wind, rain and occasional sun but this was on our backs as we zoomed along to Sawley and the back entrance to Fountains. If we thought life was tough for cyclists, pity the cross country runners in the Deer Park. It must have been thought of home which kept some of them plodding onwards. PeterJ had a puncture going over the cattle grids and he mended it before we headed to Cafe Nero for some warmth. Martin and I parted with the 'group' at Bishop Monkton and I eventually staggered in to Harrogate about 3, having notched up my 4000 miles for this year -just in time. Peter L

Long Ride

The long ride intended to go to Jervaulx Abbey but I suppose, in my heart, I knew we we would be unlikely to venture that far in the decidedly wintry weather. A mere 4 of us left Hornbeam, Geoff and Chris stuck it out to Kirby Malzeard before deciding to head straight back home via Ripon, whereas Eric and I chose to continue on to Masham for a warming lunch. Johnny Baghdad's (nee Suncatchers caff) was closed so we crowded into Border Teas with 3 other groups of cyclists (from Darlington, Richmond and Northallerton) and a group of Land-Rover aficionados. We headed back by the Snape, West Tanfield, Ripon and Knaresborough route in surprisingly good spirits as the afternoon weather improved to just about scraping an OK. 55 miles. Hopefully next week the weather will improve. Phil