

Sunday, March 17, 2013

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 359

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### Away Day from Malton

I thought we had made a pact with the Devil and that all "Away Days" would dawn with blue skies and uninterrupted sunshine. He seemed to have reneged on the deal today – who would have thought it? Nevertheless it was brightish at the start with only a hint of a sharp breeze. An elite group of eight gathered in Malton car park, Terry, Neil, Pete B, Monica and Dave, Rachael, Keith and Helen and we departed promptly at 10.00 a.m., out of Malton and on to quiet lanes. We paused at Kirkham Priory where Keith photographed some old ruins (and the rather nice Augustinian Monastery) and then shortly afterwards the Devil struck again, snapping Helen's rear gear cable. Fortunately we had a spare cable and, even more fortunately, Terry knew how to thread it up properly. The gears steadfastly refused to work so Terry rescued the situation by fixing the gears in all-purpose mode and with a cheery, "There you go, you'll be fine Helen!" – the show was on the road again. Bright conditions prevailed and the beautiful Yorkshire Wolds countryside stretched out before us. There were a couple of stonking but doable hills after Leavening and then the fabulous three mile descent in to Thixendale where the friendly local ladies were selling a range of delectable cakes, scones, tea and coffee in the village hall. Keith then took us in to the local church where he pressed a button and we all had to behave ourselves for ten minutes whilst following the lights round and listening to a very high quality commentary on the history of the church. We had become a bit chilled by this point so were glad of a few more hills out of Thixendale, through Wharram le Street and Duggleby before the final main descent of Settrington Bank. We went through the village of Settrington and all riders declined the opportunity of cycling through the two fords, preferring little bridges instead. The last couple of miles were in drizzle, turning to rain but morale was high and everyone had enjoyed a different ride. On the drive home, the rain rapidly turned to persistent sleet and we passed a few cyclists who definitely didn't look happy. We covered 34 miles and there was general agreement that the route had been, as advertised, strenuous! Keith & Helen



### **Short Ride**

After being put in the hot seat for the short ride, 8 of us had a vote on distance and route, Andy said he was happy to be back marker then off we went through the town to Bilton, out to Killinghall turning down the lane beside the school to miss as much of the busy A61 Ripon Road as we could at the end on the lane we turned left onto the A61 in to Ripley where we stopped for a photo shoot where everyone put on the brightest wheel easy smile for the camera, off we went out the other end toward Ripon turning right in to Nidd Lane and Brearton Lane following all the way to Ripley Road and left towards Scotton carrying on down to Farnham then right with the Ripon sailing club on our right, being such a lovely day there were a few dinghy's out on the water, (we've seen some fantastic views today) we entered Scriven then left down Half Penny Lane all the way through to Abbey Rd and along the Waterside for a much awaited coffee stop and tea cakes at Marigolds. Jeremy left us here, with none of us looking forward to the long hill up towards the golf club but off we set anyway, at the bus stop we stopped for another vote on who wanted to go where and as luck would have it we all said "Bogs Ln" at the back of the school we lost Lorraine and Andy and the rest of us carried on to the Stray where we said good bye to Marion & a new rider John then Christine and I accompanied Jo another newbie to wheel easy along to St Aidan's where we parted company. I know it was more than we are supposed to do on a short ride, but it's what they all wanted, about 20 miles in total. Kev

### **Medium Ride**

Despite the promise of a day which would not leave you with frozen extremities, Hornbeam seemed a little empty this morning. It seemed to be the weekend to be away or on Keith and Helen's Away Day. Having totally confused everyone with the announcements about lack of ride leaders for the short and the medium plus rides, everyone managed to find a ride and a organised their leaders and set off for somewhere. The Medium Ride had three leaders and twenty one riders....The three leaders had checked the new ride route out and with the aid of shared glasses and a photocopied map we established very quickly that none of us really knew what we were doing. With that understood we set off in three groups towards Little Arms Cliff, happily sped through Stainburn Forest, into the colder air of the Wharfe Valley, where it was decided that Liz in fact did know the way....I would have gone down an impassable dead end track.....and she led us painlessly onwards to Great Armscliff. After a banana break, where Sue T. revealed her interesting pink banana saver, we continued on a glorious sweep down to Hubby, where old timer Paul B recited the only WE rule he knew to the five tiger like young people who found themselves out for a morning with their Aunties and uncles. The two Micheals (stripy arms and maroon arms) then sped off with the tiger girls to find some refreshment at Fodders, as the rest of us struggled through Kirby Overblow to the bye pass, Rudding and home. Strangely we reckoned we covered only 25 or 26 miles maximum and it certainly was not flat...But we did manage to keep up with

The speedy Medium people who arrived home only eight minutes before us. Thank you Liz and Dennis for knowing the route...Caroline G.

### **Medium Plus Ride**

The first question on everyone's lips was the whereabouts of the coffee stop. It was decided to head for the Sun Café in Ripon Spa Gardens as the last bastion of civilisation before heading out west to more remote uninhabited terrain.

Dave, with local knowledge from his youth, took over as ride leader around Galphay and introduce a few interesting detours. The views were magnificent despite the weather being overcast. At Brimham rocks Julie experienced her first puncture (ever) and suddenly realised the value of Joe's bike maintenance course. Peter stepped in to assist whilst the 6 remaining riders headed for home. Many thanks to Peter as it was freezing up there and it did take a lot longer than expected! Julie



## Long Ride

The forecast seemed reasonably promising in comparison to recent efforts, so there was a definite air of optimism about the 6 riders who opted to test themselves against slopes of White Horse Bank. A slight variation in the usual route meant that a couple of regular riders experienced the pleasures of 2 new villages, Myton on Swale and Helperby, but after that we continued on the usual roads towards Kilburn. Up ahead, the White Horse looked grey and forbidding which was a perfect match to the weather, although philosopher Dave gave the perfect response when he pointed out that the below average temperatures means there are some above average days to come in the future. After Kilburn the climb began, the car park seemed further up the hill this time around but we all battled on to the glider club caff and some welcome warmth and sustenance. We umm'd and ahh'd about the return route, eventually deciding upon a direct descent of Sutton Bank followed the merged villages of Balk and Bagby and home via Boroughbridge. In retrospect we should have had an extra stop in Boroghbridge as energy levels were beginning to dip, but the prospect of rain forced us to push on. In the end we covered 67 miles and although it was chilly there was no head wind and it was mostly day. Thanks to all for a great day. Phil



