

Wheel Easy Ride Report 372

Short Ride Report

Fourteen people went on the short ride this week, on one of those frustrating 'summer' days we are having to get used to, cool and cloudy. There were no new riders today, so a relatively experienced group made good progress through Follifoot, Spofforth and Little Ribston. We stopped by the riverside at Knaresborough, where it was just about OK to sit outside. While some of us were happy to be getting our muscles moving after a lousy winter and spring, others were gearing up for longer rides later in the year. As so often with short rides, post-coffee we began to go our separate ways, some tracking back to Follifoot, some taking Bogs Lane, and just the two of us making it all the way back to Hornbeam. Many thanks to Paul for back marking. Justin

Medium Ride Report

This was a tale of the tortoise and a slightly slower tortoise leading, respectively seven and two hares around on a 24-mile cardiovascular and thigh numbing workout. It was Hilly, but thankfully not the 30 miles advertised. Eight of us set out to Beckwithshaw. A recovering Eric, he of the part time tour organiser and trainee canoeist fame, volunteered to be back marker (thanks Eric). As we headed for Stainburn Forest Track three hares set off at a storming pace (moral here don't give a girl a new bike). After regrouping at the car park we took the track to Lindley Hall Farm, onto the B6161, and to Leathley. With the knowledge that Honey Pot Farm café was closed, three riders took the shorter route to Almscliffe Crag, a further two set off for home at a faster pace to fulfil appointments whilst the remaining three went by Honey Pot farm for the hell of it. Eric suggested a coffee stop at the Square and Compass but sadly there were no takers so it was back home via North Rigton, Brackenthwaite crossroads, where our meteorologist escaped, Pannal and Burn Bridge. The wind was favourable but there were some patches of drizzle. Thanks for your company, Max

A very tired tortoise followed two skinny little hares up towards Little Almscliff, and through Stainburn Wood, down to Leathley. We attacked the precipice that leads to the 'open only one weekend at the end of the month Honey Farm Café'. The "following hares" led their way onwards and upwards to Great Almscliffe, as we avoided near death experiences due to very fast country traffic and large potholes at the side of the road. When I reached the top of Heart Attack Hill my hares were hiding on a bench previously covered by undergrowth. Perhaps they were avoiding the red helicopter that had been tracking us all morning. We discussed plovers, lapwings and curlews, I still don't know which of these is a peewit, were congratulated by two walkers who had just virtually run up the hill we had struggled up on bikes, solved the world energy crisis, reorganised China and Cambodia and found a new granola bar recipe.....move over Nigella. From that point it is nearly downhill all the way home and that is where we headed.... Monica and Sue W. headed for Hornbeam having led me round the route brilliantly following hand signalled directions. Thank you for your patient waiting and company.....Hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. Caroline G



Medium Plus Ride Report

Helen's Version: Keith and I were freshly tired after the Wetherby to Filey Great Yorkshire Bike Ride yesterday, followed by some beer and fish and chips at the Wetherby Whaler. So, Sunday morning, we were up and ready to go again with the Medium Plus Group on a new ride for Wheel Easy. This meant that, unusually for me, I was the only person in my group of eleven who knew the route. I couldn't help noticing that I had gained "The Fast Boys" and I was beginning to feel slightly uneasy as I did a quick assessment of the fact that they all looked rather young, fit and fast with a dazzling array of flash bikes. Nevertheless, they protested that they were happy to zoom along and then wait for me and Paul T, since they were keen to try out a new route. This is exactly what we did via the advertised route and in no time at all we had passed Bramham and were on uncharted territory along the cycle path to the A64 roundabout, through Aberford and, in what seemed like minutes, reached our coffee stop at Lotherton Hall. It was clear to me at this point that I was completely outclassed, particularly when I overheard a snatch of conversation about someone's imminent 100 mile sportif event. "The Fast Boys" were not complaining and when I did manage to catch them up they were funny, sweet natured and charming and we had some good conversations ranging from the merits of state of the art hearing aids to the finer points of good tea and coffee. We continued on some busyish roads, probably due to it being Father's Day, but also enjoyed the quiet little roads after Sherburn in Elmet and towards Biggin and Church Fenton. Everyone enjoyed the short detour through Grimston Park, where we pressed our noses against the railings of the big house and humbly stepped out of the way of a smart sports car entering the stately home. We did smugly note that it was driven by what can only be described as a Fat Blond who we assumed was not having as much fun as we were! Throughout the day I had kept suggesting to "The Fast Boys" that, as soon as they were back on familiar territory, they should fly off. This happened shortly after Tadcaster, although two of them did have to stop after a loud bang indicated a blown front inner tube. This left Paul, me and Michael (who had mislaid the flying fast boys) to continue through Wetherby, Spofforth, Follifoot and Ridding Park for the last lap at something of a toned down pace. So, in conclusion, I have to admit that I am definitely too old, slow and small to dally with "The Fast Boys" but, be warned, I am about to take delivery of a new Spa Cycles Audax Titanium bike – so that still won't change things! My heartfelt thanks to Paul for being back marker and moral support – sorry we missed our Flat White at Costa's, I'll treat you to one at the next possible opportunity! Helen

Keith's Version: A second group comprised eight riders, two of whom – Julie and Howard – I have not ridden with before. We made good progress to Lotherton Hall, incorporating a route improvement from Bill and a gazelle-like rush up Jewitt Lane by Liz from Collingham. No gypsies were encountered on the cycle path approach to Bramham Crossroads. We met the speedier group at Lotherton and all attempts to desert to the alternative group were firmly stamped upon. Then on to new territory in Sherburn in Elmet - where we only saw one motorbike – Biggin and Church

Fenton. No problems through Grimston Park which was most enjoyable and on to Tadcaster and Wetherby where we thought Paul and Helen might be in Costa but they had carried on. Then we tried North Street Deli, which was closed, and finally achieved success at good old Morrison's, beloved of all EGs. At this point the leader was advised that his wife was approaching the finish with the earlier group and on the firm advice of Liz, he relinquished his role to the safe hands of Dave P, James and Liz et al and retired home – thus easing his aching legs following the Wetherby to Filey ride yesterday. Thanks to all for such an enjoyable and friendly ride and good luck to Howard who is going to be the pilot flying a Spitfire for the first time on Wednesday. Keith





Long Ride Report

Seven people set off on the long ride following the advertised route to Kilburn & the first café stop at Ampleforth Abbey, arriving just as they opened. After lunch Peter L decided that as this was his Father's day treat he would head off to find some more hills to climb. No one else seemed keen to join him & the rest of us set off towards Castle Howard taking what were new roads to some of the group. After Castle Howard it was the descent & climb of Bulmer Bank before getting back to the "flatlands" after Sheriff Hutton, arriving at Sutton Park for another very welcome café stop. It was then a steady ride home, arriving back in Harrogate after just over 80 miles, slightly more than estimated. Jill.

