

Sunday, March 23, 2014

Wheel Easy Ride Report 412

Short Ride

Fourteen short riders today, so we split into two groups of 7 or at least that's what we said though it never quite worked out that way. Joe and Geraldine led the front section with my cohort following at a respectful distance. Sue T and Lynda N very kindly offered to backmark. There was a slight surprise when the front group went straight along Slingsby Walk to Wetherby Road instead of taking the usual diagonal across the Stray to the Empress. As a result there was a short delay for traffic and the 14 riders all eventually crossed together thanks to Kevin acting as traffic policeman. Soon we were on the Greenway, together with a lot of other people and dogs, in the sunshine and sheltered from the moderate wind. In Ripley I stopped to take the photo of the TdF Yellow Bike at the Boars Head, then we were on Hollybank Lane, the first experience for several riders since it had been resurfaced. All agreed it's fabulous. At Clint Bank our number suddenly swelled to 20 as we met up with Caroline's mediumistas. A perfect opportunity for another photo.

But Sophie's siren was calling (several of us were suffering withdrawal symptoms as we hadn't been there since she closed for holidays an aeon ago) so we coasted enthusiastically down the lane into Hampsthwaite for the essential caffeine and pastry hit. We managed to arrange the tables so that 14 of us could all sit together – another perfect photo opp which unfortunately we forgot to take.

The second half of the ride was on a freestyle basis, in other words no set route. Five, led by Kevin and Val, decided to return the way we came, while 9 went up Hollins Lane of whom (as the ride leader later discovered) 2 carried on towards Killinghall no doubt to rejoin the Greenway, while the rest of us for old times' sake retraced the once inevitable route down Grainbeck Lane, over the horrible A61 and up Knox Lane. Many thanks to all for a lovely morning's ride. 15 miles. Malcolm





MediumRide

Strangely only ten people opted for the strikingly undulating ride described on the days ride list, six of whom were wary of the whole thing and had plans for a mutiny. Yes, the bale out ride followed the Greenway through Ripley up to Holly Bank, where we had a photo opportunity when the short ride people overtook some of us as they hurtled to Sophie's. As our routes split the sun strengthened and we continued along the ridge actually looking at the stunning views back towards Harrogate, that we had not seen for months. We could even see Brimham rocks in the distance and wondered if we would meet the plucky foursome who had actually decided to follow the correct route. The slog up from the Burnt Yates turn off to the last turn off to Brimham was a grind but we were soon speeding down the perfect hill back towards Ripley. Here we expected to see the rest of the group scoffing goodies. And after various combinations of coffee and cake at a very crowded café, we set off on the last little leg home where surprisingly we met the rest of the medium group having senior moment trying to remember what they were meant to be doing, apart from standing appreciating the sun. Without the wind in our faces the Greenway was re wheeled easily and we were soon splitting up and going our various ways home. Not too many miles but certainly a quality 26 plus miles in glorious sun all morning. Thank you for your patience and company..... The Lantern Rouge. CG

It could have been the pain, inflicted on many last week by the perfect storm, as they cycled to Little Almscliffe and the desire not to self-inflict a déjà-vu, that there were only ten takers for the medium ride. However, the more probable reason was the offer of caffeine infused medium plus ride with potentially less wind exposure. The Six ladies selecting the medium ride chose the less potential energy creating option led by Caroline, leaving an unruly crowd of four, two of which were the designated shepherds, to grapple with gravity.

The ride to Little Almscliffe was easier than last week but with the wind from the NW, that up to Menwith was more fraught than usual. We were rewarded with a lovely downhill to Darley and a backwind along the valley to Hartwith Toll Bridge. Then it was the never ending climb along Stripe Lane to Brimham Rocks, where a good call was made to visit the café to attend to bodily needs and have refreshments in the sunshine. Finally it was downhill and tail wind all the way to Ripley. This was so invigorating that I became momentarily confused thinking that I was leading Cav out in the last kilometre of the Milan – San Remo monument, until I realised that despite my epic

performance I was probably still 20mph too slow. (Sadly Cav actually pushed for the line a little too early, after 299km, ending up 4thif only I hadn't slowed for that pothole!) As we four regrouped in Ripley we were kidnapped by the ladies breakaway group as they decafé. The reassembled peloton tapped out its rhythm along an unusually under populated Greenway home – several riders being congratulated for having bells!

Good ride, about 33m, thank you all, especially co-leader Justin for keeping us all under control.
Max



Medium+ Shorter Ride

Paul Tindle led 10 cyclists on a 40 mile route, with not much wind and no rain - thank you Paul. Leaving town via Low Bridge, we split into 2 groups to get us through Knaresborough, meeting up again at Farnham. Then we took Jill's perfect route along Ferrensby, Arkendale, and Marton. With the wind behind us we continued on to Great Ouseburn, Whixley and Cattal where Paul took our photo on the train station (which gave the station master a fright because he thought all ten of us would want to get on the next train with our bikes). Making our way to Wetherby, with Colin (our resident botanist), pointing out celandines (meaning: "Joys to come"), we just missed a hail storm so everything continued good as we arrived at North Street Deli for a cafe stop. We made our way back via the cycle way leading to Spofforth and the usual way back from there. Yvonne Skelton







Medium+ Ride, Slightly Slower Group

It was a classic spring day, sunny and cool with the prospect of showers in the middle of the day. A group of 14, slightly slower, cyclists left Hornbeam, destination York and in no time at all were within sight of Aldwarke Bridge where four of our number peeled off. There seemed to be huge numbers of cyclists heading towards us at Aldwarke Bridge and on closer interrogation they said there was a 100k Audax event from Wiggington. Good job they were heading in the opposite direction and not planning on joining us at Beningbrough Farm Shop Café for an early lunch! The cafe service was consistent in that it was, as usual, inexplicably slow but the quality was excellent so we just enjoyed sitting outside, dealing with all world problems and finally concluded that the Malaysian Jet has clearly been abducted by an alien mother ship.

We picked up the cycle path to York which was surprisingly quiet and just a blur of dappled sunlight and daffodils. We were then into wind after the racecourse, heading for Askham Richard. As our picture illustrates, Keith has been watching Line of Duty and was trying to fabricate evidence to get the ladies in our group incarcerated in the Women's Prison at Askham Richard. He failed. We had behaved perfectly all day. We did meet some short sharp showers with spiky hail into an increasing breeze and Keith declared himself "running on empty" at Cowthorpe and baled out, heading for Wetherby and home. He handed over the mantle of leadership to Helen (but you couldn't tell) for the last lap through Spofforth and Follifoot. Truth to tell, we were all feeling a bit exhausted as, for some of us, this was the first time we had exceeded 50 miles this year, so our little legs definitely noticed that the final total was 57 miles. Good fun though, and a nice feeling of smugness. Keith & Helen





Medium+ Ride "slightly faster pace"

Terry's team of 11 set off at a "slightly faster" pace which averaged at 16 mph until we arrived at Beningborough Hall. We decided against an early stop as the black clouds were gathering over York and so hastened toward Rowntree Park for a Bacon Butty and Coffee at a well-over half way stop.

The group had an impromptu stop in the sunshine by the side of the river to watch as Terry did a timed rear tube change (5 mins) following puncture number 1.

At the Rowntree Park tea room there was sadly no food available due to staff illness however the owner redirected us to a Sicilian café around the corner which was very busy however after 30 miles we were all desperate for some refreshments so patiently waited until tables were available. The heavens also opened during this sojourn which made the café particularly attractive.

After a very long lunch break we picked up the path over to the A64 where we joined up with the slower group. Once we reached the roads again Terry stopped for another timed rear tube change following puncture number 2 (8 minutes this time).

Back on the road we encountered a hail storm , caught up with the other group after a few miles and continued without any more punctures.

The wind made the ride tiring but overall the views were clear and we had sunshine for most of the way. 58 miles . Julie E.

Long Ride

Eight riders volunteered to climb a selection of hills in the Dales. The main climbs to be conquered were Weardley Bank, Otley Chevin, Langbar, Barden Tower and Appletreewick to Stump Cross Caverns. The ride did not start well with Phil S having a puncture on the outskirts of Kirkby Overblow. Phil S suffered a similar fate on leaving Otley and a puncture repair was again called for. With all the delays incurred by chains falling off and punctures it was decided to avoid Burnsall and head straight for Stump Cross. As luck would have it when we reached Duck Street the wind dropped to a dead calm and the expected tailwind failed to materialise. Although we could see downpours in the vicinity of the ride we only experienced one minor hail shower. The ride was only 65 miles long but given the hills it felt like twice that mileage

Peter L and Steve declined the treasures of the Stump Cross Cafe and headed home through Greenhow and along Duck Street (oh the glorious freewheeling) and thence to Menwith. Steve pulled way ahead and was out of earshot for 'right turn'. I think he got the general direction for Harrogate but would certainly have had yet more hills than my return via The Foundation College and Oakdale. Thanks Peter J for a strenuous but enjoyable ride -63 miles. PeterL



