

Sunday, April 13, 2014

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 415

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### Short Ride

On a lovely sunny but cool spring morning a baker's dozen, encouraged by the weather, set off for warmer climes and decided to head for "Wetherby, Gateway to the South." A nice, mainly downhill, outward leg via Knaresborough, Little Ribstone and North Deighton led to a coffee and cake stop at Morrison's, the North St Deli being full.

Then the hard work began with the mainly uphill, into the wind, return leg. The Harland Way was pleasingly quiet and we had an uneventful trip back through Spofforth and Follifoot. Nineteen miles with good company and a minor brake malfunction. Al D



### Medium Ride

Three groups of riders set off from Hornbeam led by Paul, Graham and Nicky. Good progress through Follifoot, Spofforth, Little Ribston and out towards Whixley (for some there was a short detour via Hunsingore and Cattal!). We all decided not to participate in the time trial on the A168. After crossing the railway our excellent ride continued via Thorpe Underwood, the Ouseburns and the Dunsforths before turning into a strengthening wind on the way to Boroughbridge (photo outside Little Ouseburn church accompanied by Palm Sunday hymns). A welcome coffee stop (in three cafe's) before battling the wind back via Minskip and Staveley onto Knaresborough. It did not feel like a flat ride! Entertainment was provided by hundreds of mopeds near Mother Shiptons Inn.

A lovely ride in Spring sunshine. Thanks to Peter and Jill for their support. A big help for new leaders! P, G & N



### **Medium-Plus Ride**

Twenty-two riders set off from Hornbeam in small groups to meet up at Little Almscliffe. The wind was surprisingly strong and the worst was yet to come. Up to Timble where we felt the full force of the wind, Yvonne, Debby and Monica sensibly decided to turn back. Timble to the A59 was very scary; a side wind from the left meant one had to lean into the wind to go in a straight-ish line occasionally being blown towards the centre of the road.

After the A59 the wind became more head on so at least you knew you just had to battle. Up THE steep hill and at Thruscross Martin led all but five riders across the dam road and up to The Stone House where they headed 'directly' to Sophie's.

Sarah, Colin, James, Peter and I stuck to the route and cycled up several steep hills to Duck Street. We were glad we did as it really is a stunning route and well worth the climb for the views.

A detour to Thornthwaite Church led us to a real highlight, three hares chasing each other at amazing speed in some mating game. Up and then down to Darley, Birstwith and finally to the sanctuary of Sophie's for well-deserved refreshments.

Finally home via the Greenway -38 miles- felt like a lot more in the wind and with the hills (3957feet of climb). Thanks to Martin for leading most of the group to safety. Sue C and Sarah X

### **Long Ride**

As seems to be the norm for my rides this year, we were again defeated by the weather and didn't achieve our objective, i.e the first climb of this year's Tour de France: the Cotes de Cray. Eight of us set off from Hornbeam along Leadhall Lane and it quickly became apparent that leaving home at 9.27 and completing the two miles to Hornbeam Park in a record three minutes wasn't entirely down to my pedalling speed - there was a very strong westerly wind. At the Jubilee roundabout (Pennypot Lane) we were joined by Peter R. We then experienced a war of attrition. As we continued westward from Menwith Hill, the wind was getting even stronger, and Steve decided to turn round and head for home. Rejoining the remainder of the ride at the junction of Duck Street, I suggested it might not be sensible to continue with the original ride, but the consensus was that we should continue. As we started along Duck Street the ride became separated into two groups of four. One mile further along Duck Street the second group had a major incident when we were hit by an incredibly strong sideways gust that had all of us struggling to stay upright but Dave W was blown completely across the road to the

accompaniment of a blaring horn of a following car about to overtake us. I decided I must stop the official WE ride, Richard P and Dave W decided to turn back. Peter J and I continued to catch up the leading four to who were waiting at the Stonehouse Inn crossroads. They had arrived at the same conclusion and had developed Plan B. So we then made our way to Dacre, Summerbridge, Glasshouses, Bewerley to Pateley Bridge. On the way we were met up with Richard and Dave who had come to the same decision. At Pateley Bridge, Peter R, Martin, Bob and partner decided to continue up Nidderdale to How Steen Gorge, whilst Peter J, Richard P, Dave W and I opted for refreshments at Teacups before returning home (wind assisted at last!) via Wilsill, Fellbeck, Brimham Rocks, Burnt Yates, Bedlam and Ripley, arriving home at 2pm after 45 miles. Praise indeed is due to the other four who went on to How Steen Gorge and completed 60 miles.

There will be another opportunity for the wider membership to ride the Cotes de Cray when I will be leading the ride at medium pace with an early start on June 15, three weeks ahead of Le Tour Grand Depart. Let's hope for better weather! Eric W