

Sunday, March 8, 2015

Wheel Easy Ride Report 462

Short Ride

Fifteen riders today, welcome to new rider Ian and returning rider Declan. Rain did try and spoil the day but cleared up and we had some lovely blue sky to accompany us. Our route was through the cycle path to the showground, past Rudding to Follifoot, Spofforth, Little Ribston and a cafe stop on the Waterside at Knaresborough. Following which we took our own routes back to Hornbeam and home. A ride of about 16 miles. Great to be back in the saddle again. JeanB

Medium Ride 1

Fluidity was the key word for today's medium ride; Justin came up with it towards the end of the ride to describe the leadership style. I'm not sure if it was intended as a compliment... About 18 opted for the ride, and Tall John and Peter had kindly volunteered to take a 'faster' group of nine, as Geraldine and I were slightly anxious about not having ridden a bike since before Christmas. Strong winds and hills were promised, and we set off cautiously to Rossett and then the Squinting Cat and on to Beckwithshaw and up Norwood Lane to Little Almscliffe. The headwind was not as bad as I had feared, and there seemed to be hundreds of cyclists out on what was probably the first reasonable Sunday of the year after a beautiful Saturday. For some reason, they all seemed to be going faster than we were – much faster in most cases. Eight of us went directly down to the T-junction with the A6451, Caroline took the side road past Brown Bank (look on the map...) to join the A6451 a little further north. We weren't sure what Caroline's plans were, so we changed ours and instead of going down to Swinsty Reservoir we went past the Sun Inn and met Caroline coming down from Brown Bank. We turned left past Wydra House (for sale if you're interested) and down through the small-but-interestingly-named Fewston Bents and Cobby Syke and back up to the busy A59. Left then right on to Meagill Lane and then right on the barriered lane past some high-security bit of the Menwith Hill organisation. Photo at the gate at the end of the lane, despite some concerns that we might get arrested, and then the lovely, long descent into Hampsthwaite with the wind now behind us. Somewhere on the way we lost Alison and Gordon (to the pub?) and Dennis to lunch and one other. On arriving in Hampsthwaite we were five. We spotted a familiar figure loitering on the green, which turned out to be Max. Once again plans became fluid: the original resolution to go back via Knox faded in favour of Clint Bank and Holly Bank Wood, Ripley and the Greenway. Caroline and Sue Oliver stopped for a toilet break in Ripley and Max dutifully waited for Caroline, so only three of us arrived back at Dragon Bridge. It started to rain slightly as we arrived home. About 25 slightly easier-than-expected miles. Clive PS



Medium Ride 2

Expecting a day of "heavy rain on the hills" I was ready for the worst and so pleasantly surprised at how things turned out. The hills were always going to be a challenge and so it was, for me anyway! Nine of us set out for Leadhall Lane and Rossett, past the Squinting Cat and on to Beckwithshaw. The long pull up Norwood Lane was interesting for the sightings of curlew and lapwing in the fields and several skylarks passing over. From Little Almscliffe Crag we sailed on and up again to the back road, turning right past the Sun Inn and taking the next fork left crossing a small beck and up again to turn right at next cross-roads, past the farm shop to the A59. Left here and first right, Meagill Lane, on for 1 mile take the bridleway through the wireless station site and all its aerials to the Menwith road. Three riders broke away for Pateley Bridge here while six pressed on through Thornthwaite noting the large flock of redwings and fieldfares and taking the top road that drops down to Darley. Following the Nidd we reached Birstwith where three riders pushed on for Hampsthwaite while the remaining three turned left for Clint, Ripley and the Greenway. Beautiful countryside all the way. 27miles PeterB

Extended Medium Ride

When Peter's medium ride reached Menwith Hill Road 3 of us turned left and then onto the road towards Greenhow Hill. It was hard going with the strong side gusts of wind but we were kept occupied saying hello to the many cyclists heading in the opposite direction on some sort of sportive! Turning right on to Fall Lane was much easier then we headed down Yorke's Folly and stopped for excellent refreshments at Teacups in Pateley Bridge. Our return was via Glasshouses and Smelthouses, the latter being a new road for all of us. Just one more climb past Brimham Rocks then we headed down past Rabbit Farm to Ripley. Just under 40 miles and 2742 feet of climbing with wonderful views if a bit sparse on sunshine. LizP





Medium-Plus Ride

Terry lead a group of riders who wished to go at a quicker pace while eight opted for a more leisurely ride.

The 45 mile route took us through Follifoot, Spofforth, Little Ribston, Tockwith, Long Marston, Rufforth, Askham Richard, Bilbrough, Wetherby, Little Ribston, Spofforth and Follifoot. Although the route is flat the wind made it difficult at times.

For coffee we left the original route and headed towards Rufforth and the Old School Tearoom, which was a former disused Victorian School converted into a village store and tea room in 2011. The Old School maintains a school theme throughout with blackboards, chalk, school bags, bells and signage. To enhance the Victorian theme, a display of the history of the village and school hangs on the store and tea room walls. However, I wasn't sure if the member of staff who served us was taking on the role of a Victorian teacher or it was just one of those days! It was certainly worth a visit. A great ride with excellent company. PaulT



Long Ride

The cycle of suffering. It's a funny thing cycling. Some days it seems easy almost effortless. The hills don't seem as steep, the wind is favourable all day and the tarmac seems smoother. Then, there are the other days.....The rest of the group of 9.30 start long riders (totalling 6) were all having one of the easy sort of days. Their tyres hummed along the road making that tuneful sound of man and well-oiled machine in perfect harmony while I groaned and grated at the back on an ever extending piece of elastic - all the way to White Horse bank. I watched the others climb the 5 chevrons easily while I ground my way up what seemed like a vertical wall ending in the welcome relief of the excellent Glider Club café. Here we met with the early start group (3 riders) and Mark S from Ripon cycling club. The return took us down Boltby Bank, through Felixkirk and Thirsk then back to Boroughbridge. En-route the elastic finally snapped - thanks to the others for suggesting a stop at Morrison's, it seemed like an oasis.

67miles fine weather, great company and despite the suffering still the best way to spend a Sunday. The question is who coined the phrase; it's as easy as riding a bike. Huh. PhilS

Notes from Spain, 4th March.

Our friends left today and I thought that they were taking the weather with them. Because when I looked out of the window there was a very thick ground mist which completely shrouded the mountains.

So I decided to skirt round the mountains and go to Javea via La Xara and Jesus Pobre. By the time I got to Javea the sun had burnt off most of the mist. The temperature was in the mid 60's and set fair for a good days cycling.

But instead of the usual cafe stop I went and had my hair cut! It turned out to be a good decision because the lady who cut my hair told me that there was another route down the mountain from Denia to Javea, so after climbing back up the mountain towards Denia I followed the directions I had been given. What a revelation I went on gravelled tracks, through pine forests and past ancient monuments (Colin would have loved this route) before coming out on a blacktop which wound its way down the mountain for about 2.5kms passing beautiful villas and giving stunning views of Javea.

When I reached the port of Javea I turned around to do the route in reverse, if you think two Yorke Folly's in succession it would be about right it was still a nice day so I took my time and wound my way up to the top before dropping down into Denia to Café Ciclista for some more CBC (Costa Blanca Carrot-cake) richly deserved I may add! About 60kms.Terry C





Notes from Spain, 5th March.

I have been told that next to Switzerland, Spain is the most mountainous country in Europe and here in the Costa Blanca region -- where I am -- there are about 40 mountains. I think I can see about 30 from our balcony!

My route today; Denia, Pego, Vall de Ebo. This is one of my favourite routes it starts off with about 20kms of 2m wide cycle path across the valley -- no dogs, no walkers and just two bikes passing in the opposite direction! Then just after Pego there is a climb of about 9kms with some 13% sections which again are not difficult, I just used a low gear with a low cadence and enjoyed the scenery which was fantastic. I took some photographs but they could never do the view justice.

The climb took about 1h 15m with photo stops! At the top they have several donkeys in a pen which they use to take the tourists for rides on the mountain trails. The donkeys must have given birth recently as there were a couple of foals in the pen; they only looked a few weeks old but oh so cuddly!

Then it was a 3km drop down to the village of Vall De Ebo normally I would turn back and reverse the route but the previous evening when I was looking at the map there appeared to be another way down the mountain so it was a case of onward and upward little did I realise that it would be upward for another 7kms with a couple of 16% sections! Eventually I found the road/track and started to make my way down the mountain --it was Peat Lane steep in places -- on the way I disturbed a snake which was basking in the middle of the road it wriggled into the undergrowth before I could get a good look at it but it was over two feet in length. Halfway down I got a puncture on the back wheel which I sorted out fairly quickly and then carried on down to the valley floor. It felt like it was downhill all the way to Pego (12kms) and finally on the cycle track to Denia. 82kms in total -- about 50mls in EG's language!! TC

