

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

First of all my apologies to those of you who set off expecting to be led around the route. A slight misunderstanding between me and Jen meant that I set off at a fast pace with one group and Jen with the other at what I thought was going to be a slower pace, however somewhere along the way it all fell apart and I'm sure some of you had to work out your own routes home.

For those that stuck with me we followed the route as planned until the cabinet makers shop near the Sun Inn. There a number of riders went back via the traditional route of Little Almscliff, Beckwithshaw, Squinting Cat and then all routes into Harrogate. The group left with me did a loop around Dob Park (the screeching of Liz's brakes still reverberates in my ears). Next assault on the aural senses was the creak from my knees on the route up Norwood edge and Stainburn Forest. Then along the rough track through the forest (remarkably dry) and onward to finish as described above.

Note to self - 'Need to do better next time, if there is one!'

Finally, the saga of Caroline and the jamming chain (this is beginning to take on 'War and Peace' proportions). So it happened again, however a knight in shining amour (armour) stopped to give the vital aid and patch things up enough to get her home. I wonder what made him stop, was it the playful smile, or the enticing glimpse of a bare ankle, or was he just grabbed by the scruff of the neck. We may never know. All's well that ends well and I'm glad to report that Caroline made it home safe and sound (extra miles on Sunday though, to make up!).

Finally, finally - talking about being grabbed by the scruff of the neck, I have been ordered to say that Jen did wait for Caroline until she received a text message about the problems, by which time everyone was so far ahead of her that she rode the rest of the ride on her own and from all accounts enjoyed it (looks like I'm redundant yet again). Glyn

Wednesday Ride

Straight to Ripon for the first coffee, out by the Studley road we forked right for Galphay. Eventually finding Laverton at the second attempt, we turned left just outside Kirkby Malzeard (at the second attempt) then headed west (and up and up) past Swetton onto Swetton Moor and the Greygarth Monument, erected to commemorate Queen Victoria's jubilee, or thereabouts. You can climb up inside the monument for a view which is quite spectacular on a clear day, unfortunately to-day didn't qualify.

It's an interesting descent from the monument, then a bit of a climb up to take a right onto Dallow Moor, then left to High Grantley, Sawley, and so to Fountains for a much-needed lunch. Home via Markington.

Because you really wouldn't want to do the climb from Ripon up onto Swetton moor into a westerly wind, I normally do this circuit the other way round. However there was very little wind to-day, so it made a change to do "Greygarth the wrong way round".....but I did find it confusing.

Plenty of curlews making their spring call, oystercatchers on Dallow moor, lapwings displaying, thrush, blackbird and wren giving full song, lambs in the fields, pussy willow coming out....all we need now is a warm day and it'll feel like spring! Colin T



How Stean Ride

Five riders, including 3 Richards, set out for Scar House Dam in the hope of some views. Almost immediately the sun hid itself away, not to reappear until we were back in HG. Eric was spotted in the outer reaches of Leadhall Lane heading towards Hornbeam and, possibly, the EGs. Our plan being to his liking, he reversed and joined us. Out through Beckwithshaw and Pennypot the chilling northerly wind made itself felt as we turned towards the network of lanes leading to Darley. Those not used to Richard P's mental mapping powers were heard to cry "where we?" Other knew they were in safe hands. Dacre's toilets proved welcome after which we set about the five chevrons leading up Hartwith Bank, finally topping out at Brimham Rocks. Tougher than White Horse Bank? Discuss.

New spring lambs and protective mums were quite a feature of the ride to Dacre, including one lamb who gave us a full 180 degree bounce and turn – truly spring-like.

Richard L left us at Silver Hill to keep a date with Yorke's Folly and Sophie's, while the rest of us descended carefully towards Wath. My care, luck or competence ran out on the third granite-lined drainage channel, locking the front wheel and pitching me over the bars – in markedly contrasting style to the bouncing lamb seen earlier. A bruised knee was the price paid; marks for technical merit, zero; for artistic interpretation, zero! The delay caused the abandonment of the Scar House leg of the ride and we headed at full tilt to How Stean café, where the obliging staff served me with a freezer block to nurse over the lunch break.

Lunch was good – the eggs were poached, not coddled (one for Google, I think!) while bacon butties came in either dipped or undipped formats. Refills of coffee and tea made for a longish but welcome stop. There was a brief discussion of Yorke's Folly for the return leg but Hartwith had been enough for today. Back along the Ripley road from Glasshouses, we diverted at Bedlam to sample an experimental link to Holly Bank Lane, past High Rails and the ancient boundary cross. But, the dodgy right turn off the main road would suggest that it's unlikely to be a regular route for most. Along the Greenway, we were passed by Angela and Stewart from the Ripon/ Laverton ride. Where were the rest, I wondered. Right behind us! At Bilton Lane massed ranks of WE riders gathered to chatter and say our farewells. Bruises apart, an enjoyable day of 55 miles and about 4000ft of climbing. Terry S



EGs' Ride

Following brief salutations with the Wheel Easy riders passing by along Abbey Road, and joining seven eager E.Gs we set off south, intent on lunching at Lotherton Hall. Our route via the usual morning halt at Morrison's, Wetherby, followed a roundabout course taking in the hills around Bardsey and Scarcroft towards Thorner. The upward climbs kept us warm but later we could feel the chill of the day as, despite the forecast, the temperature never seemed to rise. The cloudy skies continued to follow us all day but failed to dim our enthusiasm, no less Marvin who had brought out his latest creation of a 20 year old Raleigh, totally and very nicely rebuilt with "bling" to match.

We arrived at Lotherton Hall at 1.00pm(ish) in time to just beat an influx of coach travellers. Our return route took us through Saxon and Church Fenton and onwards to Tadcaster. At Thorpe Arch four of the group, Marvin, Bill, Terry, and Ian diverted towards home via the local cycle path leaving the remaining four to continue on their way arriving well in time for an early tea covering approximately 60 miles.

Dave W

