

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

Wednesday Rides

Short Ride

Newish Sue was keen to do a shorter and slower paced ride and on such a lovely morning, what a good idea. I shelved my 15 mile route to extend it to 20 and cycle to Wetherby via the Harland Way which was new to Sue. We sat outside in the warm sunshine at North Street Deli where the young lad agreed that toasted tea cakes should come to the table buttered, not with a frozen pack of butter. Well refreshed we returned via Little Ribston, Spofforth and the Showground. Well done Sue who is another ambassador for cycling doing nearly all her shopping by bike and is off to Copenhagen this weekend the capital of cycling. How nice. Gia

Poddlers' Ride - First Setty-Offy Group

A nice day was forecast (relatively speaking) and there was a clamouring of takers for today's ride which had been very carefully planned by Caroline to include longy, shorty and middly alternatives and a myriad of alternative inbetweeny routes. I was instructed to take a group at a slightly faster than snail's pace and set off immediately. Never been known for disagreeing, I set off with what I thought was a peloton of eight but found out later that it was in fact only seven. Thanks Paul for stepping back into the fray, after having previously swapped his leader's role today for an alternative (further explanation is not needed); to lead the second group whilst Caroline took a smaller group at an original Poddler's pace.

So it was down to Low Bridge via the showground, Abbey Road then to Wetherby via Kirk Deighton, The cycle path was taken towards Boston Spa with the final section following the minor road (new territory for some). A short comfort/banana break was taken at the car park. Worthy of note David A found a 2p coin and took it to the library to donate to a charity. (Conversation centred on the fact that if everyone in the UK had also done this today the charity would have been a million pounds better off!).

We continued to Bramham and over the A1, A1M or M1, call it what you will, towards Collingham and this is where it all started to go wrong. After stopping at a crucial turn to count my flock I realised that Liz F was missing. Search parties were dispatched (well a slight over exaggeration, one person in each direction). I found her valiantly trying to catch up. Her nice new chain on her nice new bike had misbehaved and jumped off. She thought that we might have gone on and left her behind. I replied that I hadn't left anyone behind when leading a ride (famous last words). We progressed to Collingham, where Surge John surged on to tend to the elderly. At the T junction in Wetherby it was noticed that Liz F was again not at roll call but spookily neither was Andrew. Search party time again! But despite David B, not to be confused with David A, returning to Collingham they were not found. We were joined by the remnants of the second group but they could not shed any light on the lost ones. (It was later discovered that Liz's naughty new chain has misbehaved again, been rectified, and Andrew who kindly had waited assumed that we had all followed Surge John and so they followed the road to Kirby Overblow forsaking the coffee option).

The two merged groups reformed into those who would coffee and those that declined. James volunteered to lead the group to coffee and he was given a cheery greeting and wished God's speed. The rest of us returned via the Harland Way bike path to Spofforth. On the final section riders peeled off to their various preferred routes home until there was only myself and David A. A somewhat eventful trip. Thanks for your company no matter how long you spent in the peloton (there must be some lessons to learn for us all)

32 miles covered, up to 36 miles covered if you participated in a search or, if you took an alternative route, you know how far you went! MG

On behalf of Caroline, she reports that the third setty-offy group progressed sedately in true Poddleresque fashion to Bramham, returning via the cycle path alongside the A1 to Wetherby and home. It was an uneventful ride also covering 32 miles. (As this distance could only have been achieved with much weaving over the road. I must pluck up courage and ask her if a visit to a hostelry has been omitted from her report)



Wednesday Ride

We arrived at Hornbeam on a beautiful sunny morning (How often this year have we been able to say that?) with good prospects for the day -and Colin had a plan...

Wharfedale was the destination via Bolton Abbey with the prospect of a day of climbing ahead. Nine riders set off (including Steve, who doesn't often ride on Wednesday so he could be classed as a newcomer) and we made our way via Pot Bank, Pennypot Lane where Peter (on only his second ride for a long time) decided the route may be too much so he looped back via the Sun Inn to home. The remaining eight pressed on to Askwith (via Timble) and a long steady run into Ilkley. The planned coffee stop was Bolton Abbey so we quickly made our way along the lanes to Beamsley then on to the Abbey Tea Rooms-chosen as we thought they would be less busy. This was the case and after food and drinks we set off to shed our 'cafe legs' before the climbing began out of Bolton Abbey and beyond.

The Pavilion was packed, which justified our decision to stop early, and spurred us onwards and upwards (with a brief stop at the old Oak tree for a photo) to Parcevall Hall and the climb to Stump Cross. Those who had the energy enjoyed the views and those who didn't could listen to Collins informed commentary of the various flora and fauna.

On reaching Stump Cross the group spurned a second food stop and pushed on to Duck Lane with the prospect of a fast ride back. At the turn off to Menwith Alan left us to return via Hampsthwaite whilst the rest headed for a return along Pennypot Lane and then back into Harrogate via Birk Crag.

A superb route, ridden in the best possible weather with great views which showed the Dale at its best. About 50+ miles, lots of hills and a happy and satisfied group of riders as we made for home. Thanks Colin for another great route and thanks to everyone who joined us for the great company. Kevin



Long Ride

A flurry of e-mails the night before produced a ride plan for the day: Masham via Park Rash. The weather looked to be set fair until evening rain and we could look forward to long hours of daylight if the timetable went awry seriously. Eight set off to see what the day would bring. Whinney Lane brought us face-to-face the factor that we might just have underestimated – the breeze. How strong would that be on the tops? While not the gale of earlier in the month it still made the slog up to Greenhow tough on the legs and sent some of us into energy-saving mode. Beyond Stump Cross the flagpole at Fancarl was rattling around as a taut flag confirmed what we already knew – it was a stiff head wind. I think all were glad to reach the café at Hebden, even though at just before 12.00 we were about 30 mins behind schedule. The usual question: was this lunch or late elevenses? Our menu choices showed we were split on that one. Sensing the need for urgency, David R headed off towards Park Rash while the rest of us deliberated and, for some, lost our rudder. We agreed on Kettlewell as a staging

post. After all the brain work, the ride out through Kilnsey was welcome, as our picture shows. The road up to Skirfare Bridge was, perhaps, a little busier than ideal but it did reveal two wonders of the automotive age – a 1930-ish open-top Bentley (which burred past at probably 8 mpg!) and a Bond Bug. Anyone remember those? At Skirfare John and Peter opted out of the loop along Littondale, heading for Kettlewell and the return. A resolute five then called at Kettlewell village shop for a swift cuppa, amid talk of going out to have a look at Park Rash, even if we didn't ride up it - a crazy idea that didn't detain us long. The back lane from Kettlewell through Conistone to Grassington was as picturesque as ever. From Burnsall, it was payback time for the wind which assisted us (mostly) up to Stump Cross, where a bit of refuelling took place. The descent of Peat Lane was as tricky as ever, with debris on the hairpin, but all negotiated successfully. Pausing along the Ripley road to observe the quality of the fill used to patch the pothole which unseated Richard L two months ago; our final parting was at Ripley where Lesley and Richard dived in for ice cream and home. Feeling like shedded sheep, Andy Richard P and I completed the day's proceedings along the Greenway as the early evening riders headed out of town. Subsequent reports from Middleham indicate that David R had lunch there and could be seen later at Masham and Fountains, having completed the ride as originally scheduled. Well done David. Nevertheless, even for the less resolute of the party the ride clocked up 75 plus miles with c 5500ft of climbing. A grand day out.
Terry Smith



EGs Ride

We had sixteen EG`s at Low Bridge, soon to be joined by a multitude of Wheel Easy Wenesdayers.

The EG`s were then joined by a Lady (to add a bit of class and up the good looks factor), however, before he could be silenced one EG told her she was with the EG`s, and away she went, despite the pleadings of our most charming members.

Then on to Taddy via Rudgate and the Lemon (cyclist friendly) Tree Cafe, the group splitting up in to small groups for safety on a busy road.

On arrival the "A" team was found (in the snug) hitting the caffeine and cake (see photo).

Six riders left us here to return home, the remaining ten on to Towton.

Just after Towton a large explosion was heard in the region of Eric, "Oh no he`s through to sound barrier again" was the thought, but no it was a tyre burst.

Repairs were made using a toothpaste tube and ingenuity, and Eric and Colin decided to return to Knaresborough at a slow pace so as not to stress the repair.

However those of us who know Eric and Colin knew that this could not last, and it was eyeballs out to Knaresborough averaging 16.5625 mph (guess who supplied the figures?) for 17 miles, the repair holding.

For the remaining eight it was on to Sherburn in Elmet, Cawood and Uleskelf, afternoon tea being taken in Boston Spa.

At Wetherby to fellowship of the eight was dissolved, Dave P and Roy climbing the ridge to Kirkby Overblow and home, Barry, Dave Watson, Dave Wilson, Dave S, Ian and Peter J headed for Knaresborough.

A gentle relaxing ride of over sixty miles, which was enough for those who still had Sunday`s 100 miler in their legs.

Eric`s Supplementary Report

There is nothing the EGs like more than a good mechanical problem (....well, apart from coffee and cakes, Morrison's cafés, toasted teacakes, baked beans on brown toast with poached eggs, sorting out the world's financial problems, and reminiscing about when we 17 and we'd just.....). Well, today we had a magnificent mechanical problem. The sort that we eulogise about, and that brings out the best in the EGs.

We were on the far side of Towton when BANG: my rear tyre blew out with a most impressive explosion. The tyre appeared to be beyond repair and the inner tube had a neat hole blown out of it. "Houston, we have a problem!" and as Mrs Clarke Kent was out cycling herself, no Superwoman rescue service was possible.

12 months ago Richard Leake completed LEJOG and told us of the 'toothpaste tube emergency repair' which he learned from their ride leader. Ever since then I have had a strip of toothpaste tube in my tool kit, and now I had to use it in anger for the first time. Having inserted a new inner tube, the toothpaste tube strip is used to line the inside of the damaged section of tyre, and the tyre can then be inflated as normal. I left the EGs to take the shortest route home. Colin P insisted on accompanying me in case the repair didn't work; he could cycle to Wetherby to buy a replacement tyre (what a saint!). With encouraging comments from the EGs, such as "if it lasts for 100 yards, it might get you home", "Take it very slowly", ringing in our ears, Colin and I took it slowly for the first 100 yards, and then as soon as we were out of sight of the EGs we subjected the emergency repair to destructive tests, and it passed with flying colours. We sped through Tadcaster, Boston Spa, and Wetherby, covering the 18 miles to Knaresborough in just over the hour. We then rewarded ourselves on Waterside with the EGs' passion of eating cake, and watching the world go by.

So the moral of the story is make sure you carry a strip of toothpaste tube on all rides. It costs nothing, weighs nothing, takes no space in your bag, but it can be a real get-you-home ride saver. The two photos show (a) the state of my tyre when I arrived home after cycling for 23 miles on the emergency repair, and (b) 2 strips cut from one toothpaste tube - each strip is approx. 4" x 2". Make sure you have at least one with you!

Many thanks to the EGs for their help, and especially to Colin for his assistance and company on the return ride. Eric





