

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

With nautical cunning, precision and skill, today's ride actually worked out quite perfectly. Basically, the hope was to avoid drowning...not York, Kendal, Carlisle, Boroughbridge then; to avoid heading into the wind, coming or going.....not Liverpool, Manchester or Hampsthwaite, Wetherby, or anywhere in reality; and go somewhere we hadn't been to for several months..... Timble. Strangely this destination had been mentioned in coffeeing terms the previous day by a couple who planned to drive there in a car...Liz and Richard!! So to cut a long (timewise) story short we went to Timble. We were well behaved and avoided the Park cut through. Our route up Norwood Lane was aided by a strange, cross wind. Our way was blocked by a blue car as we toiled up the one mile hill to Timble (probably crossly into a headwind). At Timble the £3 have as much as you want coffee with as many cakes as you could politely eat, including a deliciously light lemon drizzle and a chocolate yumminess, scones and sausage rolls, was sampled enthusiastically. As we headed home with the winds behind us, the reservoirs were almost overflowing, but did not drown us, Penny Pot Lane was a joy, the cut through the back alleys of Harrogate limited rise and fall of the terrain, and we returned home after a very successful morning of cycling in remarkably excellent cycling conditions. Thanks to the front markers, back markers and support team. CG.

Wednesday Wanderers' Ride

Strong-ish winds from the south-west were forecast, but there were 10 takers for the Wednesday Wanderers today (12 including Geraldine and me), so we divided into 2 groups. I took the first group and Geraldine the second (unusual, not to say risky, for Geraldine to lead...) We decided at Hornbeam to avoid the Harland Way because of mud and mush, so we set off through the Showground to Rudding, Follifoot, Spofforth and North Deighton on the way to Wetherby (Geraldine's group went via Little Ribston.). Under the A1 and on to Thorpe Arch and Boston Spa, at which point Andrew guided us neatly to the cycle path by the A1 back towards Wetherby. We benefitted from a strong following wind on the cycle path, which was really the first manifestation of the wind we experienced on the ride. The six in my group stopped for refreshments at the North Street Deli, but only Geraldine stopped from her group, the others having various commitments. So 7 of us set off back towards Harrogate via Sicklinghall, Kirkby Overblow (where we again experienced some blowing from the strengthening wind) and then along Walton Head Lane to the A61, Burn Bridge and up to Leadhall Lane. I had a puncture on Tewitt Well Road, so ended up walking home. Forgot to take a picture today...
About 31miles. Joe S

Wednesday Ride

The group came well prepared today with both a Plan A and a Plan B, but we still managed to take almost as long as usual to decide which to follow. Democracy is all very well but on a cool blustery Wednesday morning what we really need is a benevolent Dictatorship! Anyway having opted for Plan B so as to avoid a number having to cycle back the way they had just come in the car we headed off across the Stray and down the newly cleaned Greenway – many thanks to the Sustrans volunteers who turned out to do this yesterday. The promise sunshine from the forecast was not putting in an appearance, but least it was dry and the intention was to head up Nidderdale in the valley to avoid the worst of the wind. So after a short loo stop in Ripley – it was a cold morning – we headed through Holly Bank Woods, which was nowhere near as pristine as the Greenway, down into Birstwith and up the valley to Darley. Having stopped for a photo opportunity, courtesy of Gia and a brief debate on the next section of the route we headed towards Thornthwaite, but took the left turn up the hill against an increasingly strong head wind, coming out at the Forest Moor School on the ridge. Then with the wind at our backs we sailed along the ridge passed Menwith to Clapham Green and Hampsthwaite. Sophie's beckoned and when the orders arrived a rash of food envy broke out over the Christmas Cake and Wensleydale cheese ordered by Gia and Paul – it pays to have local knowledge and experience – and Kevin caused a minor disruption when he tried to change his toasted tea cake for the Christmas Cake, although he was eventually successful. After caffeine and chat, the group split up with some returning via Knox and others choosing the Greenway. Approx. 28 miles depending on where you started and finished in good company and not much problem with the wind together with a good coffee stop at Sophie's. Thanks to everyone. James G



Wednesday Long Ride

Just four assembled for the "long" ride today, with the aim of using the headwind-out-tailwind-home strategy. Various destinations were tossed around until Timble, Ilkley and Bolton Bridge emerged. The haul up from Beckwithshaw to Stainburn Forest into the strong headwind showed us what the day would have in store for us. It was the monthly coffee morning in Timble, but we managed to slip past without the siren call that a plate of cakes can exert. Opting for High rather than Low Snowden as the route to the Askwith turn, proved a tough test for all. Along the way there was the sight of an estate car, with tailgate open and hazard lights flashing, apparently pacing or shielding a female rider heading towards Blubberhouses. "Wasn't that Lizzie Armistead", someone asked. On balance the group agreed that it was – the hair plat being the giveaway. The gusts from the west were so strong that most of us took the descent to Askwith with great care and enjoyed the shelter along the valley road towards Ilkley. Was it a day for Langbar? A unanimous "no" and the call of a coffee stop at Christ Church Ilkley proved irresistible. While approaching Ilkley a female rider with a long hair plat came towards us from the Bolton Bridge direction. Was that Ms Armistead again? Had she completed a circuit from Blubberhouses, along A59 and back past Ilkley in less than 30 mins? We lesser mortals can only ponder! Cow and Calf followed the tea break, with gusty side winds proving rather hazardous as they pushed us into the kerb. At the Chevin PH the group split with Lesley and Richard opting for Otley, Castley, Kirkby Overblow and home, while David and Terry went for climb up the Chevin. Again, side winds were the issue. We weren't alone – a plane was seen sidling into Leeds Bradford Airport as we passed the Royalty pub. Wishing to avoid muddy roads, the ride back to Hornbeam was via Old Pool Bank, Leathley and Briscoerigg. Pausing at "Piglet Preserves" on Brackenthwaite Lane to buy eggs and marmalade, our ride ended gently before the school run picked up and the gales swept in. Just 41 windy miles (49 for Lesley and Richard) but with 3330 ft of ascent it justified a nice late lunch. Terry S

EGs' Ride

Despite dastardly Desmond doing his worst we had fourteen rider`s at Low Bridge, including a new rider Phillip (welcome to the EG`s). Considering the prevailing wind and the weather forecast, the destination was Wetherby, so Dave S guessed right. Earlier Norman had rung Terry to say he was still in bed?? and might see us in Morrison's. Eric arrived before the magic hour and away we went via the old road, Follifoot, Spofforth and North Deighton. The group splitting in to two groups for safety and different paces. As usual Morrison saw to our needs. As we began to gird up our loins after caffeine and calories ready to depart Norman arrived. It was believed? Rosemary had made his breakfast and insisted he had it in bed, the EG`s standards committee ruled that actions such as this were not allowed, especially at his age.

An English eleven comprising Colin, Dave P, Dave S, Dave W, Eric, John R, Ian, Marvin, Peter B, Peter J, and Phillip, headed for Bramham via the cycle path, noting Geraldine and Max entering Wetherby.

Bill, Norman, Terry and Theo remaining at Morrison`s, let`s hope they did not OD on caffeine and cake.

The roads were dry, with patches of blue sky and the wind was not bad (I am referring to the weather here). On to Collingham and Linton then up on to the ridge to Sicklinghall and Kirkby Overblow. Eric and Peter B had already headed north to Boroughbridge and now Peter J dropped down in to Wharfedale also to get in some extra miles.

The conditions were better than expected with mileage around 35 miles. Dave P

