

Sunday, January 31, 2016

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 509

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### Otley Ride

Listening to the weather forecast during breakfast I thought the route to Pateley Bridge via Yorks Folly wasn't the best option today. Those who opted for the medium plus ride were happy to change the route and head in the direction of Otley instead. Nine riders headed to Pool for coffee via Brackenthwaite Lane, Lindley and Otley. We returned through Castley. Weeton, Netherby, Kearby and Kirkby Overblow. Unfortunately Kevin left us just after Pool as he had chain problems. Only 32 miles but quite a few hills. Good company and great to hear the EG banter between Dave and Peter.



### Medium Ride

It was good to arrive at Hornbeam with no sign of ice or frost, the wind was not too strong and it was not actually raining! 9 of us set off in one group, with Paul B back marking, to Farnham via Low Bridge. As usual we stopped for a breather in the gateway above Farnham and as I arrived my front wheel got tangled up in a thorn branch which was lying there. From here we had a non pedalling race ( an idea stolen from the EGs) and Caroline won. Shortly after passing Copgrove Hall, I realised that the thorn bush had also won and Paul kindly began fixing my puncture. He was soon aided by Gordon who arrived a few minutes later with Alison, having had a delayed start. Andrew and Max also came back to give moral support. Caroline, Sue D and Jen were only riding as far as Bishop Monkton before returning to go visiting so we did not see them again and neither did we see Paul R and Andy so hope they all got home safely. By the time Paul and I got to Boroughbridge, Max, Gordon and Alison had gone back so there was only Andrew waiting patiently. (Considering Strava showed a personal record between Bishop Monkton and Roecliffe the others must have been flying!) The 3 of us retreated to Tasty Snacks for an early lunch and to warm up, then it was onward through the Dunsforths (quietly!) and home via Arkendale and Knaresborough. It was raining but not so that we got soaked and amazingly on this flat route there was no flooding. About 36 miles and that was missing out Burton Leonard and Great Ouseburn. Sorry no photo - no-one would stand still for long enough! Liz P.

## Long Ride

With Sunday's ride neatly filling the short gap between Storms Gertrude and Henry, I'd carefully crafted a route that would never be more than 90 minutes from home, and had plenty of cut-off points where we could beat a hast retreat back to Harrogate if necessary. I left home on a very cold, damp morning, having said to Mrs W that with any luck, if no other long riders turned up, I'd be back home in 15 minutes to continue decorating, No chance - 10 others turned up, making it the biggest turn out for a long ride in 2016. However I shouldn't then be surprised, if - having advertised the ride as having many cut-off points - one by one all the other members of the ride took it in turns to use each of the cut-off points I'd thought of, plus some that I hadn't. So by the time I was back in Harrogate, it was a Billy-no-mates ride. Yes, I lost all ten riders - or to be more accurate - they had all left me! Could this be an infamous Wheel Easy record?

So here's an account as to how far each of the other 10 got. First to fall by the wayside was Ian, who broke a spoke and cut-off for home at Harewood Bridge. Second: Glyn, who'd brought a note from his mum saying he wasn't very well. No, in truth, this was Glyn's first long ride for 6 months after a very serious Achilles tendon injury and operation, so it was great to see Glyn back with us again. Having cycled from Leeds to Hornbeam to start the ride, when we approached Bramhope, Glyn cut-off for home, by which time he would have completed 35 miles. Well done indeed, Glyn!

Otley Chevin was very cold and very wet, so at Menston we modified the route to take us to Cock Pit Farm for refreshments and reassessment of our options. The third person to leave the ride was Peter Jackson who cut-off for home via Askwith Bank and Fewston. The remainder continued via Beamsley to Bolton Bridge and up the traffic-free A59 to Kex Gill and the descent to Blubberhouses. As we turned left to climb Hardisty Hill, Richard cut-off for home along the A59. 4 down, 6 to go! Phil S and Mark cut-off before Birstwith taking the the short cut through Hampsthwaite: 6 down 4 to go! We climbed Clint Bank from the Birstwith side, and at the top Phil (No 2) continued towards Shaw Mills and to home in Boroughbridge. It was also good to see Phil (No 2) back in the saddle again after a long absence due to illness. Phil would have completed 80 miles by the time he got home. Well done to Phil (2) too! 7 down, 3 to go. The three accompanied me through Hollybank Woods to Ripley and onto the the Nidderdale Greenway. When we got Bilton Lane, Andy, Geoff and Dave W all left me for the warmth of the Gardners' Arms, leaving me to return to Harrogate alone! All 10 gone!

I arrived home at 3.30pm after 59 cold, wet and hilly miles: 6 hours late for decorating. Could have stayed at home and avoided the embarrassment!

No photos today as my camera was kept warm and dry in my saddle bag, and there was nobody left to photograph. Eric