

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

Spring had sprung, or so it seemed. Back to the normal sort of Wednesday Poddle. After a swift discussion with the two new riders who felt they would like a gentle amble, rather than a stage of the Tour of Yorkshire, it was agreed that Fountains, the Deer Park, Ripon and home via Knaresborough Hill would be just what we needed. So five Poddlers glided (glowed) (glid) along a glorious spring green Greenway to Ripley, meeting a very spritely looking Yvonne cantering elegantly home from a quick morning run, attacked the hill formerly known as Scarah Bank, now seemingly known as Fountains Road or Lane, which is just a slog, and worked our way gently up to the turn off to Fountains Visitors Centre. At this point the near spring sunshine turned to winter drizzle and Fountains Visitors Centre seemed and was an early but good option for a coffee/tea and some other delights. Kate received a phone call from her place of work and we thought we would have to rush her back to Birstwith, but no, she could continue. As we left Fountains looking forward to the stupendous ride through the Deer Park drizzle turned to full blown splodgy rain. Despite this it was still stunning, but no evidence of any deer, only a National trust van that kindly waited for us to pass, right in the middle of our path, causing Jen near cobble catastrophe on our decent. A smooth passage round the edge of Ripon and back to Knaresborough and its super (it's all in the mind) hill back to Harrogate, all carried out with a lightening mood of summer, never mind spring being quite close. Thank you the four other Poddlers' for lively company and very interesting conversation ranging from a trip to New York, a jazz festival in Perugia, plumbing, electric bikes, the Paris Roubaix and candidates for this year's Tour de France winner. Bets to be placed on Quintana... (Oh no), Geraint Thomas (Oh yes), Thibault Pinot (Oh yeeesss.... his uncle gave the Appleyard's extra bread and croissants), Chris Froome (Yes but no but) and of course Peter Sagan (definitely) but was this looks or cycling ability...probably the former and with no chances except a stage win or two Cancellara and Cavendish should be featured here. Hey Ho. All good fun. 21,650 paces, 145 floors, 2,500 calories used up and probably the same consumed, in the fantasy world of Fitbits. 31 spring like miles in the real world. CG



Wednesday Wanderers' Ride

It's me again, would anyone turn up knowing its Liz F leading and hills!! My praying worked as there was no howling gales and torrential rain which usually accompanies my rides over hill and dale. 14 cyclists up for the Wanderers ride and after much muttering about hills and did I know where I was going, (I did not have a clue except towards Timble as I had to do it backwards way round, not literally, to get to Timble in time for the refreshments). I think it was the lure of £3 refreshments and as much coffee, tea and cake you could eat that they forgot about hills! Andrew was pushed in front as he knew where we had to go to get to Timble and we set off from Hornbeam, Gia's group raced past us as we cycled on towards the Squinting Cat, on to Beckwithshaw, past Almscliff crag. Then down the lane and at the bottom, some turned right and some turned left which threw

me in a quandary, as I gathered them all together the consensus was that we headed right. Gordon, Dennis, Steve and two others had to get back and left us, now we were nine. Down we cycled and back up the hill over Swinsty reservoir to the car park, then down the track and soon we reached Timble. The village hall was full of people and the kind lady brought an extra table as we caused chaos as we filed in much to the crowd's amusement. After a discussion and a look at the map, I offered the group three routes home and with not much dissension, to my amazement they all agreed to my original hilly return route. Was this a good idea after several cups of tea and coffee, plus cakes and scones!! Off we cycled and the hills hit us, the views were glorious as we puffed and panted our way up the hills, then crossed the A59 where Mike left us and we were now eight. The meandering road, uphill again past Thurscross reservoir reaching the road. Liz P said we could go left, but oh no Liz F was going straight across and turned right down the lovely road past Thornthwaite towards Darley. David had a malfunction on his computer as he recorded his speed at 199 mph, Glynn thought he heard a puncture blowout not realising it was David going through the sound barrier. There were a few mutterings of 'could I not find any more hills', for a moment I thought about going up Stumps Lane to Kettlesing, to enhance my hilly reputation. Instead down into Birstwith, then lo and behold we just had Clint Bank to ascend, I really did spoil them today. As we headed through Hollybank Woods, the bluebells were trying to make an appearance and the wood anemones dazzled white, as it began to drizzle. At Ripley the church refreshments were open but all declined a second helping and we headed down the Greenway for home. I left my group at Bilton Cross, mainly dry, and headed home after a brilliant ride which everyone enjoyed. 2500 feet of climbing or was it 25000 feet depending on David's dodgy computer and 32 miles of hills and more hills. Liz F.



Wednesday Ride

Where did it all go wrong? I mentioned I fancied going to Toft Gate Barn Cafe and before I knew it I was leading a ride. The majority of the group of thirteen had time constraints and wanted to be back in Harrogate by 2pm therefore were going to leave the ride at various points. Just outside Thornthwaite we were down to eight, it started to rain and Gia rang ahead only to discover the cafe was closed for a few weeks. I thought ' Things can only get better' and they did. We had a great 38 mile ride along the lanes of Darley, Low Green, Birstwith, Clint, Hampsthwaite, Kettlesing, Norwood and Beckwithshaw. In addition a great stop at Sophie's and back in Harrogate by 2pm. Paul





Wednesday Long Ride

Today the long ride group showed its caring side by switching from Masham to Easingwold and allowing the writer to follow doctor's orders – nothing strenuous, to prevent undoing a recent eye op. Gentle or not, the ride clocked up over 50 miles, which outstripped the sub-50 distances of the previous two weeks. The outward route held few surprises but, in homage to the EGs, we held a downhill freewheel contest at Occaney. The winner was John S, with the lightest bike and quickest wheels. Past Boroughbridge, after the customary toilet stop, the light rain-cum-drizzle that was to plague us for the rest of the ride began. The progress at Thornton Bridge has advanced as far as a new road surface and it looks as though the bridge will re-open within a week or so. Several drivers thought it should be open already, having seen us coming away from it. Approaching the turn for Coxwold, it seemed as though our goal was Ampleforth rather than Easingwold, but careful observation by the back markers spotted a yellow blur heading for Husthwaite village and a long loop south to Easingwold. It was a busy Curious Table that served seven damp cyclists with great efficiency, while discussion of the EU referendum continued. The persistence of the light rain pointed to a direct route back via Aldwark

Bridge. A breakaway of 3 riders (Richards L and P, plus John) looped through Aldwark village and succeeded in surprising the other 4 (Lesley and Richard S, Martin and me) by arriving at the Marton turn ahead of them. They crossed the toll bridge after the 4, so the mystery remains. A lone EG (possibly Norman) was seen at his ease, seated outside Gt Ouseburn village shop, and greeted warmly. Ironically, by the time we approached Knaresborough, the rain had resolved to stop, leaving us with a few miles to dry off. April showers or not, it was an enjoyable gentle 50-plus ride – just what the doctor ordered! Terry Smith

EGs' Ride

We had thirteen riders on Wednesday the thirteenth was this unlucky?

Well the forecast said rain at nine, (it did not) ah hope, rain at two, and rain at five (and it had since eleven). No matter first stop at the men`s downhill to Occaney, as usual Dave (wonder-wheels) Siswick looked favourite but was inched out by Bob.

The ride intention was (first stop) Thirsk, part of a long flat, slow-ish paced ride to build up miles in the saddle and hence endurance for when the long hot days of summer arrive? Ha Ha when?

At Dalton, Bob declined the Fleshpots of Thirsk to return home, putting in a good ride of 58 miles (well he had been though his favourite place Cundall).

The cafe in Thirsk was warm and steamy from the bodies of the highly tuned athletes that typifies the EG`s, whilst the beans on toast was given a severe battering, in fact was there a baked bean left in Thirsk?.

Colin and Dave Peatfield took an early fast depart. Nine riders headed back to Dalton where Peter J left us to return home, but confided in us that although prepared to walk in the mountains in rain, cycling in rain was not a favourite pastime.

The elite eight then continued to Sessay and Brafferton, at which Dave S, Dave W, Nick and Terry W hung a right to head for Aldwark and home creating a ride of well in to the sixties.

Dave P, Eric, Marvin and Peter B said farewell to our stalwart and wet companions and swung left to Raskelf and the delights of the Purple Partridge, a first for Marvin who availed himself of a fantastic bacon bun. The other three hit the calories, which included a Victoria Sponge stuffed with cream and jam. Then it was a return home via Tholthorpe and Aldwark Bridge.

In Harrogate the roads were somewhat dry, drat, drat and double drat.

The Harlow Hillbillies managed to squeeze out 70 miles.

This was a long wet ride, however compared with last Wednesdays long wet ride (with wind ?) it was easier, in fact one EG could even talk at the finish this time.

Perhaps we should take bets on which day summer will be in Yorkshire? Dave P

