

Sunday, April 24, 2016

Wheel Easy Ride Report 520

Short Ride

It was bright and cold for 14 of us to enjoy a Short Ride and to take in the sight of Bluebells in Hollybank Woods along the lane from Ripley. The Greenway lived up to its reputation as the coldest way to start a ride and by the time we reached the Bluebells there were some cold hands and noses. So after caving in to a multitude of threats your Leader was dragged kicking and screaming into Sophie's. Oh but that hot coffee was welcome! At this point several riders needed a quick return and headed homeward, leaving 5 of us to explore the lovely network of lanes around Swincliffe, Birstwith Hall and Clapham Green. Then we swooped down to Birstwith Village and climbed back up to Clint Bank. With the day warming up we made our way back through the Woods for a second look at the Bluebells and a return home along the Greenway having covered around 23 miles for the group doing the extra Birstwith loop. Martin W



Medium Ride

Today's planned medium ride was quite a hilly one, but 16 members were raring to go this morning. We had a minor delay initially while Steve dealt with his tyre that had exploded with a loud bang. Chris set off with a slightly faster group, followed by the rest of us a few minutes later. However, just near the Squinting Cat, we came across several cyclists walking by the side of the road - another mechanical! This time, Sally's chain had just fallen off her newly serviced bike. They were looking for the missing link. Fortunately, Joe then appeared and produced a magic link from his kit. The men clustered round and soon had it all sorted. As usual, there was plenty of help or as Sally was heard to say, 'Thanks for men!' After this, the ride went smoothly. We were soon at Fewston Car Park, then climbed up to Timble. Then it was time for the 'big one'. We carefully negotiated the A59 at Blubberhouses and then crawled and puffed up Hardisty Hill. After that it was plain sailing along the Menwith ridge and down into Hampsthwaite where we enjoyed a break at Sophie's before returning to Harrogate. Despite the cold wind, a lovely ride, with the usual Wheeleasy joviality and support. Thanks to everyone for making it a most enjoyable ride. Alison N



Medium Plus Ride (1)

Today's ride attracted nearly 30 riders and this despite the last minute change to the ride route and some vagueness of a plan after the cafe stop at Cockpit Farm.

Julie, back from her winter riding break, Mark T, welcome back to Wheel Easy, Peter L in rehab and several faster riders set off ahead of us towards Weardley Bank.

James G and Justin shepherded another group while I mingled with the rest. As often happens we were flexible with our group, the faster group had a puncture so ended up behind, but soon passed us and by the end of the day I was leading James' group and my group self-led themselves back home (I hope!)

This ride was one of several rides with spectacular views over various Yorkshire landscapes which we all enjoyed despite the winter like chill that prevailed. We were thankful that there was sufficient room at Cockpit Farm to accommodate so many of us in the warmth of the cafe inside. After very generous portions of baked beans and scrambled eggs we were fuelled to climb up out of Askwith and meet up again at the loos at Fewston. Here half the group went back to Harrogate via Swinsty and Beckwithshaw and the rest of us took the

short and nasty hill out of Fewston to the listening station. Here we enjoyed another ridge, avoided some downpours that had preceded our arrival and sailed down past the school and the church to Birstwith. Up towards Clint and home along the Greenway, 45 miles. An excellent ride, loads of hills not huge miles, 37 miles and 45 miles, but excellent training for the Acorn ride. Well done to everyone and as always great Wheel Easy company. Gia





Medium Plus Ride (2)

Nine riders set off at a slightly faster pace which was fairly uneventful until we made a wrong turn on the way to Bramhope. Realising our error we turned back and Alan got his first puncture which took 15 minutes to repair, followed by a second mechanical at which point we lost him along with Paul. Back on the designated route we caught up with the slower group in Bramhope and continued into a cold head-wind, along the Chevin, before an exhilarating descent into Otley where Paul and Alan re-joined the group. Cockpit farm proved a welcome pit stop for all except Mark who needed to get back to Harrogate.

From the lunch break we set off into the wind, warmed up on the climb out of Askwith and enjoyed the long descent to Fewston. After crossing the dam we turned sharp left (very steep hill), left at the next crossroads and left onto the A59. After a few 100 m we turned right, then right again along a single track road, keeping height and heading in a easterly direction all the way to Hampsthwaite. Paul and Mark T managed to drop into Birstwith and inadvertently did an extra (14%) climb to where the rest of us were sat waiting, admiring the views. (Photo taken at the top when they eventually joined us.) From Hampsthwaite we returned via Killinghall and Knox Mill.

44 miles, 3350' ascent. Julie E.



Long Ride

Jill was our ride leader for today and ten riders set off in chilly but sunny conditions heading for Ampleforth. Our route took us along the riverside at Knaresborough, on to Boroughbridge, Thornton Bridge, Sessay, Carlton Husthwaite, Kilburn (avoiding the ride up the bank to the White Horse to great sighs of relief) and on the picturesque back route to Byland Abbey and then to our cafe stop at Ampleforth College. Fully refreshed (even after the omission of the cyclists' staple of beans on toast from the menu), the group set off in cooler and greyer conditions on our return route through Yearsley, Easingwold, Arkendale and Farnham with the sun shining on us again by the time we reached Knaresborough hill. Another lovely ride in good company and at the advertised 'steady pace' (67 miles at 13.9mph)- Glyn.

