

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

Well that was not quite what I thought I'd planned, so before I start an apology is necessary. SORRY DESPITE THE SLOW NATURE OF THE RIDE, IT WAS NOT REALLY A PODDLE.....IT WAS A MARATHON TREK (which seemed to include a few Himalayan summits). However looking back it seems to have been quite a jolly jaunt....almost a trip via Carlisle to Newcastle, Risplith and Ripley.

We were honoured with the presence of the thinking woman's Jeremy Paxman.....Paul Blackham, who expected a restful morning's, gentle Poddle. What he and the rest of us got was a strange northwesterly wind, which seemed to be in our faces up every one of the six major ascents we tackled before we finally headed down the rewarding, the exciting , the best zoom home around. The route up Scarah Bank to Watergate Lane, up some other long hill and a diversion down a misplaced rural motorway to Sawley and the spotty cafe at Risplith where we all had coffee. Then up an extremely long Vuelta type climb towards Brimham Rocks into a Force 8 gale in an attempt to get home the least painful way and finally the gorgeous down, with the wind behind us.

We all arrived home safely in time to greet returning offspring, an afternoon of recovery, a sausage sandwich demolition and a writing of a ride report. A blustery but superb spring day and about 32 miles, 16,047 paces and 102 floors and very joyful company. Thank you for your patience. Caroline G

Wanderers' Ride

As usual with my cycle rides most people know it is going to be hilly and usually stormy, today proved no exception apart from the glorious sunny weather. At Hornbeam the first part of my planned ride was to Fewston Farm shop for a bacon buttie and then to decide where we would meander next. I set off at a fairly brisk pace thinking only five or six people were joining me. Reaching the Stray traffic lights, I waited to gather the group together, I started counting, got to ten and looked behind and another six were with me. Blimey sixteen cyclists I thought my goodness did they realise it was me leading! There were several Daves' Mikes and Steves, Peter, two Liz's, Maris, Jo, Al and Dennis. Now having just been on holiday my thoughts were still in the mountainous hills of La Gomera and a few Yorkshire hills blurred in to that train of thought as the sun started to shine.

The group soon cycled down the Greenway on to Ripley stopping to gather together, when Caroline and the Poddlers swished past at a fair rate of knots, they were on a mission for refreshments at the top of the hill and never to be seen again. My group cycled on through Hollybank Wood with spring in the air and then down to Hampswaite, where someone shouted right as we were all heading straight on. After a little confusion it was straight on to Kettlesing, past Birstwith Hall, a few little hills to warm us up, reaching the A59. Carefully crossing the A59 the group cycled up to Pennypot Lane and down to Fewston Farm Shop. Five headed home and eleven poured into the café.

After delicious bacon butties, pork pies, scones and cakes, five decided to do a shorter route home. Liz with Maris, Peter, Liz P, Mike W, Mike the Vet decided on a meander as the day was proving to be sunny and warm. Mike W had a new bike and he needed a few hills to test it out and we would try and see how much dirt we could get on his brand spanking new bike, not that we were jealous. On reaching Fewston Reservoir the road was closed, but the road mending man, said we could cross, and met another man in high vis who said he was about to open it again. Mike decided we needed to formally open it by riding all in a line across the road which we did. Up to Timble we cycled then down to the A59 where we crossed to go up Hardisty Hill a few mutterings of 'Liz will find more hills'.

At the Smoke house a full box of tonic cans had been scattered on the road, no gin was found to go with them so we kicked them into the verge side to make the road safe. Mike said if they had been beer cans that would have been a different matter. Turning towards Darley, the plan was to go via Birstwith home, but at the toll bridge Liz asked if they wanted to extend the ride by going up to Brimham Rocks and down the lovely swooping road back

to Ripley. As the day was warm and sunny we cycled up Stripes Lane then onto Brimham, down to Ripley. Peter left for Burton Leonard and the five of us cycled back along the Greenway to Bilton, Mike W noticed the moon had appeared and said at least we have got back before night time? Liz F left at Bilton and four returned to Harrogate. 30 miles for first group, 35 miles for second group and 45 miles with 3129 feet of ascent for the meanderers. Liz F



Wednesday Ride

The planned ride to Easingwold was a perfect route with the promise of a fine day and a following wind. After meeting and greeting up with the EG's at Low Bridge we headed off to Arkendale via Goldsborough and then on to Easingwold. Here are first choice for lunch was Curious Table but it was full, Tee Hee was closed, someone suggested the department store but we ended up at Clark's Bakery which sadly today was a disappointment. Except for Malcolm who arrived last, having had a mechanical stop in Knaresborough, but was served the quickest with a delicious omelette and chips. The rest of us "suffered" with minute

scones and drinks were served long after we had finished eating. We do recognise that these are "first world problems" but as cafes are one of our highlights we have become rather choosy.

Sarah and Colin went to Coxwold, Sarah R was collected by Phil, hope you are better soon, John H cycled back to Wetherby and the rest of us went back to Boroughbridge via Raskelf. Here the unthinkable happened, Stewart led the charge for a second cafe stop and we did not need much persuasion to pile in to Bean Vintage where we were welcomed warmly and served efficiently. What a great cafe. Homewards was more testing with the wind but riding together eased the effort and with the sun shining we all enjoyed one of our longer rides of the year so far. 48 miles Gia M



From luncheon stop to Coxwold, Byland Abbey, Kilburn and into headwind, rejoining main route. God Bless Morrisons in Boroughbridge. Sarah C



Long Ride

Six riders set out on the long ride today. Wharfedale being the target route with Bolton Bridge the intended cafe stop. The idea being to take the pain from the strong westerly wind for the morning part of the ride and then cruise home wind assisted in the afternoon.

The westerly wind made its presence felt as we left Beckwithshaw and dropping down to Fewston was quite calm. Our plan however went wrong due to the closure of the road across the dam. A first for the Long Riders who have previously always been able to negotiate safe passage. We diverted to west end and a new plan emerged to do the ride anti clockwise. Duck street was particularly tough and two riders opted to re-route to Pately. The remaining four had to pedal hard into the wind to get down to Stump Cross. Eighteen miles, two hours and everyone was beginning to tire.

After the stop the wind strength reduced as we dropped into Wharfedale. By the time we reached Cavendish Pavillion the sun was out, we had started to pick up a tail wind and riders started smiling. The conditions had taken its toll and we were running on low tanks.

We started our sail onto Ilkley and then the return to Harrogate via Otley and Leathley at a steady pace.

We did 53 miles and 1650 metres of climbing. Great company, pretty good weather, beautiful countryside and a wish for less wind on our next ride. Martin D



EGs' Ride

Despite the average age being around the seventy region they say the E.G's are "Up" for anything so "Up" we went (yet again) notwithstanding the rigours of last weeks ride!!

Leaving Dave P. and a couple of others to go their own way we left Morrison's at Wetherby, our first stop, to head for Otley, via the hilly route. (And Some!!)

The bridge at Linton still being closed, we were compelled to risk the main road to Collingham before we could gather on the more quiet country roads. Nine of us quickly reached East Keswick before engaging our lowest gears ("granny gear, front or back!) to crawl up the long climb towards the Scarcroft area & onwards, into the brisk westerly wind, to Wike.

Reassembling near the Dexter pub we pressed on via Alwoodley golf course for Eccup reservoir.

It soon became apparent, later, that the ride had become a tour of Leeds' district golf courses as we passed at least three others on our travels and we'd all on restraining Ian from dropping off for a quick "round".

A slight pause at Eccup and off we were again through Adel and Cookridge via Holt Lane, (Bob's neck of the woods), by now looking forward to lunch at the next stop in Otley.

Progress was now a little easier as we approached the top of Chevin somewhat with a little trepidation having mind it's reputation amongst the cycling fraternity.

From bright sunshine we seemed to disappear into the shadows of the tree lined avenue as we approached, creating disquiet as to what lay ahead. Both the deep shadows and the uneven nature of the surface called for prudence from us mere mortals but Colin threw caution to wind and, leaving his braking to the very bottom, achieved an inordinate speed of 41mph. Perhaps it's the sailing spirit in him?

For lunch we visited the recently reopened "Milk Bar" in Otley where we were able to store our bikes to the rear. Regrettably the service was dire, so slow it took at least half an hour to receive our fare and thus we were not able to depart until 2.55pm, one hour after arrival. However the food was acceptable, baked beans, omelettes and Dans usual double dinner, and not over priced, so perhaps they just need to get used to large numbers of cyclists descending on them with urgent demands.

Our return journey followed the usual route through Castley and onwards through Kirkby Overblow. By now some of us were flagging and needed to take our time up the remaining hills but reaching Wetherby Rd. via Rudding lane we split up from Dan and Dave Wilson, saying our farewells and thereafter completing the ride back at our starting point, Low Bridge, seemingly with some relief.

Confirming our approximate mileage of 50 miles completed, someone was heard to utter the words "are you sure there wasn't a one in front, it certainly felt like it!!! Anyone heard of York?"

Tired legs felt by most surviving riders but each acknowledged a good ride enjoyed, for a change, in sunny condition, was enjoyed by all! Another magical day!! Dave W

