

Sunday, May 21, 2017

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 575

---

### Medium Ride - Slow

After a very brief conference at Hornbeam Monica Scott and I decided to take the plunge and offer to lead a Medium Slow Ride to Wetherby and beyond. We were joined by 7 fellow enthusiasts for length rather than speed. It was good to see Michelle and her pal, Mel – both in training for “challenges” taking place in June. We managed a respectable pace via Burnbridge and across the A61 where we were overtaken by Cappuccinos who were powering along but with whom we all exchanged pleasantries and good wishes. Thence to Wetherby via Sicklinghall and on to Boston Spa, Clifford and back to Wetherby. Dennis left us to continue home via the Spofforth Cycle way and offered to conduct anyone preferring a shorter option to follow him. However, despite earlier misgivings re their competence, Pat and Jill were determined to keep going and Dennis, hopefully, reached Dorothy's Sunday lunch. Coffee was taken in Wetherby at the cafe in The Shambles (aka Toilet Row owing to the line of very posh looking facilities). John and Judith found an internal table while a table of six sat outside and were served by an absolutely delightful Irish girl who responded to Jill's request for chutney with her cheese on toast by producing a small pot! The drinks arrived considerably earlier than the food order and John and Judith left to return home as their comestibles had been consumed. Chutney cannot be rushed and we enjoyed an hour of girlish glee. Thus fortified, we returned to Hornbeam across the Showground and met Malcolm in the carpark!

PLEASE NOTE especially the Wheel Easy husbands of Jill and Pat whose wives easily achieved a first – 30 miles!! Actually it was 30.23. Thank you all for your very jolly company and thank you, Monica, for being an exemplary leader – she even reminded us of the rule re pulling back into line. Oh, and Michelle, the next coffee is on me!! Sue D



### Medium Ride

Eleven riders set off for Fountains Abbey including four relatively new riders to Wheel Easy which is always good to see. I hope they enjoyed themselves.

We made fairly rapid progress through Bishop Monkton and Littlethorpe to Ripon. Then we started the climb to Fountains Abbey where we stopped for coffee and cake. They seem to

be streamlining their free tea/coffee voucher system for cyclists but today they had a new till system which delayed things a bit.

Then it was off up the hills back to Harrogate. Nobody wanted to try the loop through Shaw Mills to Hampsthwaite so we all continued down the hill to Ripley, the Greenway and home. 31 miles in good company. Al D

### **Medium Plus Ride**

Announcements having been made and Medium Plus groups divided up, I had 11 takers for my group. Picking up Marish at Rossett made our number a neat dozen. The day was pleasant and we set off at a steady pace to Beckwithshaw, Menwith, Duck Street, Stumps Cross and Grassington. Cobblestones Cafe was a welcome sight, as most of us were feeling very much on the peckish side by this stage. We all managed to squeeze onto the benches in the pleasant courtyard and enjoyed an excellent lunch with friendly and efficient service. Debby's beans on toast were a rather posh version, not only with parsley sprinkled over, but she was also given a choice of English or French mustard! Dave Siswick will definitely have to pay a visit! Talking of posh, I came in for a bit of stick from Bianchi Bob for my southern pronunciation of Grassington – to be acceptable up north the "ass" sound should be pronounced as in donkey! The ride onwards from Grassington was, as always, delightful following the Wharfe valley through Burnsall, Appletreewick and Bolton Abbey. From there we made our way to Ilkley where we said goodbye to Alison, who was meeting some friends. She decided to treat herself to an ice cream there, while the rest of us pressed onto Cockpit Farm to indulge in some rather nice homemade cakes and tea. Suitably refuelled, we made our way home through Otley, Leathley and North Rigton. Everyone agreed that it had been a great day out especially for Liz and Steve W for whom Grassington was a new riding experience. About 64 miles. Monica





### **Medium Plus - Alternative Ride**

James, Sue, Janet, Dave, Paul, Kevin and Jeanie joined me for a shorter ride taking in Duck Street, Greenhow and the excellent cafe at Toft Gate Farm. James despite mechanicals, malaises and encouragements to return home made it round and we are glad that he did. He did however describe the Wheel Easy method of leading as benign dictatorship and we had a meaningful discussion about the merits and standards of various college institutions. The ride up Duck Street was tempered by a following wind, and we saw Two Dave's, Dave Webber returning home we think with a mechanical and Dave Preston recovered from a virus and out for a spin to Stumps Cross!

Toft Gate Farm is a treat for anyone who hasn't been there, we did suggest that opening on a Wednesday would be very appealing for all the walking and cycling groups. The horses in the adjacent field to where our bikes were parked were starting to improve their diet, managed to turn on James' bike lights and were after the water bottles. The views over towards Pateley are fabulous from the cafe and the food and coffee is good too.

We cycled back to Duck Street where Sue, Paul, James, Jeanie and Dave carried on towards Menwith Hill while Janet, Kevin and Gia took a left up Braithwaite Lane towards Heyshaw, Dacre, Darley Birstwith and the Greenway. We were briefly amongst some of those riding the Struggle and were glad when our paths diverted. It was a beautiful and mainly downhill route home and an excellent day's ride. 3500 feet of climbing and about 44 miles. Well done to Sue out on her big bike again after her second hip op less than 3 months ago. Gia





### **Medium Plus – Fast Ride**

Six of us set off from Hornbeam Park energy levels high plus it was warm enough for shorts and summer legs...hurray!! for the ride to Grassington. Leaving town quickly we reached pothole alley better known as Penny Pot Ln actually the 1st bit as you come off the roundabout is called Rough Rd, quite an apt description for it all. Crossing over a rather quiet Skipton road we passed Menwith and out onto Duck Street, great when there is a bit of wind behind you. We lost a member of our little squad when wing commander Dave decided to call it a day at Greenhow and return home citing a hard hilly ride on Thursday. We entered the National Park just before Stump Cross and the views were really excellent today and we swept down hill and onto Dibble Bridge with its sharp bend as you reach it, sight of Britain's worst coach crash at this time in 1975. Entering Grassington for a pit stop at Cobblestones Cafe revived by top coffee and tasty tucker...any place that serves large flat whites gets my vote and free with a breakfast item too.

On reaching Burnsall one of the group had a slight directional issue...err me actually, and missed out the Appletreewick bit and decided to go on the road via Barden obviously though the views were better on the other side of the valley we finally met up again at the Cockpit Farm cafe for a second stop as tired legs seemed to be the theme apart from Paul it seemed as after the pot of tea he was passed by a Pinarello Dogma on Farnley Bank so he gave chase and we all met up again at the bottom of the hill at the Bridge.

By the time we reached Kirkby Overblow there were four tired riders left as Dave wanted to meet up with someone doing Le Struggle sportive, it felt a bit like that today but we all reached Harrogate and home all riders happy if a bit knackered. Tony P

### **Long Ride**

Nine riders set off through familiar territory to a first stop in Thirsk, before venturing onto some much less familiar roads up to Knayton, Borrowby and Kirby Sigston. Then across the A19 to Thimbleby and Osmotherly, before turning south into the wind and over the lumps to Hawnby.

Phil and Peter pressed on rather than face Murton Bank with stiffened up knees, while the rest enjoyed an entertaining discussion of the optimum managerial approach to dealing with employees with 'odour issues' while waiting for lunch. Then it was up the last lump of Murton Bank and back home via White Horse Bank, Coxwold, Easingwold and Aldwark Bridge.

A challenging ride of 88 miles, no rain and some scenic new roads (although the ride leader once again failed in his ambition to find a road previously unknown to Richard P). RL



