

Sunday, April 1, 2018

Wheel Easy Ride Report 617

Short Ride

Fifteen heathens gathered for the short ride on this dull but dry Easter Sunday. Dennis volunteered to lead a second group with CG as back marker.

We set off with Sue T as our back marker (ta), to find that it was a red letter day for WE. We had a new member who's name wasn't Dave! Not only wasn't it Dave but it was Marwood. You don't get many of those to the pound (or, for the sake of political balance, kilo).

Additionally, Justin had two of his daughters with him but, alas, this was as good as it got for him. A severe and peculiar mechanical mash up left an unridable and unpushable bike, necessitating a rescue by Mrs Justin.

We wriggled through northern Harrogate to Killinghall and Ripley, thence to Burton Leonard through the not-too-bad Mountgarret estate. Then on to the site of Justin's misfortune at Occaney. As we abandoned him he had the presence of mind to leave a small pecuniary legacy for the Waterside caff stop for his daughters.

By the time we got back we had done two miles more than the promised 20 but, hey, we're athletes. And Justin had a successful rescue.

Never saw Dennis's lot again, though. Maybe there're still out there. Paul B



Extra Extra Long Ride

I knew Liz F had taken a wrong turning out of the farm shop - but she wasn't listening. Well, after a couple of months of furious pedalling I finally caught up - in Sydney ! I thought a gentle paddle on one of the prettier beaches might calm her down, but no - our Liz set about swimming up and down the shark net to frighten them away. It worked. Then I had to cycle down and up a steep hill in 30 degree heat to retrieve her necklace from the rocks where she had so carefully stored it, and navigate her and Peter along snake infested bush tracks to catch the ferry home. She did promise to take the next day more gently, just climbing the harbour bridge, so with a bit of luck we should see her again in a month or two ! Just call her Digger.



Medium Plus Medium aka Long Minus Ride

When is a ride not a ride? When no-one volunteers to lead it? When no-one lines up to ride it? There was no official Long Ride on Easter Sunday, the vacancy on the ride calendar mutely unfilled, yet a ride still took place. Here's the tale of the Long Minus Easter Fools Day ride.

The Medium Plus ride swelled so much in numbers with defections from other rides that a de facto third group appeared, comprising Dave S, Rob M, Helen, Janet, Glyn and myself - we headed out via Little Almscliffe and Timble at an agreeable pace fitting to the weather (it didn't rise above three degrees all day), with a growing breakaway tackling Low Snowden before dropping down to Askwith and heading for Ilkley. The lads got the scent of Arabica in their nostrils and we struggled to keep up with the tearing pace along the Wharfe, but despite the Medium Plus Fast being the first of four groups of cyclists arriving at La Stazione they not only coped but served an object lesson in committed and efficient service. Most impressive.

It hadn't warmed up, and there were more hills to come... Dave, Glyn (who'd cycled over from Leeds already), Helen and Janet headed back via the Cow and Calf (and, I believe, Kirkby Overblow), the hills of Little Almscliffe, Timble, Askwith and Cow&Calf being enough for one day. Rob and I fancied more challenge however, and hatched a plan to continue - Rob had thought of heading for Langbar and Barden Tower, but liked the idea of heading for Silsden and The Chevin on roads he didn't know, and I'd only visited once, courtesy of a 2016 Peter Jackson ride. We set off west on the A65 for a mile - the only busy road we'd encounter all day - and headed over the shoulder of Rombaldsmoor discussing vintage Mavic hubs before dropping down to Silsden where the climbing proper began - 120m to 250m in a mile, though with great views of the Airedale conurbations of Steeton, Keighley, Bingley and Bradford with Oxenhope Moor in the distance. A twisty downhill to East Morton followed with another equally-testing climb up to The Dick Hudson pub on Bingley Moor, where we stopped for a bite before the rat-run of Bingley Road and down to Menston. One last climb up onto the Chevin followed, where our ways parted at Pool Bank, Rob heading back to Bramhope and I returning via Leathley and yet more hills! Strava reckons on 5000ft of climbing; my altimeter reckoned 6280.

Gluttons for punishment? One of the stand-out benefits of being part of WheelEasy is the wealth of route knowledge that can be shared - but any group of cyclists will get to know their local area very well, and rides can too-often become formulaic with familiar routes being retraced time and again. Any chance to vary the script, to explore roads rarely-visited, or extend one's range, is solid gold for an adventurous cyclist, and I remain indebted to Peter Jackson for sharing this particular gem of a ride with hills the equal of Yorke's Folly or

Norwood Edge within a twenty-mile radius of Harrogate. A weapons-grade Wharfe-Aire adventure, and a fitting test for the First of April. Daniel Hutton Ed. He never mentioned that he had two breakfasts!!!



Medium Plus Faster Ride

Leading the Medium Plus Faster group is not usually an onerous task. It is often enough to just turn up, do one's best to keep up, take a photo and write the report. Any idea of leading from the front is quickly dispelled as the sportivos stamp their authority on the proceedings. So it was today on the familiar route to Ilkley via Little Almscliffe and back via Great Almscliffe.

Nine of us were quickly off the mark at Hornbeam due to the cold. Unusually, a peloton formed on Norwood Lane and we progressed effortlessly up that normally gruelling slope. Then it was every man for himself onwards to Ilkley, with the hills opening up some bigish gaps. We arrived early enough to find plenty of room at La Stazione, where the service was refreshingly quick, as was the banter from the waiters, and in no time we were back out in the cold and heading home. The group began to splinter after Otley, with two choosing the challenge of Norwood edge and various alternative routes being taken through Stainburn. Five of us returned to central Harrogate after a hard but enjoyable and largely dry ride.
David W



Medium Plus Gentler Ride

A good turnout for the Medium Plus ride to Ilkley on Easter Sunday. After the faster boys left Hornbeam, Dave Siswick buddied up with a few takers, another regular group of riders including Sue Couture and Kevin was quickly formed and my group of 6. We set off with a reasonable time gap between us all on the usual route to Little Almscliffe, Fewston and Timble. Peter suggested to go to Asquith by Low Snowden – the road surface was good, lovely views on a quiet road and the steep climb up to the crossroads was achieved without too much pain. Debby joined us at the bottom of Asquith hill - her group were going to Cockpit Farm and she wanted to play out a bit longer. We were lucky to find seating for all at the Stazione cafe in Ilkley with the usual excellent service and refreshments. It felt rather chilly again when we left the cosy cafe but we soon warmed up on the climb back up to Asquith and onward to Farnley. The hills seemed never ending as we followed the route from Leathley to North Rigton and we all appreciated the welcome descent down Brackenthwaite Lane. Not long now before we were on Green Lane and saying our farewells. All agreed that it had been a hard ride but worth it! Thanks to all for a good day out.
About 41 miles Monica W



Medium Ride Report.

Easter morning, cloudy, chilly but no rain; 12 riders set off from Hornbeam down to Low bridge to re-group where 3 more riders then joined the group. On towards Farnham, Boroughbridge Road had very little traffic, then on to Burton Leonard and Bishop Monkton. Towards Roecliffe dark clouds seemed to form but only slight drizzle fell. Bean cafe was closed at Boroughbridge and Plenty looked full, so we split into 2 groups, a small group when into Plenty and there was plenty of room at the back, the others went to the Courtyard café. We had a discussion which we thought the road through the Dunsforths

would be very wet with lots of puddles after all the rain, but no, the road just had a few puddles and was rather dry. Through Great Ouseburn where 2 riders went on to Whixley and Cattal to get back home. On to Arkendale and when going up the hill to Farnham cross roads, we passed 2 riders on mountain bikes who commented, that they knew a group was coming behind them, as they could hear all the laughter way back! Riders left to go home at Knaresborough the rest split up at the top of Knaresborough Hill. It was my first time to lead a Sunday ride and a lesson learned was to have a few more catch up stops for slower riders. Thanks to Joe for backmarking. 37 miles. Chris Rogers



Downunder Newsletter

G'Day Pommies, following on from Mike's report from down under, Liz F (Digger F) is now lost in the Red Centre of Oz, I'm sure Mike said turn right! Uluru the Aboriginal sacred homeland (Ayers Rock) is an awe inspiring place you can feel the spirituality of Uluru as soon as you see it. Hiring bikes, Pete and I cycled 15 kilometres all the way round it in 38 degrees heat, flies everywhere, had to wear midge nets otherwise it would have been fly catching by the hundreds!, That was fun, but what a fantastic cycle trip and to be so close to Aboriginal history. At a waterhole Aboriginal children were playing in the water, just as they would have done for thousands of years. Uluru is one of those magical places that should be on everyone's must do bucket list. Words or photos cannot describe the breath taking beauty of Uluru. Today we went at 5:30am to see the sun rise over Uluru and also its nearby mountain Kata Tjuta the 'Head's, were we walked round today, the walk had to be done by 11am due to the heat. Liz F.