

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Wednesday Evening Ride



21 June - Midsummer, You Must be Joking!

Nine of us gathered at St Winifred's Co-op for the Summer Solstice Ride, on a grey cold, and very windy evening. At one point I had thought of calling off the ride because of the conditions, but eight others were enthusiastic so off we set.

First of all let me apologise to some of our riders. This was intended to be a rather easier ride than usual because it was Bike Week. The listing on the website did say "At a good pace", but there was perhaps an impression I was going to lead a Sunday morning type ride, so to those who expected a casual jaunt I am sorry for the mixed messages. With at least 5 of my fellow riders in the "I am damned if he/she is going to beat me to the top of this hill" category I decided on a compromise short route of 16 miles but with some big hills to let the "Headbangers" have a blast (Sue - you are now categorically in the Headbangers category!).

So it was up to the top of Harlow Hill, down to Oakdale Bridge and then up to Pennypot Camp. On a pleasant summer evening this would have seemed no more than a pleasant energetic ride but the high winds and cold were making things tough. Onwards down to Hampsthwaite and then we headed up to the Black Bull on the A59 by way of Kettlesing village. This is a long but steady climb and the mountain goat section, led by "Bike Missile" were relishing the challenge so I told them to get on with it and then head on back to Harrogate.

The rest of us returned more gently along Pennypot Lane, climbing up again from Oakdale Bridge. Looking at my speedometer I could hardly believe we had only done 16 miles, it felt more like 25!

So what happened to the summer? We will go looking for it at the York Cycle Rally this weekend.

Martin Weeks

Next Wednesday Evening the usual faster pace.

Wednesday evening rides start from St Winifreds Avenue Co-op at 6.30pm prompt. The pace is Medium/Fast typically averaging at least 12 mph on hilly routes. If you are not sure of your abilities you are still very welcome and you will get a lot of encouragement. But be prepared to turn back if you struggling to keep up with the pace.

It is an ad-hoc arrangement so rides and leaders are sorted at the meeting rendezvous.

Lights are a good idea in case of a gloomy evening or delays. We also recommend taking a full water bottle.