

Sunday, August 6, 2006

Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 14

We congregated at Hornbeam Park and split into three individual groups making our own separate ways just after 10.00.

Sue Threadgold led the short ride today taking the route through the fields and woods behind St. John Fisher and out through the showground to Sainsburys and on to Knaresborough to Waterside for a tea and toast stop. Then back to Harrogate via the Beryl Burton cycleway, around 10 miles in total.

Leaving Hornbeam seven intrepid souls dared to venture onto the intermediate ride planned for about 17 miles (slightly longer than claimed in the email but due warning was given). After taking the shortcut past the golf club and showground it was a quick dash down Wetherby road before taking a right turn leading the short sharp climb and long drag past Rudding House. After this awakening everyone was grateful for the undulating road from Follifoot to Spofforth before another quick hill leading to the country road to Little Ribston.

At this point a little building came to everyone's attention and after a while a volunteer read the inscription above the door to confirm it was indeed an old Chapel, a very charming building it was too.

Then it was back on the bikes as we made the homeward turn towards Knaresborough, stopping at the roundabout on the ring road to watch some cyclists racing. It turned out they were taking part in a 103 km (64 mile) road race , and we agreed that if they got a bit faster then they might like to join us. From there it was past the St James retail park across the river and along Waterside. Foregoing the chance to stop at the cafes we took the Beryl Burton and Bilton Cycleways back to town where folks branched off to their homes. In all a ride of about 18 miles was enjoyed by all.

The 'dashing dozen' tackling the long ride made their way through Harrogate by way of the cycle tracks down onto Tennyson Avenue and picked up Knox Lane. We crossed the busy A61 (minor blip here - some of us managed to cycle up a private driveway) through Killinghall along country lanes and down to Ripley.

Here we had our first short drinks break and discussed the difference between male and female saddles! Next it was through Ripley where we picked up the back road and it was here that we met our first major hill, there was a lot of heavy breathing but we all did really well and reached the summit where we had a chance to recover with another drinks stop (water of course).

We carried on a long stretch of road until turning right at Bishop Thornton down into Markington, back across the busy A61 and into Bishop Monkton and made our way to Boroughbridge via Roecliffe.

Once in Boroughbridge we stopped by popular demand at the Gilchrist cafe where we all sat outside in the garden under a small marquee. We all had something to eat and drink, scones, bacon butties, cups of tea etc. (Well nearly all had something to eat - poor Steve had to do without because the Cafe actually ran out of bacon.)

From Boroughbridge we travelled east through Aldborough and onto (oh what's that next village called? oh yes) Lower Dunsforth, up into Arkendale, Ferrensby and on to Knaresborough.

We all managed the hill to the top and then split into six of one and half a dozen of the other. - Some went their way back along the cycle path to Bilton and the rest turned left down across the railway crossing at Forest Lane, right and quick left, onto the cycle route up to Wetherby Road, left and then a quick right onto the Yorkshire Showground and back to Hornbeam Park.

Well done Marge and many thanks to Jill for being anchor person on the day

Weather warm and sunny. Mileage covered approximately 38. Time back at Hornbeam 3.30pm.