

Sunday, July 8, 2007

Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 62



Eleven cyclists took up the challenge of the long ride to Brimham Rocks and Studley Royal, encouraged by the prospect of decent weather at last and unparalleled views. We sailed through Bilton and down over Knox ford, crossing the main road to reach Hampsthwaite and up the steep hill to Clint. There is no easy way to reach the heights of Brimham so we continued through Burnt Yates and then along a series of thrilling descents and testing climbs towards our goal.

Our efforts were rewarded with stunning sun drenched vistas which stayed with us as we took the minor roads down to Sawley. The one heavy downpour of the day came and went by good fortune as we were swapping stories over a leisurely lunch at the Studley Royal visitor centre, one of our favourite haunts.

Somehow we managed to become separated into two groups after lunch, but all riders enjoyed the same route back through Ripon, Littlethorpe, Copgrove and Knaresborough to Harrogate, around 40 miles overall. It was an excellent Wheel Easy day out. MM

Well, what a turn up for the books - there were less on this ride than either of the short or long rides - only six including myself for the shorter than average medium "lollipop" route! However, it did mean that we should be back in time for the start of the F1 at Silverstone!

So, the 6 left Hornbeam but having crossed at the lights this quickly reduced to 5 - poorly bike syndrome. The route today was along the disused railway from Starbeck and onto Ripley. We then said goodbye to Stuart who had unfortunately some more hours of work to do. Now reduced to two-thirds we continued through Ripley woods and onto Clint Bank Lane and into Birstwith. Here, Paul '1' left us - a wise move Paul - just before Meg Gate - a 15% hill climb up to High Birstwith! I was beginning to wonder if it was something I said! However, Paul '1' took up the lead, whilst Tony and I made it at a slightly slower pace. After climbing the second hill of the day along Swincliffe Lane and turning into Hampsthwaite, Paul also said his goodbye as he was

also due at work.

This left two, (or should I say one third of the original - it sounds more!) We carried on through Hampsthwaite and up Clint Bank and back into Ripley where a couple of spots of rain were felt. The dark clouds quickly passed as we enjoyed a famous Ripley Ice Cream before setting off again - back along the "stick of the lollipop"!

A most enjoyable and scenic 20 ish miles ride. ST

The short ride welcomed a mix of 'old' , or shall we say, 'familiar' faces, and young, as we journeyed off to Knaresborough via Yorkshire Showground, (animal sheds in situ for the Great Yorkshire Show this week), Knaresborough Road, Beryl Burton, and the very pleasant meander along Abbey Road. Left turn for a loop around Knaresborough via Wetherby Road, Chain Lane, and Halfpenny Lane, and onto the quiet and pleasant Water Lane/Hazelhead Lane until reaching Bar Lane. Left turn back to Knaresborough and a stop at the Marigold cafe by the river, where the umbrellas over the tables became a shelter from, firstly, the blistering sun, and then, yes - you guessed it - the heavy downpour which followed!!

Pedal home to dry off via Beryl Burton and railway line to emerge at the back of Asda car park. Our youngest participant, age 7, seemed to enjoy her ride, but decided that a cushion under the saddle was possibly needed for next time around! A longer ride than normal for the 'short' group - 17 miles - but very pleasant! Well done to all! SE



