

Sunday, September 30, 2007

Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 74



Medium Ride. A superb turnout on a fabulous sunny early autumn day meant that the medium section needed to divide into two groups. This coincided with a couple of suggestions about a slightly faster ride aiming to be 'back by 12.' The aim is not to race, but rather to have fewer stops and shorter regroups. Six hardy souls elected to try it out.

The group made good progress in fantastic weather, to Little Almscliffe where we made the first scheduled stop. A brief discussion concluded that the visibility across to the Cleveland Hills White Horse must be 35 miles or so! A brief exchange with the most impatient Volvo driver in the world followed shortly thereafter. Then up to the A59, over and past Menwith Hill. A four mile run to Hampsthwaite allowed a photo stop [we weren't really in Skipton! - see slideshow] then a tough climb out back up to the A59.

A third and final regroup on Penny Pot Lane where we agreed that we had averaged 11-12 miles per hour and covered 19 miles. On past Ethelburga's to a seemingly vertical ascent up to the water treatment plant by Cornwall Rd. Here the group split to either go home or press on to the coffee shop.

I dropped through the Mallinsons estate and got back for 12.03 - 22miles and just perfect!! LW

Sixteen of us followed behind on the same route and at Stainburn Woods we split again for those who needed a shorter route home which they did returning to Harrogate via Norwood and Penny Pot Lane. Well done to our new riders who probably notched up a few extra miles and hills today.

The remaining 10 crossed over the A59 to Menwith and from there enjoyed the fabulous views all around and a wonderful long downhill descent through High Birstwith, Swarcliffe, Clapham Green and into Hampsthwaite. The round trip is about 25 miles, and on a day like today with clear skies and no wind it was perfect.

We returned to Harrogate some via Knox and others via Penny Pot and two of us went to the Cat Walk Café on Montpellier where 3 of the speedy medium riders were still enjoying their coffee and tea. This was an excellent café and a nice way to end the ride. Short ride leaders might want to use this café sometime. GM

Long ride. Fourteen riders, including Jill just back from cycling the full length of France, headed through Burn Bridge, over the A61 and up Walton Head Lane to Kirkby Overblow. Then it was back down to Dunkeswick and along the fine road to Castley and Pool, a familiar Wheel Easy! route but for several of us the first time we had tackled it in the clockwise direction.

A testing climb through Leathley brought us to Stainburn Woods where for a while we followed the same route as the medium ride. Four riders returned along Penny Pot while the rest continued to Menwith Hill Road. At High Birstwith two of the cyclists missed a turn and continued home through Dacre with a stop at the Royal Oak while the rest were enjoying a drink at the Joiners in Hampsthwaite.

A chance comment by Peter G that he would like to achieve a 50 mile ride before he reached 50 was all the incentive we needed to add an extra loop. On such a lovely day, any excuse would do. The necessary miles were added via Knox Lane, Knaresborough Scriven and Farnham, and back through Knaresborough to Hornbeam, a total of 52 miles. MM