

Sunday, October 28, 2007

## Wheel Easy! Ride Report No. 78

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**Long ride.** The damp weather kept with us all the way through Hampsthwaite and Birstwith. It was no more than light rain and all seven riders set off with enthusiasm over the toll bridge to climb the long hill up through Hartwith to Brimham Rocks. After cresting the highest point of the ride the sun broke through and we speeded off down to Sawley with a following tail wind.

After Sawley the ride through Studley Park to Ripon was spectacular with autumn colours and all the male deer braying loudly and strutting their stuff as we cycled through the park. A leisurely stop at Ripon Spa Gardens café was followed by a pleasant ride back via Bishop Monkton and Knaresborough. In total 40 miles and plenty of hills.

Highlights:

- It really is too bad of Gia to let Malcolm ride her old Trek bike. But his vastly enhanced performance leads me to conclude it can't be only the bike - has he been taking some performance enhancing concoction while holidaying in France? Yvonne and I were in the same area but we obviously did not frequent the right restaurants. [I deny everything - Ed.]
- The fame of Spa Gardens café seems to be spreading. It was fully booked for lunch with a large group from East Bradford CC. As usual they were very accommodating and we were served sandwiches outside.
- Gia liked the East Bradford club jerseys so watch out for details of Wheel Easy tops to come - could they possibly contain Lycra?!

Martin

**Medium ride.** The wet weather didn't deter those riders normally out for a short ride in joining the medium ride for a "quality" 20-mile ride (quality means "hilly"). Nine of us headed out to Beckwithshaw, over the moor to the car park near Little Almscliffe Crag, left on the track through the forest, then left on minor lanes down to Leathley.

Lovely swoops down normally means character-building swoops up! So from Leathley we cycled

up to North Rigton, then left for a right at the next cross roads to bring us into Burn Bridge.

Fantastic views as rain quickly turned to sunshine, and we all had a great time in the good company of fellow cyclists enjoying beautiful Yorkshire countryside.

Highlights:

From starting statements such as "I may turn back", and something along the lines of "If any one chickens out, that's my cue" - everyone completed this quality route. On the final big hill out of North Rigton, Caroline was crowned "Queen of the Hills". And she was.

Many of the riders, being new to this sort of cycling, rode bikes with gears not suited to steep, long hills. But they completed the ride, despite having a harder ride than me on my new Airnimal bike.

Yvonne

**Speedy ride** Two Pauls and a Mike left Hornbeam Park in miserable conditions but undeterred. With Mike leading the way and pushing the pace, we sprinted through Knaresborough and Little Ribston before turning off to Cowthorpe and Thorp Arch. Paul 1 left at this point and headed back to Harrogate via Wetherby. Mike & Paul 2 continued to Boston Spa and returned to Harrogate by way of Collingham, Linton, Sicklinghall and Kirkby Overblow.

A total of 34 miles in a few minutes over 2 hours. A cracking ride generating enough heat to keep the wet and cold at bay. PD