

Sunday, December 14, 2008

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 138 and Christmas Lunch



From the comfort of an armchair in a warm house the idea of a 50 mile ride in December seemed an attractive proposition.....

A perfect start to a planned 50 mile run took 7 riders through the snowy beauty of little Almscliffe and onto the icy slopes of Dob Park wood. Here we decided upon a slight change of route which unfortunately led us into thick fog around Lindley Wood Reservoir. As we left the reservoir behind, the fog cleared and it was back to sunshine for the rest of the ride heading to Wetherby via Weeton and Sicklinghall. As we approached Cattal (a notorious flood spot) the road closed signs appeared. Being intrepid cyclists we of course chose to ignore the signs leading to a spot of aquatic cycling and soggy feet.

After this Malcolm Y decided to leave us and head back to Harrogate along the A59 - perhaps he thought we would be late and miss all the chilli - the 4 remaining riders continued on to Marton cum Grafton, Arkendale and Knaresborough riding hard to ensure we arrived in time for lunch.

We had completed 51 miles, experienced snow, floods, ice and fog, arrived at the hockey club cold, wet, dishevelled but above all starving hungry to enjoy all the lovely food that had been laid on. Thanks to everyone involved for a marvellous spread!

... so it turned out to be a good idea after all! Thanks to Gill, Eric and Pete for sticking with it and making a great ride. Phil St.

Now that is what I call a seriously chilly ride! Despite ski socks, Specialized ice-breaker boots, over-shoes, and chemical warming pads, my feet were still cold when I got home. The next step in the warming project is to carry a car battery with plug in electric blanket.

The medium group that set off from Hornbeam Park was pretty large, comprising at least 20 riders who split into groups but we all reassembled at each major road junction as the ride progressed. It seemed relatively ice free as far as Beckwithshaw, but beyond there the snow and ice along the verges gradually increased to become quite spectacular. Beyond Little Almscliffe Crag towards Fewston there were patches of ice on the road and a re-routing decision was taken to keep to the salted routes around Menwith Hill, and we were rewarded with fabulous views of the sun catching the snow-capped hills in Nidderdale. Then we dropped down on the lovely long swoop to Hampsthwaite Village. Realising that this shorter ride would get everyone back rather early for the Christmas Lunch, the group stopped off at the cafe in the town centre for a warming brew before departing

for the Hockey Club.

Only 22 miles and hopefully by the end of the afternoon everyone had thawed out. Martin W

The short ride attracted a large posse of people many set with the task of getting to the Xmas Lunch early enough to prepare the feast!

At Sue C's suggestion, I led a nine strong 'longer short ride' to Burn Bridge, Kirkby Overblow, and Weeton. Here, I suffered the nuisance of a rear tyre puncture and the embarrassment of demonstrating how little I remembered from my day bike maintenance course at Edinburgh Cycles a couple of months ago. However, I gave it my best shot closely supervised and aided by Joe, and about 15 minutes later (or 20 according to the ladies who were checking their stopwatches) we were away, chasing the rest who had gone on ahead up Crag Lane towards Almscliff Crag to ward off the threat of frostbite. The climb to North Rigton, and from there to the 'top of the world' made sure we were all feeling the heat by the time we separated into two groups, one heading on for Beckwithshaw and the other down Brackenthwaite Lane to Burn Bridge. Then it was home for a hot shower before regrouping for Christmas Lunch. MM

Five of us gathered to take a slower ride mothering our recently recovered hero from her altercation with a cycle barrier. She climbed Dizzy Hill (the one out of Beckwithshaw up to the top of the world) with no ill effects, just glad to be back on the bike, as was Gaye who has also had a long layoff. Sue was glowing knowing that she had been described as looking very dainty on her bike. Thus inspired Gia, Gaye and Sue sped down in to Burn Bridge then added a loop to Kirkby Overblow and back via Pannal. 15 miles on a day which just got better and better and saw none of the snow and ice for those who went West and North. Max escorted Caroline safely home - well done getting back on the bike so soon after your accident.

XMAS LUNCH DECEMBER 14th 2008.

Highlights

Delicious beef and veggie chilli

Panic stations that the potatoes would not bake in time.

Excellent bunch of kitchen helpers

Great musical entertainment from Terry

Nostalgic look back at 2007-2008 Wheel Easy photos

Tough Quizmaster Martin foxes us with his questions.

Super venue, thanks to Sue and the Hockey Club.

Look out for Steve and his pink Marigolds.

Pictures of the day now on site.

53 Wheel Easy members and their partners enjoyed the best Xmas Lunch yet. Gia

