

Sunday, January 18, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report No.143



Short(ish) Ride 18 January 2009

Despite a freezing wind and prospect of rain, ride leader Paul's brilliant advertising spiel for the short ride won an all time record 12 for the short ride. We set off up Hookstone Road and Leadhall Lane in the wake that had been the long speedy ride, who'd disappeared in a flash of yellow following Jill to somewhere very hilly and a long way off. Continuing down into Pannal, over Leeds Road and up towards the by pass and Follifoot, showed us that Paul in fact was a dedicated leader, resisting the temptation to pop into his house for a quick coffee whilst he waited for us to catch up.

However, his dedication was knocked a little when the group decided to do a quick detour via Spofforth and only Lynda and Jean wanted to follow Paul's route, but without Paul! So rather than leave him alone and sobbing at Follifoot a fast and a slow group decided to go

via Spofforth to Knaresborough and the Riverside Café. Heading to Knaresborough, we sensed that Jo and Geraldine were having a small domestic ("Well Darling" is always a sign we felt) re yet another detour to Cowthorpe. The main group continued detouring to Knaresborough, cleverly avoiding the largest hill, via Kirk Deighton.

Along this glorious route, the winter sun warming our bones, bikes speeding along merrily, we experienced a lucky escape. The Nice Man from the other side (we are not sure which other side now) leading the group towards Knaresborough, chatting happily to Gardener Jo, was suddenly abducted by aliens. Well all the evidence points to that. He was happily riding his cycle (or was it a time machine) and then he was not. He disappeared. Hopefully back to the other side from whence he came. However despite being abandoned by our second man (Joe being the first one) we managed pluckily to find the Café by the river in Knaresborough, full of the other half of the ride, who without a detour and being very speedy had only just arrived.

We ordered refreshments, enjoyed smooth and velvety, hot and intense, and confused and mixed up versions of coffee etc, and celebrated our narrow escape from being abducted by aliens. The main topic of conversation, which seemed to confuse Paul totally, was initiated by Lycia, Gardener Jo and Sarah, was cycling helmet hair - before and after problems and glamour whilst cycling. A group of cyclists from Rawdon joined the discussion helpfully suggesting the best things that you could do with a Yorkshire Post, demonstrating graphically a warming technique involving stuffing the said broadsheet up your jumper.

Fully refreshed Sarah, Paul and two jolly new girls set off to tackle the north face of Knaresborough Road and home, while Lycia told us how her dad had suggested attacking Beryl Burton. We arrived back on the Stray, having solved the world economic problems, global warming, the housing market, and riding on the Stray, after a super ride of 19 miles covered in under 5 hours!!!! Thanks Paul a super ride. CG

Long Ride:- Rain, wind, snow & sun - were all features of the long ride today. Eleven people, including Paul on his first long ride, set off from Hornbeam Park where there was a light wind blowing. By the time we reached Moor Park & were heading up towards Little Almscliffe the wind felt much stronger & we were riding into a snow shower. At this point it was decided to stick to lower roads instead of continuing on the planned route of Fewston, Timble & the rather exposed road over Askwith Moor to Ilkley. Three people decided to take shorter routes back & the rest of us continued down to Farnley & then into Otley, first stop being Chevin Cycles before coffee at the garden centre café.

After coffee, with the wind now behind us & the sun shining we had a speedy ride back via Castley & Weeton to Kirkby Overblow where another three riders headed home. The remaining five cyclists continued the wind assisted ride to Wetherby & then north along the old A1, turning off at Arkendale. The last few miles of the ride suddenly became harder work again as we tackled a head wind back through Knaresborough towards home, the rain arriving just before we reached Harrogate. Although not the route planned for the day, we still managed a 50 mile ride. Jill



