

Sunday, February 15, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 147



Long ride. Although the weather had turned much milder there was the possibility of there still being some icy roads so it was decided to stick to a lower level route & head for Bedale. Seven cyclists set off from Hornbeam & at Knaresborough we gained one more as Dave W joined the group. From Knaresborough we kept up a steady pace as we headed for Ripon, then Wath, Kirklington, Carthorpe & Burneston where we joined the B6285 for the last few miles into Bedale. At Bedale we had our first café stop at Aunt Sally's Café. Another group of cyclists from Stockton were already here, they had already cycled 45 miles to our 30!

As we left Bedale the sun had come out & it was beginning to feel like a spring day, a welcome relief after the last few weeks of winter weather. From Bedale we went past Thorp Perrow Arboretum & then on to Well where we went up the first (& only?) real hill of the day. From here continued on through WestTanfield and back through Wath again. As it had turned into such a pleasant afternoon it was decided to extend the ride by going back through Boroughbridge. Here we had our second café stop of the day at Morrisons before heading home through Knaresborough. Around 64 miles in total (with thanks especially to Dave P & Bill who helped out when I wasn't sure of the route!) JF

Around 17 of us chose one of the various medium ride options, the longest going to Darley but with a few cut off points along the way to shorten the distance. All met up at the Black Swan, Burn Bridge, for the first rendezvous and photo which had just been taken when Mervyn arrived with Joe who had administered much needed additional air to Mervyn's insufficiently inflated tyres. There followed a brief clothing inspection, which two miscreants failed for lack of fluorescent yellow. One squeaked through though when he pointed to the brilliant yellow waterproof protecting the contents of his saddle bag.

After this, things got rather serious with the nominal ride leader of the longer ride group struggling to keep the faster riders in sight as he barely made it to the top of Brackenthwaite Lane and the crossroads at the top of the world. Then it was down to Beckwithshaw and the long haul up to Little Almscliff where the views of Menwith Hill golf

balls, Knabs Ridge windfarm and Nidderdale opened up magnificently below us, albeit with a threatening grey black sky above.

We took the quiet dog leg to the B6451, up to Pennypot Lane and Menwith Hill where Paul, Nick and Dennis turned off to Birstwith leaving 7 to continue down to Darley and through the village as the skies cleared and spring came out. It was plain sailing then alongside the Nidd to Birstwith where we stopped for a second photo and a banana stop before the good hill up to Clapham Green, and coast down to Hampsthwaite. Climbing Hollins Lane, we came up with the slightly slower shorter medium ride and all continued more or less together to Grainbeck Lane, across the A61 (where an unexpected siren and rushing ambulance made the crossing even more scary than usual), Knox, walking across the still icy ford bridge and on the bikes up into Harrogate. A dozen or so finished off at the Catwalk Café on Montpellier for an excellent coffee and a bit of crumpet (or whatever else they fancied). Only 25 miles but plenty of hills. MM and GM

Short ride. The temperature was a bit more acceptable at last as we progressed to Low Bridge by way of Hookstone and Forest Moor Road then along Abbey Road to Chain Lane and Farnham. A pity the usual lanes had to be avoided due to potential frozen snow but it was pleasant enough and the traffic no more unbearable than usual.

Once en route towards Ripley and a detour by way of Brearton it turned fairly sunny with accompanying farmyard odours. By this time we had mislaid Sue and Paul but as they are experienced members we were not too alarmed. Paul caught us up and backtracked to fetch Sue but when we found him alone at Ripley roundabout he advised that our ex-treasurer had opted to make a quick return home (note to leader: make your directions more detailed next time!). Coffee at Ripley having been declined we soon found ourselves at Spruisty Bridge and it was (hopefully) straight home. Just the top side of 20 miles on a fine morning's outing. CM



