

Sunday, February 22, 2009

## Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 148

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### Sunday 22 February Short Ride:

Funny how quickly the best laid plans can fall apart! Having agreed to lead the long ride, and then cycled 71 miles around the route the previous day, I was on my way to Hornbeam Park on Sunday morning looking forward to repeating the ride with the added delights of Wheel Easy company, when my gear cable snapped. Could I ride the route in one gear - my highest gear? Definitely not! So I continued downhill to Hornbeam Park, whilst working out Plan B. I could pass the 16 copies of the ride route I had printed earlier to somebody else, and I could lead the short ride which would have to go back to my house where I could switch to my mountain bike. On arrival at Hornbeam Park, Dave P asked me if could lead the short ride for him, and he would go on the long ride? Spooky, or psychic, or what? So Plan B it was!

Five of us set off on the long ride to my house. Having already lost all my gears, somehow I also managed to lose 2 of my 4 charges within the first half mile. Kriszti and Paul - on their first Wheel Easy ride - were overtaken by a complete stranger just before Leeds Road traffic lights, he turned left, and they naturally followed! Chasing after them with one gear was a bit of a handicap. After a quick change of bikes at my house we set off with the objective of getting Lynda back home for 12.30. We took a route past Pannal Ash roundabout, down Whinney Lane to Beckwithshawe and on to Little Almscliffe, where we stopped to catch our breath after the long uphill climb into the teeth of a gale. We then continued down the steep hill, having to pedal extremely hard to get down at all! Crawford commented that it was the worst wind he had experienced on any Wheel Easy ride. We passed the Sun Inn and returned along Penny Pot Lane at very high speed thanks to wind assistance, stopping for a photo call with the Hags Ridge wind turbines in the background. We would have each covered about 20 miles by the time we got home. Eric

Medium Ride: Seventeen took up the Medium ride retracing the initial part of last week's ride through Burn Bridge and Brackenthwaite Lane, but this time reaching the Beckwithshaw/Otley Road and heading south turning left to pass west of Almsliffe Crag and down through Huby. Crossing the Bradford Road, we headed through Weeton and Dunkeswick then followed the valley of the Wharfe to Chapel Hill ,Kearby, Sicklinghall and Wetherby. Five riders headed back along Harland Way , eleven continued through Wetherby and up the old A1 to the Knaresborough Road at Little Ribston and so to Knaresborough where more team disintegration occurred with six opting for a lunch of low-cal Bacon and Egg buttie/scone/tea/coffee etc. 28 miles to the cafe, 32 back to Hornbeam all in lovely sunshine and a definite feeling that spring is in the offing. Peter

Long Ride: There was a good turn out at Hornbeam carpark with the promise of sunshine and a hint of spring. We lost count after 37 riders. Eric and David did a swap due Eric's bike problems and David led the long ride. It was decided to split the long ride (at York) with Martin Weeks leading a shorter ride looping northwards and Dave P leading the long ride to Selby.

On the road to York Martin and Paul went back to pick up a couple of riders who had dropped off the back. We also picked up Dave W and Nick on the way. The main group of riders continuing to York to the cycle path and waited on the Planet Cycle Path (under the Sun of course) for Martin and Paul. Seven riders then left with Martin, and nine riders with Dave P continued to Selby.

We had a "banana break" in Ricall and decided to continue to Selby ( Eric`s preride had noticed an absence of cafes in Selby) and risk it. The only cafe we could find was at Morrisons , a bit crowded but OK. Then returning via Wistow,Cawood, Ulleskelf and Tadcaster for afternoon tea. Here Colin nearly got into "hot water" by asking for hot water in a mug instead of a glass. We then returned to Harrogate via Wetherby and the cycle path.

An excellent cycling day, sunshine and good under tire on the cycle paths. From Selby we had the head wind (perhaps not as bad as Saturday) but cycling as a group with riders taking turns at the front to "push the wind" helped a lot. Mileage was approx 64 miles carpark to carpark. Tough most riders would have done 66 to 70 miles door to door. Dave P

The "Shorter" long ride continued, on Sue's recommendation, to Rowntree Park where we refueled, before heading through York to continue on the cycle paths to Beningborough, Aldwark Bridge, and home. We also found it pretty tough going into the headwind, and to be really honest I was delighted to make it to our driveway. Copious quantities of hot tea plus something stronger ensured a recovery! Martin W

