

Sunday, March 1, 2009

## Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 149

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Martin and Yvonne 'model' the new Wheel Easy jackets!

Long. There was a good turnout at Hornbeam on a beautifully clear sunny morning & 11 people, including James on his first long ride, set off to Masham. Heading out of Harrogate through Hampsthwaite & Burnt Yates, we steadily climbed up past Brimham Rocks to the moors. Peter J was the only rider tempted by an off road short cut, the rest of the group sticking to the road.

As we headed past the Drover's Inn on our way to Kirby Malzeard we spotted another group of cyclists who turned out to be from Ripon Loiterers. After a few minutes of chat & a joint photo (courtesy of James from the Loiterers), we headed on our way with the temperature decidedly cooler than when we set off from Harrogate. Shortly afterwards another familiar figure was seen ahead of us which turned out to be Mike who sometimes joins the long rides. He then joined the group for the café stop at Masham.

After refreshments, Dennis headed off for a fast route home while a breakaway group consisting of Peter B, Phil, Bill & Chris decided on a more challenging ride of the climb over to Lofthouse. The remaining 6 set off on the original planned route via West Tanfield, Wath & Ripon, a pleasant & easy run back. The weather had improved again with the sun making it feel decidedly spring like & at Ripon, Colin decided to head off to Boroughbridge. The remaining few completed approximately 55 miles via Knaresborough & back to Harrogate.  
Jill F

Medium. It was a wonderful spring day and a great one to model the brand new Wheel Easy shirts. Fifty riders today, including some newcomers and some "returners". At least 30

hungry medium cyclists descended on Spa Gardens Café in Ripon where we devoured tea, coffee, scones and cake.

Caroline kindly led a gentle undulating route to Ripon via Copgrove and Bishop Monkton. Gia and Malcolm took two groups via the climbs of Hampsthwaite, Shaw Mills and Bishop Thornton. The swoop down through the deer park was new to several riders but even for those who have done it before it is still a treat. At the café we met Caroline's group who were already sitting in the sunshine.

No one was in a hurry to leave the café but we broke up in to smaller groups for the return journey via Bishop Monkton. There having met Martin we added a loop round towards Roecliffe but cutting off along the bridleway to Copgrove.

Home to Harrogate in the sunshine enjoying all the snowdrops and crocuses. Well done to all those "short" riders who comfortably did the Ripon ride. Forty two miles for the Pannal contingent! Gia

After having to be rescued on the long ride last week (thanks again Paul) due to my dodgy knees I decided to go for the medium "no hills" ride to Ripon led by Caroline. Somehow no hills must mean something different in Harrogate than it does in Earby where I live. We started off with 11 or maybe 12 (depending on who was counting) riders but courtesy of a puncture this dropped to 5 (Caroline, Jo, Debbie 1 with a red top and co-ordinating bike, Debbie 2 and myself) with Max "that rude man", who was with the deflated sub group (poor joke), eventually ringing Caroline to tell her to carry on and that we would meet up at the Spa Gardens café.

Jo admitted at one stage to nearly falling off due to her studying the bums of a group of male cyclists going the other way. With my stunning knowledge of the geography around Harrogate I am not precisely sure of the route that we took (actually I have no real idea at all but I do remember Copgrove and Bishop Monkton) but eventually we arrived at the café ahead of the faster group who were going by a more diverse route. Debbie 2 had at one stage seemed in danger of fading away before we got there but was revived by food at the café.

Agonising decisions then had to be made between the tempting array of cakes, scones etc. on offer. I went for an apricot and coconut slice which was really good and managed to get three cups from my pot of tea which set me up for the ride home. The same intrepid 5 set off together and followed the same route home in reverse. On the way back Caroline managed to pick up two stray men one of whom was a fellow Wheel Easy cyclist who was with one of the other groups. He however subsequently left us behind and we were then overtaken by another non Wheel Easy cyclist. He stopped shortly afterwards and watched us go by. Jo decided that he was studying her bum as she went passed (is there a theme here?). Debbie 1 had her chain come off which, as Caroline put it, gave me a chance to tinker. Luckily for me it came off again just as we were nearly back at the start of a steep hill. This gave me the perfect excuse to walk up the hill as it was too steep to set off on.

At the outskirts of Harrogate Caroline peeled off home leaving the remaining 4 to head back to Hornbeam. Thirty excellent miles in very pleasant company and it stayed dry. By the time of next week's ride I will have had some work done on my knees so watch out! Mervyn A.

Short. Five of us set off into the brightening St David's Day and headed for the Yorkshire

Showground and onwards to Follifoot. This was an early Spring Day and there was a real spin to the pedals. Despite this being the short ride I gathered quickly that everyone could motor a bit, especially our new US friends Matt and Sarah who showed they had plenty of potential.

After Follifoot we headed south to Spofforth, then over the lanes to Little Ribston and back to Knaresborough. The riverside on Abbey Road and Waterside was busy with walkers enjoying the day, and then we climbed back up the Beryl Burton Way to Harrogate and home.

The Leader then set off to catch the Medium Ride, and met them all returning along the lanes near Bishop Monkton. Sadly I had to comfort Yvonne who was distraught as someone, we shall not mention names, had dared to take the last cheese scone at the Spa Café. I think she might get over it - eventually! Martin W



