

Sunday, May 24, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report No. 161



Despite my expectations that I would be riding the wheely long ride alone, there were 4 willing volunteers for an 85 mile route to Helmsley including a new member, Geoff.

Perfect cycling weather and Martins pace setting meant we reached Thirsk for our first café stop in double quick time. Surprisingly there are 4 cafés in the market place at Thirsk giving us plenty of options.

As we headed to Boltby via Felixkirk the scenery became more interesting and the road more hilly giving us a hint of what was to come. Almost immediately after Boltby the road turns steeply upwards signed at 25%. A long stimulating climb followed mostly on the bike but a little walking proved necessary for most of us. On reaching the summit the rewards became immediately apparent - stunning views and a fantastic downhill section which led almost uninterrupted to Helmsley.

In Helmsley we visited our second café in the old walled garden near the castle. It's tucked out of the way so was not too busy even on a Bank Holiday weekend. A particularly enjoyable no added fat, no refined sugars fruit cake was enjoyed by the author - I was so impressed I'll be searching the internet for a recipe - absolutely perfect cycling food.

The return journey was equally pleasant going through the attractive villages of Harome, Nunnington and Hovingham. At Hovingham we headed to Easingwold along a pleasantly wooded route and then home via Aldwark Bridge.

A fantastic challenging ride, ridden and enjoyed as a single group. Phil St

When I planned the Fabulous Five Series for medium rides I had this vision of riding in

wonderful weather. So it was today for the fourth ride of the series that we had the best day of the year so far. The ride was spectacular, fine views, we did look out for the long ride over towards Helmsley, and new territory, ten in my group had never used or known about the Hartwith Toll Bridge crossing over the river just below Birstwith. They all climbed up to Clapham Green with consummate ease and there were no complaints on Stripe Lane especially once getting to the top to be rewarded with splendid views across to Sutton Bank. The ride past Brimham Rocks is fast and fun and once past we took a snack break. Phil and Linda turned off towards Markington with a request that Phil bought Linda a cup of tea at the café at Markington! Well what happened?

The rest of us headed for Sawley Moor Lane which is a quiet route taking us towards Fountains Abbey and the Deer Park. Bill who was leading one of the groups followed a route over the moor and round by Grantley adding a few miles and a bit more climbing. We heard that Denis K left them to tackle Yorke Folly to justify sitting watching the Grand Prix later in the day! Dennis B lead the third group, picking up Paul B in Hampsthwaite and they were the first in to the café at Spa Gardens in Ripon.

At the café it was a treat to see our members picnicking on the grass enjoying the sunshine and the company. We welcomed three new members today, although Richard has ridden with us before when visiting Harrogate.

Bill had to have his Boroughbridge fix so some left Ripon to go home that way and the rest of us did the usual route back via Bishop Monkton. At Sue C's suggestion we left Ripon via Littlethorpe which makes for a much safer crossing of the Ripon bypass and a pretty route through the village.

Most people will have completed 42 miles, well done to everyone and good preparation for the Acorn Ride next week and the Wetherby-Filey later in June. It was a real Wheel Easy day, wonderful company, great weather and the beauty of the Dales. What more could we ask for? Gia

It was a good cycling day, sunny and not too windy. Six riders including the leader chose the short ride, Sue , Sarah, Jean, John, Crawford and Dave P.

First decision to be made, did we want a coffee stop? Yes of course we did, unanimous vote from the ladies. Out of Hornbeam car park to cross Leeds Road and on to Rossett Green and Pannal. Again crossing the Leeds Road and alongside Pannal Golf Course to Follifoot, but crossing the York Road via the bridle path underpass, unfortunately the tunnel was rather muddy.

Through Follifoot to cross the A661 and on to the disused road past Wingate Farm to cross the York Road to Thistle Hill and on to Waterside for coffee. We had a pleasant break at the café, sitting in the sun (a refreshing change) and soaking up the holiday atmosphere.

All good things must come to an end so it was onwards and upwards, (up the Beryl Burton track actually). As we came in to Harrogate various riders left the group, but the route was on to cycle path to Kingsley Rd, Woodfield Ave and Hookstone Road to the car park .Approx 15 miles.

A pleasant ride, everybody keeping together and thanks to Crawford for being back marker.
Dave P

