

Sunday, July 26, 2009

Wheel Easy Ride Report 170



The photo above is the latest addition to the Wheel Easy technical manual. Thanks are due to Sarah and Sue who asked Yvonne for advice and feel it is a significant issue for many female riders. Apparently this knowledge will open up new worlds for our lady members. Male members who have any questions on the subject should direct them to Martin, the acknowledged expert with an unrivalled range of experience on the fields and hedges of North Yorkshire.

Rainy days and Sundays!! Today was the finale of the Fab Five rides for medium riders to stretch their distance including hill climbs and set out to Ilkley. The planned picnic was out of the question with the forecast of rain coming in later in the day. Well the rain came in much earlier, at 9.00am to be precise. The usual stalwarts turned up plus two new members keen to get the Wheel Easy experience. Max took the new riders under his expert wing and for the first time this year decided to turn up in shorts. Was this the Tour de France influence?

Martin's challenge for the day was to come up with as many songs as we could with rain in the lyrics. We think we came up with nine.

A group of 10 set out for Ilkley taking the Lindley route rather than Alsmcliffe Crag. This keeps the route higher and flatter for longer but has the sting of the climb up out of Lindley reservoir to Farnley. It is also a quieter route just requiring a spotter at the brow of the hill on the B6161.

Dave P designated Dennis to take the team photo as he didn't have his Wheel Easy shirt on! Hopefully the new shirt order will arrive this week. Dennis turned back at Farnley with orders to be home for lunch.

We all made it to Ilkley, by this time in fairly heavy rain, but a decent café stop at Avanti meant that by the time we left the worst was over. At Askwith Martin and Yvonne led the group up the hill towards Timble and Norwood whilst Gia and Caroline sped home via Otley, Pool and Castley with a brief stop at the shop in Kirkby Overblow to chat with a potential new member. Then home in time to watch the final day of the Tour de France.

Thanks to Martin and Yvonne for encouraging the group from behind and up front, to Dave P for checking that Caroline and I got home safely and to all those who completed the Fab Five series. We need to come up with a new set of rides for next year. Pateley? Masham?

Maybe there will still be time this year to do the Ilkley ride again and if the weather is fine have a picnic. Gia

At least the rain was warm! The long ride followed Gia's medium route to Ilkley although we took a slight detour from the top of the world - going round Almscliffe Crag instead of straight over to the Beckwithshaw/Otley road. The weather brightened up at Almscliffe and looked very hopeful as we cycled to Ilkley.

Unfortunately it poured again as we entered the café in Ilkley and despite an extended stop it was still pouring as we left. The consensus of opinion was that we should return home by the quickest route via Fewston. Three of us (myself, Pete and James) opted for a second stop at Fewston village hall but everyone else headed straight home.

Fortified by extra tea we returned to Harrogate via Kettlesing, Birstwith, Hampsthwaite and even an ascent of Pot Bank to work off the second slice of cake.

Despite the three soakings we had a great ride and returned home fairly dry except for wet feet. Why do cycling shoes absorb so much water?

'Twas a lovely day for ducks! Seven riders set off on the short ride (welcome to two new members Alison and Veronica). This was quickly reduced to six riders when one, whom I didn't get chance to say good morning to decided to return home in the hope that the weather would improve in the afternoon. We went via the much used Graham route via the Squinting Cat and Beckwithshaw to Almscliffe Crag,, not much of a view today. Well done Veronica. A return swooooooooooooooop down to Beckwithshaw saw the peloton turn right to face the daunting climb to the summit of Mont Ventoux. Sorry getting carried away again, belay that, to the top of the world. Veronica had done her bit for the day and left us returning via Otley Road from Beckwithshaw, home.

On the ascent to the top of the world Alison showed her true colours arriving first to the top, not even breathing heavily. (She has now been banned from all further short rides). Well done to her. We continued along Brackenthwaite Lane, Daw Cross and back to Hornbeam where we all went our separate ways. Only about 16 miles but with a couple of decent hills. Thanks to John for being back marker. Max

