

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

## Wednesday Rides and Brompton World Championships

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Sixteen riders turned up at Hornbeam today at the new start time of 9.30 all eager to sample the cakes at Timble Village Hall. We were joined by Peter and Linda at Whinney Lane, Ben appeared behind us on his single speed bike and Malcolm caught up with the Poddlers at Stainburn. So by the time we all arrived at Timble there were twenty of us. The village ladies had been 'warned' we were coming and we settled down along with dozens of walkers and others for a great selection of home made cakes, biscuits and scones. Leaving Timble we acknowledged a large group of volunteers repairing the stone wall by the hall, the Poddlers returned to Harrogate, Dave R and Ben no doubt gobbled a few quick hill climbs on their way home, Martin led Sue C, William and Angela back to Harrogate over the moor and down to Otley and home. Meanwhile, Jill who had been let out of work for the day and was keen to enjoy the October sunshine encouraged Malcolm, Gia and Paul T to take the extra mile by climbing the moor to Askwith and, arriving at Ilkley far too early for lunch, cycled along the river to Beamsley and almost to Bolton Abbey. The lure of the Yorkshire Deli in Ilkley led us back there for lunch and home via Otley. 50 miles. Beautiful day and great for Poddlers and longer ride to meet for a very sociable coffee and cake stop at Timble. Gia

### EG's Ride

It was a damp (but not raining) day at Low Bridge despite the poor weather forecast. It was nice to see Dave Watson back with us after being off for a while ill. The seven riders Bill, Colin, Dave P, Dave W, John, Norman and Roy decided to head north via Boroughbridge and perhaps stop at Minskip to take tea with the Ladies.

There was no board outside Minskip Village Hall so it was on to the top cafe in Boroughbridge for the first stop of the day. Then on to Cundall and Asenby with a banana break in Rainton. The pelaton then stormed on to Wath (OK but anyone can dream) leading

out our top man for the final sprint into the Ripon Spa Cafe for tea/coffee/chocolate, cakes and one bacon sandwich.

It was a pleasant Autumn ride through Studley Royal Park, somebody said it might be the rutting season, as some stags seemed unimpressed by our presence and made it known we should clear off.

Back to Harrogate via Ripley. Norman was on top form and took the King of the Mountains jersey. He put this down to "deep breathing" not "heavy breathing" as you might expect. Total mileage 55 miles and no rain. Keep up the good work Met Office. Dave P

and if you can spare 4.43 minutes watch the whacky video at <http://www.brompton.co.uk/bwc/2009/> Don't forget the full screen option.

### Brompton World Championships 2009

Sunday, 4 October 2009 dawns sunny but chilly. We have shaken off the rain and high winds of yesterday. Arriving at Blenheim Palace we could be excused for thinking we had arrived for a day at the horse, rather than bicycle, races. The rules of the BWC require that all competitors wear jacket and tie (though shorts are allowed). As there are prizes for the best dressed male and female entrants, many competitors have taken the opportunity to dress in the most bizarre costumes - bright colours, outlandish combinations, the inevitable gorilla suit and two animal lovers with their dogs harnessed in baskets on their Brompton carriers!

I am worried about gearing. My Brompton has only two gears and I am expecting the course to be flat, in which case, I will be outsprinted. When I arrive the time trial is in progress. One of the trialists tells me that the course is quite hilly and I breath a sigh of relief.

At 11.40 we receive race briefing and are herded into six pens of 100 by a bossy Australian woman. We all go Baah! What is it with Australians and sheep? On second thoughts, don't answer that...

It's a long wait for the start but eventually the string is cut and we run for our bikes which are parked, folded, in the field next to the course. In my case 'run' means more of a hobble as I have pulled a muscle in my groin when I fell off my Brompton two weeks earlier. Our race briefing stated clearly that we should unfold our bikes and walk to the road, mount and begin the course in an orderly fashion. No need to rush because each bike has a chip which only activates the timing mechanism when you enter the course. Of course, starting orders are ignored in the usual jostle with riders leaping onto bikes on the grass and riding to the road.

Obviously I am not one of the first off and I can see the front group a little ahead of me. Down we sprint towards the place, then a sharp right, scary as we shoot into the bottleneck, down the hill, over the bridge and up a steep hill on the other side. I decide to stay in my high gear and sprint up the hill, gaining several places. Over the top and we drop away down a steep left-hander. No one is pedaling so my under-gearing is not a problem. Over a cattle grid (covered with matting) and up the other side. Once again I stay in my high gear but this time the hill turns out to be a long slog. I change down but can see the front group slowly pulling away. Over the top again and we are dropping down a steep winding road through the forest. I crouch down, trying to make as small a hole in the air as possible. I begin gaining again. Suddenly there's steep hump-backed bridge followed by a right turn

over a cattle grid. I brake hard but realise too late that I could have made it without braking. The front bunch are gone and I'm on my own, cycling up a 'gentle' slope. My high gear is too high and my low gear too low so I grind along in the high gear. At this point Roberto Heras, three times winner of the Tour of Spain and teammate of Lance Armstrong, passes me. He is going so fast that I don't even try to jump onto his back wheel. Slowly a group of three riders behind me haul me in and I join their group with some relief. We pass the start/finish line and start our second lap but I loose them on the long hill. This time I don't slow for the hump-backed bridge but have to avoid some one lying in the road attended by first aiders - the corner is definitely a tricky one. I am exhausted but the sight of the finish line gives me a boost and I sprint for the line yelling for two Sunday riders to get out of the way.

The results? Roberto Heras won by 0.245 seconds from Michael Hutchinson, who just won the time trial. First female was Julia Shaw who had just won the women's time trial. Me? Fourth veteran. Ian



