

Wednesday, November 25, 2009

Wednesday Rides



Poddlers Ride Report

It seems to have been windy for days, it was windy this morning when I woke up. The planned ride was carefully moderated to take into account a force 16 southwest wind gusting to 32. We had to have the wind on our backs or at least be able to use it for tacking (I am sure there is a cycling term for this) for as much of the ride as possible. Hornbeam car park was full of yellow jacketed mad men and women, so there was no escape. The poddlers knew where they were going so we shot off straight into the wind, leaving the others dreaming of cakes and coffee in far flung cafes, and losing Jean and Max on the way who did not really want to come with us anyway!!! I needed you with me at the back Jean!! We had to pedal downhill towards the Squinting Cat which John W noted was a first. After a short catch up stop on Lumb Lane we nearly lost someone under a car as we set off again to the Heights of Beckwithshaw. We forced our way up Heart Attack Hill, having turned left and left again at Beckwithshaw, to the Top of the World the wind trying to cause a Wizard of Oz incident.

As I finally reached these crossroads there were four options. I hoped the patiently waiting group had already made up their minds and decided what they wanted to do. I knew what I was going to do. A group of men (who will remain anonymous because I am not that nasty!), who wanted to be models and save the rainforests, wanted to return by the easy, downhill, wind behind them way to Harrogate and home. Thankfully Sue W., realising they needed someone to tend to their broken nails and out of place curls, bravely and stoically escorted them home. I assume they got there without being sucked into any tornados, as two of them were in my sitting room relaxing with a coffee when I managed to return. The sturdy plucky members of the group (the women and the legendary El Butler), decided it could not get any worse and headed off for North Rigton, where after a very scary tussle with a downhill and gusting side wind entered a near different world. Perhaps we had been

transported to Oz. It was a glorious glide down to Weeton, then along the valley bottom, with the wind behind us, blue skies and the sun shining to Dunkeswick. The ascent of Kirkby Overblow was never easier, aided with occasional blasts of the still southwesterly wind, and the hill out of Kirkby Overblow had become positively down. Alison and Lynda headed down Walton Lane towards Burn Bridge and Jenny and the ride leader were pulled along following in the slipstream of El Butler to Rudding, Wetherby Road and home, having admired stupendous views of the vale of York. Let's hope this wind eventually stops and we can concentrate on more views rather than staying upright. About 20 miles and 2174 calories used according to Sue D calorie counter, with an average heart rate of 154, whatever that means. Caroline G

Wednesday Wheel Easy Ride Report

With no designated ride leader seven grown men and women watched the decisive Poddlers wheel away to the hills while we dillied and dallied about where we would ride. We headed out towards Knox which is where Dave R sensibly decided that if we did want to go to Fountains then the safest and most protected route was via Ripley. As Caroline said there was a fair amount of tacking in to the wind, desperate to stay upright with some fearful gusts tearing across the roads. Malcolm, Paul, Glynn, Sue and Gia followed in Eric and Dave's wake to arrive at Fountains Visitor Centre unscathed. By this time the sun was out and in its own way this was an exhilarating ride. I think deep down we were delirious just to have got there in one piece.

Chris Fowler the Manager at Fountains Abbey joined our table and gave us all coffee loyalty cards. This was very generous as Malcolm and Sue had complained to him that there wasn't enough coffee in their cups! Too much froth! We also met Kath their customer services manager who is organising a family ride next year in the grounds of the Abbey and has asked us for some help.

We made it home, variously tucking in behind Eric who kept tacking back and forth rescuing his flock. Nice downpour in Knaresborough but all home safe. 35 miles. Gia

EG's Ride Report

A clear blue sky, wind a bit "gusty" and a fast swoop (wind on your back) down to Low Bridge, exchanging cheery waves from the Poddlers on the way down. Eight riders met at Low Bridge, Bill, Dave P, Dave W, John R, Norman, Peter B, Roy and Terry. The wind direction influenced the route which was South to Wetherby and a coffee stop. Here John left to return home due to only having a two hour pass out. After sustenance and a chin wag it was on the cycle path to Boston Spa, somewhat sheltered from the wind by trees and the old railway cutting.

It had been the intention to go to Tadcaster, but this would have meant more wind in your face, so a shorter route via Rudgate (south of the Wharfe) was taken to get us to Bramham. In Bramham a banana break was taken in the "Bramham Old Folks Shelter", if this seems hard to believe see photo.

This was unexpected luxury, it was warm (radiator on) comfy seats with cushions, and a radio to listen to (half expected to hear Vera Lynn singing). Dave P and Norman were on the point of nodding off in the warmth, but it was off again to Collingham via the old Roman road, then on to Linton and Sicklinghall. Here the weather spoiled itself and we had rain. A short Mars Bar break was taken at Kirkby Overblow, where the rain stopped so it was not too bad a ride back home.

A good cycling day for most of the ride, the wind though a nuisance at times was better than expected, approx mileage around 37 to 38 miles. Dave P

