

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

Wednesday Rides



Wheel Easy on Tour. The Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way
It was a bit nippy at 8.30am on the Monday morning of the ride as we assembled at the Black Swan in Burn Bridge, but a climb up Brackenthwaite Lane soon ensured the eight riders were warmed up. On to the Avanti Coffee Bar at Ilkey where we met Debs and started on the marathon coffee binge, oops sorry, bike ride, through and over the Dales. The route rolled off the tongue as a list of the most picturesque dales villages, but we learnt that a bit more effort was needed to actually make it to Appletreewick, Burnsall (a lunch stop), Cracoe, and Airton. After Malham village the serious hills started as we climbed up to the Tarn and continued west and then turned down south to Settle. Outside the Naked Man (or should it be Knackered Man) café a serious distance debate was settled by Paul laying the law down and making sure that one and all set forth post-haste for Ingleton. It is surprising how a delightful and relatively flat stretch of road raises the spirits.

Ingleton was our first stop after an unexpected 70 miles covered on the first day. The B&Bs were located and later food consumed at the Wheatsheaf Pub who seemed distinctly unimpressed by our existence. This theme continued at several locations on the ride - whatever happened to Yorkshire hospitality?

The next day was the short day - but that was measured horizontally, vertically it was another matter entirely. So we set off up the gated road through the absolutely delightful and splendid Kingsdale. This gem is hardly discovered by tourists and they can leave it to the cyclists and walkers forever please! Over the top we dropped down into Dent for coffee, before setting off up again to climb up the long hill to Garsdale Head. At the top the advance party of 3 riders discovered a tea and cake farmhouse and took advantage of the slow progress of the rest of us to finish up all the cake. So then it was into Hawes and despite the gloomy weather there was a real determination to finish the day's ride properly by continuing to Swaledale and then climbing back up over the hills again before dropping down to Leyburn and our stop for the night after 4 heroic climbs.

We ate at the Sandpiper Inn, and what a treat we had. Really good food and served by nice people who seemed to enjoy having us in their restaurant. The next morning Martin and Yvonne opted

out of the hard route due to a knee problem so authorship for the rest of the report goes to Gia. Martin W

Gia writes: Wednesday morning was much better than the forecast and as we set off today our thoughts were dominated by the anxiety of the climb up through Coverdale, the very steep descent of Park Rash and the promise of rain and thunder by lunchtime. We were sorry to miss Martin and Yvonne who had returned via a flatter route to protect Martin's troublesome knee. Our legs were all pretty heavy from the previous two days exertions as we made the first climb of the day out of Wensley but the sun was shining, Mark had fixed his chain and everyone was chatty and reflecting on the excellent dinner we had had the night before at The Sandpiper in Leyburn. Mark, Eric, Peter and Debs led the attack up the Col de Coverdale, Paul, Sue, Malcolm and Gia followed doing the touristy things like stopping for pictures and for rests but we all made it to the top, enjoying spectacular views all around us. The run down from Park Rash is pretty amazing, even though some of us walked down the hellish hairpin bend and arriving in Kettlewell we felt jolly pleased with our efforts of the day. Then on as fast as we could to get to Grassington as we hadn't had coffee yet and it was well past midday! Mark, Eric, Peter and Debs arrived first to secure our places at Cobblestones where we stoked up for the return home via Appletreewick, Bolton Abbey and Ilkley.

Mark who had stayed on in Grassington for a bit of sightseeing proved his new found fitness after his LeJog and caught us up after passing Burnsall. Not long after Eric's back wheel suffered a blow out of the rim which meant calling upon the Martin Weeks Rescue Service which sprung in to action and had Eric collected and home for four o'clock. Meanwhile the sun was still shining as Debs left us near Ilkley, and we texted Cockpit Farm to expect us for tea. In less than five minutes the rain started and then it poured as we raced through the back road out of Ilkley to Weston, followed (!) by a peloton of triathletes! We arrived at Cockpit Farm where we all had tea and coffee, teacakes, crumpets and scones which revived us for the final leg and behold as we left the sun came out and we returned home in the warm and dry. Within an hour of getting home there was a fantastic storm so we were very lucky. Total mileage was 180 miles, we visited dales we had never heard of or visited, climbed more steep hills in three days than ever before, enjoyed landscapes that are just here on our doorstep and each of us met the challenge of the ride with the wonderful support that makes Wheel Easy so special. Thanks again to Paul whose idea it was to put this tour together and to everyone who took part. Gia

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Poddlers Ride Report
Six Poddlers cycled around 20 miles to Timble Village Hall for tea and cakes with the WI.

EG's Ride Report
Despite the bad weather forecast and the Great Yorkshire Show traffic seven riders met at Low Bridge. The ride needed to be shortish with its timing and route avoiding traffic leaving the showground.

So it was on to Wetherby via the B6168, here the traffic was queuing through Little Ribston and back to the A1 turn off, making it difficult for cars to overtake us despite riding in single file, so we had to keep pulling off the road to let cars through. After tea and toasted tea cakes in Morrisons it was on to Otley via Netherby and Pool. Dave W leaving us at Kearby to return home. Then it was on to "Dunnies" for more tea, this had to be done as there was an EG who had not tasted the delights available, ie Mug of tea, bowl of chips and a piece of cake total price £s;1.90, wonderful!

Besides the EG's other illustrious personages eating there included Sir James Saville OBE, one EG suggested we should shout out in the cafe "we've got a puncture, Jim can you fix it?", however this was not taken up as we may want to eat there again.

The route back was via Braythorn (here Bill and John E left us for a quick blast back) Almscliff Crag, North Rigton and Brackenthwaite arriving in Harrogate at about 3-00pm before traffic starting leaving the show. The total mileage would have been around 43 to 45 miles'. This short mileage was made up for by getting a few hills in and although threatening it never rained and was in fact quite warm. Dave

Evening Ride Report
 Ronnie and myself turned up on Wednesday night. With Ronnie not knowing the area I said I'd keep us close to Harrogate in case the weather turned much worse. We got about 500 yards towards the Appleyards traffic lights when the heavens opened, thunder and lighting filled the sky and the traffic closed up to a point where couldn't even get further on. Roads looked like rivers. We abandoned the evening ride right there. Steve

2010 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 2125 YTD 80320



