

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

Wednesday Rides



Poddlers

Ride

As the bravest Poddlers gathered at Lynda's house up a hill in Skipton, so too did the monsoon rain clouds gather over Skipton. We were meeting for the 2nd Skipton away day, the first - last year was cancelled due to a tornado. So it was with fear and trepidation that 5 plucky poddlers set off into the monsoon rainstorm that was lashing at Skipton. Down down we sailed, almost literally, into the town, it was Market Day, no one was marketing, then up up we plodded to Embsay. Lynda N had assured us that we were going to do a flat ride, Skipton however has no flat bits in it or near it. There is even a quarrying company which is trying to flatten the hills around Skipton, and by next year they will have got rid of at least two more mountains. We passed near their latest flattening attempts, as we headed towards Bolton Abbey, but could not see them as they were shrouded in mist, fog and a monsoon cloud. Up up we continued and eventually, after doing an awful lot of down down down, but more up up up, we seemed to emerge from the cloud base over a cattle grid onto a glorious flat topped hill and a sweep down into café filled Bolton Abbey.

No stopping for us, however, as we passed the Devonshire Arms which looked extremely lovely and pushed up a short stretch of the A59 and onto a road filled with cyclists speeding to Ilkley and to Bolton Abbey. The sun had begun to shine and despite a nagging worry that we would need to retrace our wheels back up some fiendish ups, we bowled along taking in the spectacular views towards Ilkley. Caravan Lynda suddenly sped after an elegantly lycra-ed gentleman with red wheels, only to be brought back to the group with a promise of an ice cream at a park in Ilkley. Her excuse was she was following John - well, everyone knows John has not got red wheels and his squark like a parrot, except they don't now as he bought a new wheel. After ice cream and intermediate sustenance for all and a sit in the sun, we began the dreaded journey up up up and down to Skipton. It was not however as awful as anticipated, the route had reversed and it was more down down than up, and despite a force 9 gale, we reached a midday break stop at a café in Bolton Abbey with only one incident, when Caravan Lynda had to be restrained and stopped from chasing after another neat lycra clad bottom.

At the Café in Bolton Abbey we all were tempted with a little something, I in particular tucked into a delicious baked potato, the two Lyndas ate the cafe's cream, jam and scone supply for the week, whereas Tony (new to poddling and must have by this time been completely bemused by the whole outing) and John W picked at a light bite of flap jack each. Lynda N once more delighted us with the wasp dance, and then we were prepared for the ascent of the Bolton Abbey Mountain, past Hesketh Open Farm to the top of everywhere. I had in particular had been taking no notice of Lynda's insistence that it was not a big hill, because I had come down it 2 hours before. It was big and long, but on reaching the top I realised that I had thoroughly enjoyed pedalling up at my own pace, and found the whole experience quite comforting... a bit like fishing perhaps, pointless, and mind numbing, but very relaxing. But it was not in fact pointless as now the clouds had totally lifted and we could see magnificent views of pointy hills, half flattened mountains, sweeping valleys, deep green woodland, and field upon field of nice clean sheep and dark chocolate coloured cows. Lynda then cleverly led us up up up in the continuing force 9 headwind out of Embsay round the edge of Skipton, demonstrating once more that there was nowhere flat in Skipton, back on a downhill sweep to her house and our homeward mode of Transport. Thank you Lynda N we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, and perhaps even more people will be brave enough to do the 3rd Skipton Away Day next year. 69 miles of up up up, 4 miles of down, all done in a gale force wind in 9 hours, or for Malcolm's record 25 miles by 5 people done in about 4 hours with stops. CG

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Wheel Easy Ride
Only Gia, Ed and Paul turned up for today's ride. After a brief discussion it was decided to head towards Otley via Beckwithshaw, Stainburn Moor, Fewston, Timble and Askwith. We were cycling into the wind as we headed west. Ed on his new carbon Trek bike seemed to be free wheeling as Gia and myself struggled with the wind. At Timble we agreed to meet Ed at Cock Pit Farm for coffee and he shot off into the distance. Approaching Weston, Brian, out for a ride by himself, joined us for refreshments. The return journey to Harrogate saw Brian and Ed return home via Timble and Gia and Paul via Pool, Castley, Weeton and Kirkby Overblow. Ed summed up the 32 mile ride by saying his rides with Wheel Easy are always great rides with excellent coffee stops. Paul

EG's Ride
It seemed a cold start to the day, with a mixed sort of weather forecast. Ten riders gathered at Low Bridge, welcoming back Colin from his sailing and Barry M who cycles with us now and again. We had just had information on a toxic fire at/near Tockwith and the closure of some roads, this left us with the option of North, South or West, but definitely keeping away from the A1. So the ten headed North to Ripon and Spa Gardens Cafe to take a pleasant break sitting in the sun. As the break was so pleasant and the sun so warm, it seemed difficult to get moving and some of us could feel a slight nod coming on, but the loins were girded (not a problem when you wear Lycra) and nine of us headed North West to Grewelthorpe, Norman returning to Harrogate via Boroughbridge.

We were led out by Dave W this area being his old stamping ground, or as they sometimes say in Yorkshire " playing on his own midden". From Grewelthorpe (as Eric remarked something Dickensian about the name) south to Kirkby Malzeard and up on to Swetton Moor, Grantley and Aldfield.

It was definitely lumpy, and as Roy also remarked "where does he dig up these hills from", to some it seemed like being on the roller coaster at Lightwater Valley. John E also stated he thought this was going to be a relaxing ride after his time trial, no chance. Soon we were near Fountains Tea Rooms for recuperation, before moving on to Ripley and Harrogate/Knaresborough.

Though DP left to head for home without his second café stop, now that must be a first.

Thanks to Dave W for a great ride through the small lanes up hill and down dale. The weather was excellent and approx mileage around 50 - 52 miles. DP

2010 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 724 YTD 94509

