

Sunday, October 17, 2010

Wheel Easy Ride Report 234



Short Ride Report

It was good for the confidence to find no fewer than 12 riders (6 ladies, 6 men) on the short ride today in contrast to my last turn as leader with only Tim for company. We waited for the longer and faster pelotons to leave their bays (Hornbeam car park can seem to be almost designed to cater for a large cycling club, as well as cars) and then followed them up Hookstone.

Within minutes we were out of Harrogate and heading up to Stainburn Woods, where we stopped briefly and regrouped. We followed the script past the Sun Inn but soon after the leader was distracted by a sign to teas and cakes at Fewston Parochial Hall. A free vote resulted in 4 continuing down Pennypot Lane and 8 heading to Fewston where we saw Crawford and Anne, and demolished some ridiculously good value refreshments. Lynda bought some crockery for a song and Matt won a [Simply Red CD](#) on the tombola. Sarah and John went on ahead, which left 6 of us together for the return leg along Pennypot, over the bridge closed to traffic for repairs, and pedalling or walking up the steep hill towards the Duchy estate. Finally we did some minor detours, walking past the tennis courts in the Valley Gardens, skirting the Stray towards The Oval, and then the cricket ground to reach Leadhall Lane where I turned right for home and Linda led the rest left towards Hornbeam. Total distance 18 miles. Malcolm

[Click on slide show for all today's photos](#)

Medium Ride Report

It was a lovely sunny, if chilly, day and there was a fabulous turnout at Hornbeam Park. I started counting, reached the mid-fifties but more were arriving. I think we probably topped 60 riders again.

The medium ride had 22 riders at the start, so we split into 2 groups and headed west to Beckwithshaw and on to Fewston and Timble. It soon became apparent that there was a lack of

the usual cheerful chatter in my group, and I also soon realised that it was men only. Was there a connection?

Gia was leading the 2nd group and by Timble three riders had left us, mostly by design, and headed back. The rest continued to Low Snowdon and then down the long hill to Askwith and Cockpit Farm cafe where we found the medium plus riders having diverted from their official route for the same delights of coffee and cake. We really took over the cafe but the owner and her helpers (plus chickens) coped magnificently as usual. Back home the route took us via Otley, Leathley, Almscliffe Crag, and North Rigton before dropping to Burn Bridge and Harrogate. Dave, new to Wheel Easy, coped comfortably with the hills and we look forward to seeing him again. One new rider, Anne, decided that she would return before the climb to Timble. Anne, if you read this we don't have an email address so get in touch please. We would like to see you back again, and if it is any comfort you joined us on just about the hardest medium ride on the whole calendar! It was a good workout in good company in glorious weather. Mileage: 19x33=627, and 3x20=60 Total 687. MartinW

Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

Leading the ride today reminded me of trying to conduct my Junior Band. They all start without me and I do my best to keep them altogether and pretend that I'm in control... It all started too well. 15 of us set off on the medium plus ride. At the top of Little Almscliffe, natural selection had taken place and the faster ones set off leaving eight of us to follow in a more leisurely way. Both groups were supposed to turn right in Askwith and follow the road to Ilkley. The lure of the 'Cockpit' tea rooms was too great however and both groups were to be found there, enjoying its refreshments. The fact that the faster group had transgressed wasn't my fault but my group's deviance was a result of weak leadership and Sue C. who talked me into it. My "Yes man" leadership didn't end there. After the tea shop we were supposed to return via Otley, but this time it was Gia who suggested that we return the way we had come as the beautiful weather would mean another glimpse of the wonderful views. The fact that Gia wasn't even on our ride, but with the medium 'not plussers' only compounds my obvious inability to lead. Anyway, we were just lamenting how nothing exciting had happened to put into this report when we realised we 'spoke' to soon. Yes, Terry broke a spoke. With a combination of repair skills and the right tool, he put it right even if it did render his back brake useless and put an impressive buckle in his wheel.

After this I got lost... don't ask me exactly where we went but names such as Blubberhouses, reservoir road, Stone Cross and Duck Street were observed at points along the journey. Oh well, we were a well matched bunch who all seemed happy to go at the same speed even though the leader didn't know where he was leading. I was informed at the end that we had cycled exactly 40 miles and climbed 3079 feet and I'm pretty sure it was a route never tried by Wheel Easy before... Steve

Long Ride Report

9 riders set off on what promised to be a hilly ride. 3,700' climbing was promised - same as last week, but this time packed into a shorter 52 mile ride. So logic dictates the average gradient today must be even steeper than last week's hilly ride! The climbs up Brackenthwaite Lane and North Rigton to Almscliffe Crag were a useful warm-up for the bigger ones to follow. The views over Wharfedale from Almscliffe Crag were stunning in the autumn sunlight. We descended into Pool, and then hit the first major climb of the day - up Pool Bank Old Road - possibly the first time this has been tackled on a Wheel Easy ride. We then rode the length of Otley Chevin, stopping at the viewpoint for a photocall. We dropped down into Menston and immediately started another climb up the south east side of Ilkley Moor. At the top, we paused to admire the views over Airedale, and saw a buzzard and red kite close by. Shortly after we set off again, 2 kestrels and a sparrow hawk were also spotted, so there were 5 raptors within a very short distance - quite a sight! The road then dropped down into East Morton, before we climbed steeply again, this time up the south west side of the Moor, with views over Keighley below. Another long steep descent dropped us to the edge of Silsden, where we turned to take us along the north west side of the Moor, and

- yes, you've guessed it - yet another steep climb followed by a long descent to Ilkley. Although by now we were all in severe need of calories, we decided to carry on to the Cock Pit Farm Tea Rooms at Weston for our lunch stop. We were the last of several Wheel Easy groups to arrive there today, and the others left no tea cakes and just one scone for us. Fortunately soup, baked potatoes and paninis were still available, so we survived! By this time, Chris, suffering with cramp and trailing behind the group, somehow managed to cycle right past the cafe without seeing it, and continued on his way home alone. The rest of us continued to Otley, where Glyn left us to go home to Leeds, muttering something about having to cycle up Pool Bank Old Road for the second time today! 7 continued to Farnley and Lindley, where Geoff and Pete made their way home to Knaresborough, whilst the remaining 5 came through Stainburn Forest on the forest track to Little Alms Cliff and the welcome descent to Beckwithshaw. Finally arrived home unusually early at 3pm. 52 miles, with lovely views over new countryside, but the 5 mile section from Menston to East Morton is too busy with traffic to recommend this as a frequent Wheel Easy ride. Total mileage for the 9 riders to their respective homes was 490 miles. Eric

2010	Wheel	Easy	Miles	(approx)	Today	1993	YTD	123323
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