



Short Ride Report. "Hence a season of calm weather..."

Today's windfree conditions were much appreciated given that my last two rides had been somewhat blighted by strong gusts. A little less appreciated was the untimely start - yesterday it was 8 30am! Eight of us prepared to face the challenge of today's short ride via Follifoot, Spofforth, Little Ribston and thence to Knaresborough. There was a variety of reasons for opting for the short one ranging from the need to recover from last night to being back promptly in order to practise one's sax in preparation for next weekend's crescendo in Glasgow. The talents of Wheel Easy members never ceases to amaze. Two new riders, Annette and Bob, were warmly welcomed.

We maintained a steady pace throughout with one or two interesting happenings en route. Thanks to Joe's kind intervention, I was able to continue the ride having placed my rear wheel between two bars of the cattle grid at the Rudding end of the Showground cycle path! Just beyond Follifoot, there was a clatter as my mirror once again hit the road. This had been carefully retrieved but the shock of the noise caused poor new rider, Bob, to plunge down a bank, narrowly avoiding being impaled on a barbed wire fence. Thankfully, Bob emerged smiling and joking and, even more impressively, without a trace of mud or any other sign of the miasma lurking in the dank ditches of Follifoot. What a start to one's Wheel Easy career!

Without further ado, we continued to Knaresborough, where the decision to skip coffee was made. As Sue H pointed out, had we been going for four hours, coffee would have been vital. Jean and Bob left us to scale "Beryl" - hopefully, Bob enjoyed a "full English" at home and will return unscathed to the joys of Wheel Easy!

The remaining six returned to Harrogate via Bogs Lane. Joe and Geraldine took an interesting little deviation and met us on Silverdale Road before departing for the excitement of the "Rug Doctor". Max

headed off for a quick rallentando before Caroline returned or maybe that was the flavour of today's sandwich. Sue H left us having said how much she'd enjoyed herself and Annette and I returned to Hornbeam.

17 miles of good fun - thanks to all participants! Sue Downes

Click on slide show for all today's photos

#### Medium Ride Report

26 riders opted for the "Lollypop" Ride to Timble (same route out and back except for a circular bit at the top). After a cold, early morning, the weather warmed up. Even around Hornbeam, there was little traffic on the roads as the clocks had moved forward into Spring so normal people were still in bed. This made for a pleasant start, with 3 distinct groups setting out from the start. There was easy relaxed riding but some steep hills and this led to a certain amount of metamorphic activity! However, this sort of behaviour did not continue for long! The three groups merged at the Washburn Heritage Centre, which was very welcoming to such a large group of cyclists.

Most of the group decided to deviate from the planned ride to return with Paul via Hampsthwaite. Others came with Martin and Yvonne to do the planned route, deviating just a little to ride down to Scargill Reservoir. Most of us returned to Norwood Lane and on home, whilst Paul decided to continue for a bit of off road biking. Distance: 28 miles. Hilly. Thanks for the ride and good company everyone!  
Yvonne Skelton

#### Medium Plus Touring Pace Ride Report

Having persuaded the Ride Calendar Supremos that I'd like to reverse the advertised ride, I was gratified that given today's weather conditions tackling the hills early on would suffice to keep the morning chills away. By the time we reached Hampsthwaite though, the sun made its first appearance and didn't stop from then on. Various closed roads and diversions produced changes of route and attracted passing traffic in unexpected places but we strove to maintain the planned route. After Brimham Rocks we turned right on the Pateley-Ripon road which is not an often used route but meant we were quite fast to the small hamlet of Risplith - site of the defunct Blackamoor Pub (anyone know why its named so?). We turned left to Grantley, just ahead of G&T's ice cream cafe - has anyone been to this and is it recommended ?

In order to gratify the leader's need for 'roads what I have never cycled on', we turned left in Grantley up on to the moors to rejoin the Pateley-Kirkby Malzeard road above Dallowgill. This was lovely, peaceful, easy riding on a very quiet road and meant we could then enjoy the long downhill into Laverton and then to Galphay and Ripon for the excellent value tea and cakes in the Spa Gardens Cafe. No question of seeking inside seats, we basked in the sunshine alongside other cycle groups from York, Leeds and Yeadon. Eventually we dragged ourselves away and home through Littlethorpe, Bishop Monkton, Farnham, Scriven - at which point Malcolm sprung his Coup D'etat !! 'I'm not quite sure but keep the wall on your right and we can't go wrong', he cried as we swung up Scotch George Lane. Within seconds of entering this residential off-piste we were lost, although Malcolm investigated each cul-de-sac undaunted, we eventually found our way back to Knaresborough central and hauled up the A59 to Starbeck and Harrogate. Everyone seemed to enjoy the ride, I certainly did and I think have confirmed that 'hills before cafe' is the right way round for this ride.

Thirteen riders at 45 miles per head : 585 miles I think. Home by 3:30 without pushing it. Peter L

#### Medium Plus Ride Report

Well the intrepid six, Glyn, Darren, Steve, Dave, Gary and myself set off under leaden skies for what was billed as a hilly ride. And it did exactly what it said on the tin! Glyn's obsession with a horse in a field on the way to Brimham Rocks had us all a bit worried, and produced a fairly quick upping of the pace, "what you do in your private life is none of our business Glyn" and on we sped under what was now bright and warm sky towards the excellent fare on offer at Spa Gardens, where there was an open and frank discussion on what is the best Duran Duran Video. Yours? You can guess what Darren's is! Not far from Knaresborough, Dave had a visit from the puncture fairy, but it gave us all a chance to bask in the sunshine a while longer, with the final hill out of Knaresborough completed we all went our

separate ways, after what was a fantastic, if hilly ride, spent in great company.  
Approx 45 miles. Mark T

#### Long Ride Report

The magnificent or foolish 7 set off from Hornbeam Park with the intention of cycling to Lofthouse via Kirkby Malzeard and Grewelthorpe. Everything was going according to plan until we reached the Bermuda Triangle of Ilton. Where the leader took a wrong turn on leaving Grewelthorpe, and hey presto, we were on our way back to Grewelthorpe. There were two options, one being 7 miles of rough track across moorland to Lofthouse or the other was to retrace our steps, which we did. Some members of the group thought the diversion was just a dry run for the hills we were about to climb. Once we were on the right track it was an excellent ride, with some testing climbs, and splendid views across upper Nidderdale. Several members of the group decided on an easier route for their return journey following the stop at Pateley for refreshments. The remaining 3 were left to tackle Yorke's Folly, but were again rewarded with splendid views across Nidderdale. About 60 miles. Peter J

The "Off Road" ride was a little impromptu affair. Doubts had been expressed as to whether we would get sufficient support to have one. However five members were brave enough to join me on a journey to the unknown despite the early hour enforced by the clocks being put 1 Hour ahead.

We set off a little later than anticipated due to the high numbers of enthusiastic Wheel Easy members heading off out by road.

Leaving Hornbeam we tracked through via the Squash club, towards "Fodders" (Too early for a stop-off), crossing Wetherby Rd. past the Recycling Centre on towards Forest Moor Rd. From here we climbed up Thistle Hill and dived into Birkham Wood our first off road section. A sharp descent to the Lido and onwards across the by-pass to Goldsborough Mill Farm. Stopping off we couldn't help take in the view of the weir, recently opened up due to some significant tree felling, revealing the old mill house.

We continued through Goldsborough village, turning back towards Knaresborough and then turning north through Hay-a-Park. Following a loop via Sweet Bits Farm & Bar Lane we crossed via a field of wild daffodils towards Hopewell House. Continuing north to Arkendale, Debbie collected a rather large thorn leaving her with a puncture. Stopping off to replace the punctured inner tube, once Colin had sussed the difference between Schrader and Presta valves, we continued on our way. Swinging around the tracks north of Arkendale we headed west towards Staveley. So far, although cool, the weather had remained dry and the off road tracks firm.

Occaney followed and on past the Stud Farm on Walkingham Hill, we dropped down to the edge of the woods north of Farnham. By now some of the regular riders were able to get their bearings having for the past few miles being a little puzzled as to where we were.

The first challenging climb now faced us. Ben, on his single speed mountain bike (how does he do it?) made a valiant attempt to cycle to the summit only for the abundance of roots to defeat his efforts. Peter B. complained of his front wheel reaching for the skies but made it to the top. A short break to recover our breath, we dropped down the long road towards Burton Leonard but swinging west for South Stainley.

Yet more daffodils. Thousands of them, lining the very long drive to the renovated Hall over the little bridge. Crossing the A61 we turned for Ripley past High Cayton Hall. Time for a banana stop or in Peters case a couple of sandwiches. Thoughts of ice creams were now tempting our progress toward Ripley, but first yet another loose climb through the woods near Cayton Grange. A photo call allowed us to regain our composure.

Reaching Ripley about 1.45pm we dived into the ice cream shop for well earned refreshments. Richard, a relatively new member to Wheel Easy, on his first off-road ride with us, however headed straight off home with a wave of thanks to all.

Everyone seemed to have enjoyed the ride so far helped by the unexpected sun coming out. Ice creams finished and a very large piece of lamb bought by Debbie and Colin for Sunday's dinner, we headed for Killinghall, leaving Peter to branch off to Jennyfield and the remaining 4 to continue to Knox and for myself to then return to Knaresborough.

Apologies once again to Colin for the accident at Ripley. I'll try to be more careful next time.

Mileage is a bit of a guess without a GPS but I estimate the route about 28 miles from Hornbeam

Total Milage:-  $1 \times 33; 5 \times 28 = 173$  miles

2011 Wheel Easy Miles (approx) Today 2312 YTD 38360





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