

Wednesday, May 23, 2012
Wednesday Rides



Poddlers Ride - Caroline
Blue skies,
No Clouds,
Warm wind,
Ten Poddlers',
Ten shiny bikes,
Water bottles filled
Two returning Ladies.

Route decided,
Through town,
Onto the hills,
Glorious views,
Zooming downward,
No ice cream temptations,
Back for showers, lunch, and meeting a new person.

Will Christian let Le Tour de France have as much fun on their day in Yorkshire. 25 miles of wonderfulness. CG

Poddlers Ride - Liz

Under the expert leadership of Caroline and Max a total of 10 poddlers proceeded to Hampsthwaite where they were allowed to fraternise with the fast group, though not invited to join them! By the time Clint Bank had been conquered the poddlers had divided into 2 groups of 5 with Max racing away with the faster ones and Caroline bringing the rest at a more sedate pace. We continued up and up (and occasionally down) through Burnt Yates then turning right still climbing but enjoying the views and sunshine. The 2nd group had a banana stop just before Brimham then proceeded on to find the others had been waiting a "long while" for them at the actual entrance. They joined us for a photo stop and then set off on the wonderful mostly downhill run past the site of the now demolished Drovers into Ripley and back to Harrogate in soaring temperatures. The other 5 followed at a slightly more sedate pace though 2 of them were very nearly wiped out by a caravan as they approached Killinghall. A wonderful ride and all back for lunch. 10x approx 26 miles. Liz

EG's Ride

A hot sunny morning seems strange for Bill and DP as with bare knees they headed for Low Bridge with a salutation to Caroline as she made for Horbeam Park and the Poddlers. At Low Bridge we soon had fifteen riders all with naked knees and lashings of sun block, some looking a bit like Laurence of Arabia, which makes a refreshing change from the usual coating of seal blubber and WD40 to keep out the rain and the cold.

Eric had devised a cunning plan for the day's route to take in Leyburn (for the fit & support Le Tour) and Masham for the less fit. So it was north to Ripon Spa Gardens Cafe (the bikes know their way there) for the first café stop and a bask in the sunshine. Then it was North again to Masham via Grewelthorpe and the fast descent into Masham. Here the group split their patronage to two cafes and a pub (guess who finished their meal last).

Peter B was found wandering around the square (as you do) and also James (nice to see you back on your wheels James). Eric gathered in his flock (or was it press ganged) to head for Leyburn. The remainder to head for Ripon, with pleas not to return via the expletive hill.

So it was on to Ripon via West Tanfield, with Rob insisting we had an ice cream stop on the route. At Sharow two riders left us to return via Boroughbridge, the remainder having an ice cream and a comfort stop near Ripon Cathedral to return via Bishop Monkton, Farnham and Knaresborough.

Great cycling weather, it seems like a year since we cycled with bare arms and naked knees. Mileage could be anywhere from 55 to 70 plus for the whole seventeen riders. Dave P

Long Wednesday Ride

Just three riders set off with Richard at the helm with a notion that we would head west and north west. Early thoughts about a run up to Arncliffe were quickly shelved as the prospect of a broiling day ahead began to unfold. Instead, Nidderdale became the goal.

Outwards via Squinting Cat and the corrugations took us to Hampsthwaite, where the Poddlers were regrouping, and onwards to Brimham Rocks via Clint Bank and Burnt Yates, past farmers taking their first crop of grass this year.

Once on the top, and as the temperature rose, stops for water and a look at the view across the dale were welcome. Compared with previous weeks we were in a different land.

On the road up to Lofthouse, we were joined by three riders from Otley/Shipley aiming for Masham, showing no fear of the climb up to Jordan Moss in the rising heat. They didn't seem to be aware of the visit to the town by M. Prudhomme, so I hope they were able to be present at or near the deputation about Le Tour.

Light lunch in the shade was taken at How Stean Gorge cafe - very welcome, although the service was a little slow, given that there were only about six customers. But it was that sort of day - it demanded to be taken slowly.

Setting aside any temptation to ride up the 1 in 3 to Middlesmoor (!), we set off for the dams up the road that Richard reliably informed us was on the track bed of the former railway laid down to allow materials and workers to access the dam site. Shortly after the fire station, there came a view that we dared not stop to admire. Almost like a Greek tableau, there was a waterfall, a pool dappled with shade from trees and a naked male bather.

Eyes focussed to the front, we headed silently up the Dale!

Past the ghost of the workers township and up to Scar House dam, we wondered at the scramble there must have been on nights off when workers went in search of the ale houses down the valley. Finally, on to Angram, across the dam and to a photo call, where as a group we worked out how Richard's phone took pictures. Proof is attached.

Back down the track bed, one couldn't help but take a look to see if the tableau was still there - but no, it had vanished. Onwards to Pateley and Teacups cafe where, as well as dispensing tea and cakes, there was a good helping of friendly advice about money and purses to be had. Teacups has many community roles and on this day a keyboard player was running

through a medley of Rodgers and Hammerstein standards to ease us into the next phase of the day.

Richard gave us three choices of route back to Harrogate, but there was only going to be one winner - the valley road, via Summerbridge and an impromptu tour of the New York industrial estate in the vain search for the bridleway by the river. Stiff Cycles was spotted on the estate: quite a relocation from Headingley.

The route back took in the climb to Dacre, a climb out of Thornthwaite to Delves Ridge and a friendly wave to whoever was operating the security barrier - all of this across bubbling tar and the occasional blast from an oven door when we got too close to walls. Returning via Penny Pot Lane, the languid turning of the wind turbines tempted one to follow suit and ease up and enjoy the slackening of the heat. Sixty miles clicked up at the household waste station.

It had been an excellent day out. Distance to Knapping Mount for Terry was 66 miles, Richard and Steve would finish with even more; total climbing amounted to almost 3690 ft, but it didn't feel like a hill thrash. It must have been the heat!

Terry Smith



