

Sunday, May 27, 2012

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 317



### Short Ride

A pleasant 17 mile ride taking in Follifoot then off road through Birkham Wood to Abbey Road . Coffee at the Waterside then back via Beryl Burton. 8 riders and welcome to 2 new riders esp Victoria who did great for a first ride with the group.

### Medium Ride

On this glorious sunny morning, 27 riders fought their way to the Medium Ride assembly point. Given the difficulties associated with large groups, the following divisions were created using Malcolm's new pace-speak:

St Dave Preston plus 8 (sedate ++)

Sue D plus 8 (sedate +)

Sue T plus 4 going on 5 after a re-group (sedate)

The Waters Family plus Sarah (sedate -)

Quick-witted SueT spotted that her group could be rolled out as dumplings while Sue D could be exposed to legal action!

A determined if sedate pace took us to Beckwithshaw via Lady Lane, Howhill Lane and Otley Road and thence to the heights of Almscliff Crag where we encountered St Dave P and his cohort of enthusiastic trail blazers. Suddenly, Diane appeared having been "left" at the Leeds Rd lights. Quel horreur, what dreadful leadership could have caused this - actually she confessed to talking before undertaking a fast catch-up. At this point, Chris became very excited at Diane's apparel - it seems that fur linings feature somewhere but surely not in today's soaring temperatures... What's more, we'll never know.

Thus, upward and onward beside Swinsty and over the dam. A quick pause at the Car Park to greet Dave's group allowed a photo stop and then the haul to Timble village. By this time, Marion had assured us that cakes would be available in Fewston Village Hall so we retraced our tyre marks over the Dam and thence to the aforementioned where SueT and her group were about to finish their fare - they had nipped in quick by avoiding the Timble Tops! Having consumed some very good cakes, we turned left and right to descend and ascend to the junction with Penny Pot Lane. Given the joys of this glorious Sunday, we decided to journey on and from Penny Pot Lane said farewell to Dave's group and returned via Weston Lane to halfway up Hollins Lane and thence to Knox, the Cycle Path, Asda, Stray Rein and Hornbeam. A very enjoyable 27 miles and, Pete, if you're reading this I suspect Jill will be out-riding everyone before long!

NB: Apologies from the sedate group for not doing the actual prescribed miles but I was too keen to reach the village hall and the lovely cakes on offer and sit in the sun for a little longer! The ladies topic of the day was their forthcoming jubilee street party [?] Uuuuummm, wonder if I can "street crash" ..... mine isn't having one!

Thank you all very much Sue D + Sue T

There were a lot of takers for the Multi Sue medium ride, something perhaps to do with the glorious weather and the promise of gooey cakes at Fewston. At over twenty riders it was decided to split into small groups, Eric the accountant (good with numbers) rose to the occasion and told how many per group (a bit beyond DP who would have had to take his shoes off.).

Sue D handed out the route sheets and sent Dave P's group away first, comprising Al, Bob, Diane, John, Laurie, Mary, and Trudi (and I hope I have got these names right I usually don't).

Out via Beckwithshaw to Little Alms Cliff for a quick drink stop then on to Swinsty Reservoir and a comfort stop at the car park and toilets.

Here we met Roy (well where else would you expect to meet a fellow EG but at a toilet or a cafe).

Laurie left us here to return to Headingley, the rest of us climbed the hill to Timble, then the swoop down back to Swinsty and on to Fewston Village Hall

for cake and caffeine only to find we had been beaten there by Team Sue T (immediately renamed Team Cakehounds).

As usual delicious cakes, however the smell of cooking bacon was too much for a couple of EG's who had to leave before succumbing to temptation.

(As like a famous author we can resist anything but temptation).

Then on to Penny Pot Lane a great ridge route back to Harrogate. Dave P.

### Medium Plus Sedate Pace

I thought my offer of a 'sedate' medium plus would attract a fair proportion of the horde of WE riders at Hornbeam, but it seems that while I'm slowing down nearly everyone else is getting quicker. Nevertheless, I was joined by 4 others who were at least to start with in a sedate mood, Bridget, Ian and Ruth B, and Monica, though at every decent hill her inner demons, or at any rate her natural triathlete instincts, took over as she raced away from the rest of us.

Brimham seems to be inching closer and closer to Harrogate, or perhaps it was the chat and the sunshine which made it feel that way. We were there before we knew it, and then speeding down the hill to Risplith for, I think, our first ice cream stop of the year. This kept us going to Spa Gardens and some rather more substantial drinks and sandwiches. By the time we arrived the crowds of WE and other cyclists who'd been there earlier had gone.

Finally, with the heat mounting, we were off on the last section through Littlethorpe to Bishop Monkton and Knaresborough, where Ian and Ruth left us, and following Monica up the hill to Harrogate. About 40 glorious relaxed miles and splendid company. Malcolm

### Medium Plus..Middle group.

There seems to be a trend to try to rename the various rides as people step up or step down depending how they feel on the day.

Sedate has now entered the medium plus category, so our group could be called sedate plus, less quick, or just a jolly good ride with a great group of people!

Nine of us followed the speedy chaps and one chappess out of the car park and enjoyed a fine run to Brimham where Simon and David left to take the Wilsill route home.

David S left somewhere near Grantley to ride home via Ripon, something to do with watching the Grand Prix!

After Risplith we were held up briefly by a flock of sheep crossing the road, arriving at Spa Gardens which was a real hub for cyclists today. Some of the EG's were eating tea and cake, Steve and wife, Sue arrived on a training ride, Phil Sn. and his daughter on their way to Bedale , tandem riders, a handpedal tricyclist and speedy guys from Otley and Brighouse.

On our return home we met John R and his wife, he had just completed his epic ride from the furthest point east of the country to the furthest point west. Watch out for Travellers Tales next January.

Sue and Gia topped the day with ice cream by the river at Knaresborough.

44 mile ride, fabulous day, great route and many thanks for the guys who rode so patiently with us today, we felt privileged. Gia

### Long Ride - Swaledale 100

The ride departed from Hornbeam on schedule at 8:00 in surprisingly chilly but sunny weather and by 19:00, all 10 riders had completed a tough ride of around 110 miles (Terry unfortunately, but wisely, having dropped out early due to illness). All day everyone stayed in one group which made the pace rather more than Touring but this was Ok as we navigated via Ripon, Snape and Spennithorne to Leyburn. Then the hard work started with a pull over a live firing range to Reeth where the Copper Kettle provided a reasonably priced but full flavoured brunch - which, as it was 12:04, for some of us came in the form of Afternoon Yorkshire Tea. The sun was full out now as we headed up Swaledale with a following wind, vying with the motorbikes for road space on the twisty route and enjoying fantastic views over Gunnerside and of the wildflower meadows at Muker. I'm not sure whether the minor mutiny really wanted to head over towards Askrigg via Oxnop Scar (maybe next year ?) and avoid Buttertubs, but in the event we pushed on and started the ascent with the best wishes of several cyclists finishing their descent! The book \* says ' the giant Buttertubs Pass is brilliant to climb from either direction' Last year it was South-North, this year North-South. The North route is the toughest but we were aided by a slight following wind and the descent to Hawes more than rewarded us for the effort. We decided against a stop in Hawes alongside about the entire Yorkshire bikers community and headed for the dreaded Fleet Moss.

Again last year we climbed it South-North and this year the reverse. Quoth the Book \*, 'Fleet Moss, the highest road in Yorkshire, is a beast from either direction but the greater challenge lies in the route south from Hawes'. Why do we do these things? The heat was merciless and the following wind had dropped. This was truly a beast of a climb. I'm not sure what happened behind me but I am sure that at one point grinding along at 3.3 miles per hour, I could hear footsteps behind catching me up! Again the descent was a joy, but to our dismay we had to pedal down Langstothdale into a headwind rather than freewheeling past by the picnickers and bathers.

Sustained by another afternoon tea in the West Winds tea room in Buckden (good B&B apparently), the ride down Wharfedale was quiet, although somehow both Peters became detached from the front of the group despite one reaching Kettlewell at the rear. By now dear Reader, you are expecting a

few bland sentences about a familiar roll back to base. Oh no, yet more hills out of Grassington - all of them into the wind, up through Hebden, up Grimwith , up Stump Cross to a rest at Greenhow. Not content with the leg pain caused by the hills, your author decided to summersault into a patch of stinging nettles from a standing position immediately then getting cramp trying to hasten out (combined degree of difficulty : OUCH). Luckily Duck Street allowed more freewheeling and recuperation with (I assume) everyone reaching home at their own comfortable pace.

To be honest the overall pace was faster than I would have preferred, but that is a feature of riding in a group and the encouragement and banter from each other over the whole day is what makes riding in our groups such a great experience.

Apparently I had suggested that we reverse last year's ride this year - I now know we did it the easier way last year (and included Tan Hill ) and took an hour longer. At this point , I have no suggestions to make for next year. But Phil's Hilly Challenge is now an event which needs to feature annually, with a group expansion in two years from 4 starters to 11 clearly there is a demand. Thank you again Phil for planning the route, keeping us going and climbing up ahead to record us on camera. Well done and I hope the knees recover quickly

\* The Book : 100 Greatest Hill Climbs, A Road Cyclist's Guide to Britain's Hills ; Simon Warren. Peter L



