

Sunday, January 13, 2013

Wheel Easy Ride Report 350

Terry welcomed a large group of members who had ignored the cold and the unreliable weather forecast and were keen to ride.

Maintenance tip of the day from Joe

If you took your front wheel off to get your bike in the car please check you put the wheel back on correctly before cycling. If your wheel is not moving freely and the brakes are rubbing the rim there is a good chance it's not the brakes, its the wheel that has not been fitted correctly.



Short Ride

Now it was not a promising start to the day. It was -1 C outside and there was ice everywhere. It was grey. I had no idea where would be the safest route and there was more marmalade to made and labelled. However, by the time I reached Hornbeam and had seen everyone ready to go and the beginnings of basking in a slightly less than watery sun, I was filled with enthusiasm. The Sloe Gin Ride backwards would be exactly 15 miles with a cafe stop as a finale treat at Fodders. And I had enough stamps on my card for two free drinks. Fourteen people set off to Knaresborough where Sue Threadgold diverted back to prepare for a little lunch do, and Ruth got confused at the end of Abbey Road because we turned right instead of left. Liz having already tried to divert several surprised cyclists, was delighted when I suggested following a group of young lycra clad young men on bikes up the side of the roundabout for safety purposes, which turned out to be more icy and traffic strewn than the road way. We powered along the road towards Spofforth and Dave suggested a diversion via Wetherby to a cafe stop and Kevin suggested we should have rung and booked a table at the planned stop. I could feel there was doubt about whether we would stop or not. Many sunny photo opportunities were missed as Fiona was speeding the group round the lanes and the leader and her camera were plodding along slightly more slowly. By the time I caught the group up at the top of Follifoot hill I was in photographing mode (having taken lots of snaps of the group not there and posing) and would stand no messing. They all lined up beautifully (even the man with the lovely green hat), all facing the right way and all the bikes placed as recommended. A perfect shot. Christine made sure I had picked up everything I had dropped and mislaid and onwards to Fodders and more photographic evidence that I had in fact allowed them to have a coffee stop. Nicola and (appologies if it is not) Steve bravely passed their home and the end of their ride to join the group for their coffee stop and a nice lady with pink things round her legs left the group, while the remaining twelve sat down and enjoyed cakes and a warm drink. The horrid hill to Hooky Woods was tackled by all

and for the first time I heard back marker(thank you for your help) Liz panting...she must have been very ill..this must have done her some good and everyone else as well. Thank you all for being so patient with the leading from the back and thank you Darren for being such a good sheep dog, checking all was well. 15miles Caroline G



Medium Ride

Fifteen people opted for the medium ride, which the web site promised would provide us with about 30 hilly miles to the west of Harrogate up to Little Alms Cliff, down to Swinsty and Fewston, up to Timble and then over to the Nidd Valley at Darley via Menwith Hill. Paul Tindle had to leave early, and offered to lead a shorter ride, missing out the reservoirs and Timble. It was a cold, frosty but lovely day, with almost no wind as we pulled up Norwood Lane to the car park by Stainburn Woods. The blue sky and view of the windmills on Penny Pot lane were inspiring, although the windmills were not turning. Dave Preston took the group photo on a proper camera. The group decided not to do the reservoirs and Timble, but simply to turn right on the B6451 past

the Sun Inn. Paul Tindle's sub-group, which included Dennis and Roy, went straight on over the A59 along the prescribed route, whilst Max led us left and down and then up to join the A59 a little further along towards Blubberhouses. We faced about 100 m of A59, which was not nice, before turning right on Meagill Lane past Fewston cemetery and then right again along the 'barriered' road past Forest Moor Naval station. We were being watched, as someone lifted the barrier for us at the start of the road and also at the end (unusually, we didn't get a visit from the boys in blue to check us out). We turned right along Menwith Hill Road to the B6451 again, crossed and regained the prescribed route along Back Lane towards Birstwith and Clapham Green, and then a lovely swoop down to Hampsthwaite, where Sophie's Café was too tempting to resist for many, and so several of us called in for refreshment and a chance for our feet to thaw out. We found Roy there tucking in to a hearty breakfast. Back up the hill and across the A61 to Knox, and people made their own ways back to Hornbeam or home. About 23 cold-but-sunny miles. Joe and Geraldine





Due to time constraints I could only cycle for a few hours this morning but I had the privilege of cycling with Dennis. You can only admire his enthusiasm for cycling and the speed he climbs hills. I love to hear anything about bikes and cycling and Dennis informed me all about cycling when he was younger. Below is a photograph of Dennis cycling in the Blubberhouses area in 1946. Paul



Medium Plus Ride

Two Medium Plus (MP) leaders lead eight others to Spofforth via the Showground path, Rudding Lane and Follifoot. Rachel joined us there having already warmed up by a lap to Follifoot of her own. Thence to Little Ribston, Cowthorpe, Tockwith and then Askham Richard, where Rachel headed off to York for a spot of familial rugby watching. Three riders attempted the shortcut to Healaugh via Mill Lane but discovered it a sea of unsurpassable mud and took a slightly less direct route. The other seven riders road through Bilborough, Catterton, Healaugh, Wighill to the Low Calorie Cafe in Thorpe Arch. Three of the ladies headed back to Harrogate via Kirk Deighton, the remaining 6 (John had left the cafe early) rode via Sicklinghall, Kirby Overblow and Burn Bridge. The first half of the ride was in clear sunshine in which one could detect a modicum of warmth. After the cafe, the skies clouded high up and the resulting chill was obvious.

Two events of note : It was refreshing to see horse riders roundly abusing a car driver who squeezed dangerously between them and us near Little Ribston. Admiration goes to Terry for sticking to a cup of green tea while all around ordered bacon butties, cakes, teacakes etc. 45 miles - a good excursion taking full advantage of the weather and home by just after 2pm Peter L

Long Ride

The weather forecast for Sunday had kept me busy during the week, it seems that it changed every day, requiring yet another rethink about the planned ride. On Saturday morning it seemed there was no chance of a long ride hitting the hills, but Sunday morning's forecast was more optimistic - we might not see snow until the evening! So four hardy souls (Phil, Glyn, Nick and Eric) set out on the long ride to Embsay, and I had planned a couple of shorter escape routes if we needed to hasten our return to Harrogate due to the weather. The long climb up Brackenthwaite warmed us all up, and I experienced wheel spin on the climb up to Almscliffe Crag indicating there was still an icy coating on the road surface. We stopped for photos by the Crag, and admired the great view over Wharfedale, which looked stunning in the glorious winter sunshine. We continued through Otley, Ilkley and Beamsley to Bolton Abbey where we stopped at the Tea Rooms for an early lunch. With only one other table occupied, we were served very quickly, but minutes later the café was full, so our timing had been perfect. We took the gated road through Hesketh Farm to Embsay. As we approached Embsay we could see clouds of steam slowly following us along the route of the Bolton Abbey to Embsay railway, so we stopped to watch the train pass - and take more photos! We then had a long climb up to Halton Moor before the fast descent to Barden Tower, followed by another long climb from Appletreewick and the final climb to Stump Cross Caverns, where we paused for pots of tea and some rather fine apple cake. The temperature dropped significantly as the sun disappeared as we returned along Duck Street arriving home at 4.20pm. We had been able to complete the full route of 58 miles, with the unexpected bonus of wonderful January sunshine ahead of the snow. Eric

