

Sunday, October 27, 2013

Wheel Easy Ride Report 391

Short Ride Report

The extra hour must have enthused Wheel Easiers to grasp their handlebars and go for it despite rather worrying forecasts. (Yes, Max and Caroline were thought of as they nobly propelled their caravan into the eye of the storm/s battering the SE coast.) Seventeen riders opted for today's Short Ride and assembled themselves between a posse of Sue's – D in front, T at rear and W in the middle. Thank you fellow namesakes for ensuring the safe passage especially across the A658 and A661 as we battled along to Follifoot, Spofforth, Little Ribston and Knaresborough. With the wind behind, speeds of 25 were being recorded but 'twas a different story into a head wind! There was a full arc rainbow across Little Ribston just before the posing and pouting took place in front of the Friends Meeting House. Linda Caravan was so keen to be photographed that she hurled herself to the ground having achieved a tight rainbow turn herself. Fortunately, there was no need for the foil blankets and plasters but her chain had disengaged itself. As usual, the kind men of the equipe assisted and we arrived more or less intact (Sue T and David carried on home) for the joys of Marigold's coffee. Their decision may have been regretted because once seated at tables 9 and 10, the heavens opened. Hopefully, they were able to duck under trees and avoid the worst. It was all very jolly and convivial with toasted teacakes and scones (yes, the pronunciation debate continued between PB and me) aplenty. PB had asked for a "Hot Chocolate without decorations" bit I suspect the marshmallows were replaced by extra cream! The "disintegration of the ride" (another of PB's syntactical gems) began before we left with Jane, Kevin, and Linda Caravan taking to Beryl Burton's death defying route. To my horror and shame, I discovered that my bike doesn't go well with a bungee wrapped around the wheel and that "Mother Shipton" to the majority of cultured riders means her well and not the watering hole of my youth. Confusion over, we took the cycle path and then descended into Starbeck and thence to various destinations which promised rest and relaxation. Glyn and Jen opted for the scenic delights of Bogs Lane and onward. Thank you everyone. Sue Downes





Medium Ride Report

Clocks gone back, storms forecast but nothing deters Wheel Easy members from coming out in force and as it was such a fine sunny morning, it was a good decision. Nearly thirty chose the medium ride which was led in smaller groups by Ian, Peter and Gia. Our group left last and by Woodlands we had lost two, to a puncture, at Farnham Dennis swept past us all to lead the pack up the hill, at Marton cum Grafton we had another mechanical. The sun was shining, the wind behind us so all was well. By Whixley where we had turned in to the wind and where we were caught by a short shower our third mechanical of the day was a broken chain. Spare link provided and Kate very ably repaired her own chain and soon she and Malcolm followed on. Gordon, Alison and Gordon went straight back to Harrogate via Hunsingore and the rest of us, now very hungry kept our heads down, followed the prescribed route and landed at North Street Deli where some of Peter's group were enjoying a leisurely break. We met Ian's group leaving the racecourse as they had stopped at Thorp Arch so we spread our numbers round the cafes. We don't know where Martin ended up, maybe the EG's kidnapped him and took him to Morrisons! Our departure was

delayed when we discovered that the key to the padlock locking two bikes was sitting at home in a garage, but help came to the rescue quickly and they too were quickly on their way. Home before the rain, a good ride, quite testing with the wind on the way back but a good run out. 40 miles. Gia



Medium2 Ride Report

Addenda or is it addendum ? (probably both wrong as I do`nt know the difference between slippy and slippery as from this morning`s English lecture) to Peter Lawley`s Med Ride. A breakaway group led by Martin W consisting of Dave P and Roy left Peters group to head for Whixley village crossing the A59 and the single track level crossing to head for Hunsingore and Wetherby. HEAVEN on a small quiet country lane, then PURGATORY as the lane was blocked by a large tractor and trailer unable to make a 90o turn (see photo). The driver though in no danger was stuck in his cab. A second tractor (complete with trailer) was unable to pull them back in to the field so they had to wait for a six wheel drive tractor. Decision return via the A59 (HELL) to Knaresborough via Goldsborough and Waterside. In the cafe three bacon sandwiches, a bowl of chips, coffee and tea. HEAVEN. Ride title "To Hell and Back on a Bike" Dave P





Medium Slightly Faster Ride Report

Leaving Hornbeam with seven in our party we picked up another two at Farnham. At this point we had the pleasure of a downwind hardly-pedal-at-all ride until we turned and were battered from sides and front all the way to Thorpe Arch, losing one plucky rider on the way (he was suffering from post-operative seizing of the knee and was forced to call home for alternative transport). After refreshments at Thorpe Arch we headed down the cycle path to Wetherby and then Spofforth, grateful that the trees lining the cycle path afforded some protection from the wind. *A warning to anyone using the cycle path: not only is it wet, but with a carpet of leaves, it is also slippery.* Arriving safely at Spofforth it was a regular return via Follifoot, Rudding Park and the showground. Ian N



Medium+ Ride Report

This was a curtailed ride due to high winds it was decided that the top of Yorke's Folly was not a good place to be in the gusty conditions. All agreed except Peter Bradley who braved the full

route.. A speedy group of largely red shirts rode on to Darley and then to Brimham. Seven of us rode at a more sedate pace via Penny Pot to a cafe stop at Darley and then back along the valley to Birstwith.. We then decided to make for Little Almscliffe cycling passed Menwith. Brilliant ride back from Little Almscliffe with the wind behind us making up for all the hard work cycling into the wind. A perfect rainbow was a fitting reward for all the showers we put up with. A windy 30 miles in total felt like 45 miles. Sue C





Long Ride Report

The planned Long Ride (61 miles and 4,900' of ascent) appeared to be well and truly scuppered by the weather forecast of impending doom, and therefore flexibility would be required to adapt the route as we went along. 8 of us set off, exiting Harrogate via Burn Bridge and Brackenthwaite Lane to North Rigton and Almscliffe Crag, where we stopped for a photo call - much earlier in the ride than usual, but it might be the only opportunity to take a dry photograph if the BBC forecast is to be believed. Shortly after, we were hit by the first and heaviest of the day's showers - very painful when you were hit in the face as if there was a bit of hail mixed in with it. When we got to the junction for the climb to Langbar, the rain was still falling heavily, and the wind was giving us a thorough buffeting, so the majority decision was to stay low and keep to the usual lower road from Otley to Bolton Bridge via Ilkley. I have to confess that if anybody had suggested stopping for coffee in Ilkley, I would have been very easily persuaded. Sadly nobody did, so we continued battling into the headwind and rain. As we approached Bolton Abbey, the sun came out, bringing a rainbow with it, so another photostop was called. After refreshments in the Abbey Tea Rooms, Jill and Nick M. decided to return to Harrogate so six of us continued. As it was not raining just then, we took the gated road to Embsay and the climb up to Halton Moor. We had turned the corner, literally, and were no longer cycling into a headwind, so the climb was not as difficult as expected. The descent to Barden Tower was interesting and adrenalin fuelling, with us all clocking up some extremely fast speeds on a day when we would have least expected it. My previous fastest was 47mph - let's just say, I beat it comfortably! We then stopped to put rain jackets on again, take them off again, put them on again, etc.etc. I lost count of how many times. We climbed out of Wharfedale from Appletreewick into Nidderdale at Stump Cross Caverns, and descended Greenhow Hill (very cautiously) to Pateley Bridge and further refreshments at "Teacups". The last of the big climbs of the day was up York's Folly, then returning to Harrogate via Darley, Birstwith, Hampsthwaite and Oakdale, arriving home at 5pm. Remarkably we'd completed the full 61 miles, but omitting the climb to Langbar reduced our total ascent to 4,450'. We were all amazed by what had been achieved in the conditions, and were delighted with the day's ride. Special mention must go to Graham from Wetherby on his first Wheel Easy ride. Graham had cycled from Wetherby so by the time he got home he would have completed over 80 miles. Well done Graham, and we look forward to welcoming you back in the future. What a debut! Eric



