

Sunday, April 20, 2014

Wheel Easy Ride Report 416

Short Ride

There were sixteen 'takers' for the short ride today. Commitments later in the day and injury meant that some of the 'longer' riders joined us. We'd heard the 'Honey cafe' at Braythorn was open so planned a route that incorporated a stop there. We made our way in small groups to Stainburn Woods. Once reassembled we went through the woods, turned right along the gated road and headed along the ridge. At the junction, Peter and Jen decided to drop down to Leathley. The rest of us kept to the 'tops' and, after a short spell on the busy B road, were at the cafe. Just as we arrived, Malcolm drew up to join us for coffee. There was a stiff cold wind and rain in the air, so any idea of sitting outside was quickly dismissed. We were made most welcome at the cafe (now open on the last Sunday of each month). As it was cold and miserable, the majority opted for the quickest route home. The rest of us decided to do the North Rigton 'loop'. Steve left us at Almscliffe Craggs and swooped off down the hill. We struggled up the long hill before turning right for the 'sail' down Brackenthwaite Lane and back to Harrogate. It was a short ride, but the final hills made it quite strenuous. Many thanks to all who 'shepherded' and back-marked. Alison N





Medium Ride

Having avoided an altercation with an argumentative 4 by 4 in the road marking bike box at Oatlands traffic lights and insistent on turning into our bike path, three W.E. riders just missed an early exit. However, the medium ride for Easter Sunday looked super. Lakes, reservoirs, hills, mountains, cols, passes and precipices, and even a mention of Blubberhouses, just up my street. Gordon and Alison were very understanding and my cleverly thought up excuse of having to make an Easter Lunch was accepted. I could cut off a few corners and higher things. Luckily there were a few more people who had an Easter Lunch to cook, who kindly joined the slightly shorter medium ride. We left Harrogate by the Rossett Bike Path and The Squinting Cat, waved at Dave Griffin who was going the wrong way, followed El Butler up to Little Almscliffe, and explained my cunning plan not to do hills and mountains....Dennis had also thought of the clever avoidance of Blubberhouses. A flat ride then. By this time Alison and the short ride had zoomed up and looked anything but short, with Gia and Sally leading the pack. They looked positively raring to go. So we went, cleverly avoiding Timble Fewston and Blubbberhouses, but the road was blocked at Menwith and the diversions looked very newsworthy, spies, nuclear leaks, protests, escapes. It could have been anything...so we chose to avoid it and attacked the A59 in order to get to Darley by a parallel route. Glyn had departed in order to do a few extra loops for his Tour de France training, leaving Max as chief mechanic for a select group of ladies.....Jen, Monica, Sue T, and Nicola, who kept Max nicely in his place without any other male support. We sped along the valley from Darley to Birstwith, and bearing left up to Clint Bank, were nearly overtaken by Gordon's group who must have been going quite slowly to be so left behind.....or was it that the mountains of Blubberhouses that had slowed them down. As we glid/glided/ glode along the Bike Path to Ripley the smell of bluebells was overpowering and very early. We nearly ploughed down Granny and Grandpa Downes proudly taking the latest addition to their family for a stroll in the buggy. We stopped for refreshment at Ripley café which seems to have a gazebo extension to it and a door that must not be closed for some reason. The homeward journey along the Greenway confirmed our suspicions that we certainly were speeding along eating up the miles as we overtook part of El Butler's group cavorting with the metal sculpture of Malcolm. We finished the ride in near sun missing the hint of rain and competing a shortish but enjoyable medium jaunt in time to produce lunch and have a snooze before the visitor arrivals, lunches out and family pizza feeding. Caroline G



Long Ride

Fifteen eager riders set off promptly for the Helmsley lunch venue into an Easterly wind, the fast "boys" quickly pulling away from us steady away riders. (The term "boys" is a general one, as the group included Julie and Mark, visiting Harrogate from Rhyl, for an Easter Break). We do hope you enjoyed our countryside guys, and will visit us again sometimes. Welcome also to Ray (from Skipton), and Tony, whom I had not met before.

Steady, and enjoyable progress was made as far as Coxwold, where a democratic decision was taken to lunch at Ampleforth School. This sadly turned out to be out of bounds to lesser mortals, a knees-up taking place, with people in suits. (Anyone would think it was a special day or something).

The newish cafe in Ampleforth village more than rose to the occasion however, and we were soon on our way home via Easingwold, only to be soon caught and passed by our own fast group. Chris was flagging, having not been out for three weeks, and dropped off onto our section, which also included Monica, Debbie, Helen, Dave W, and Colin.

Thanks to all for an excellent day out; let's do it again soon. Dave S



A ride to Helmsley with no hills proved to be impossible. In fact our group of seven proved it is definitely quicker to go up Wass Bank than carry on to Ampleforth for the 'easier' climb. We had lunch at The Castle Tearooms and then came back via Harome, Nunnington, Hovingham and Easingwold - a departure from the published route but it avoided the main road climb out of Helmsley. About 80 miles. Phil S