

Sunday, May 11, 2014

Wheel Easy Ride Report 419

Short Ride

Responding to Gia's plea for someone to head up the short ride, Lynda and I agreed to take 12 hardy souls around to Sophie's for coffee and buns. 1 turned back early on and the rest of us followed the time-honoured trail via the Squinting Cat to Beckwithshaw, Penny Pot Lane, Burley Bank Lane, across the A59, and down Rowden Lane to Hampsthwaite. 3 left us there to go home, and 8 of us repaired to Sophie's for a very leisurely coffee and chat. Back via Clint Bank, and the Greenway from Hollybank Lane. Nice short ride, nice long chat, and we didn't get soaked! Always a plus. About 18 m. Monica S.

Medium Ride





Medium Plus Ride

Richard P kindly offered to help lead today's medium plus ride which is enticingly called Jill's Hills. So he set off with a few quick guys with Dave P, Rob, Debbie, Glyn, John, Alistair and I to wander on behind. The weather looked worse than the forecast but with Dave's good advice we embarked on an EG type ride with a coffee stop on the way out. This turned out to be an excellent idea because not only did we need the caffeine and the fuel but it poured with rain while we were indulging in Cockpit Farm.

Alistair with very quick legs had peeled off at Farnley and Dave scurried home via Askwith and Timble. That left five of us with no excuse not to carry on. For Rob and John this was their first experience of Jill's Hills, which for those who don't know, means after Cockpit Farm climbing up to Middleton, then Langbar and Beamsley. The views are fabulous, the road is marked on the map by a series of dotted lines which thankfully seems to deter most Sunday drivers from using the road.

The road surface is much improved and after a photo shoot on the viewing bench had a wonderful downhill, following wind run all the way to Ilkley. At the Italian station café we indulged in more caffeine and delicious farl teacake sandwiches and sped home with a following wind. Glyn left us at Otley and John at Kirkby Overblow.

Arriving in Harrogate Debbie informed us that we had completed 4115 feet of climbing. I understand that is pretty good! 51 miles in great company, Gia.



Long Ride

To 'Lovely Littondale' at a medium pace

The omens were not good! My track record for the last two rides I've led is that both have had to be aborted due to bad weather, and the weather forecast for today made me believe it could happen a third time. The turn out at Hornbeam Park was well down on usual, so presumably others had already decided it just wasn't worth the risk. Nevertheless I was pleasantly surprised that 10 riders moved into the bottom car park, including Colin, Ernie and Dave who are not

regular long riders, attracted by the advertised 'medium pace'. So after handing out route slips to each rider, we split into two groups: Phil, James, Dan, Dave W and Nick in the faster group: Jill, Colin, Ernie, Dave & myself in the medium pace group, which increased at Jubilee Roundabout where Peter B joined us. The slog along Penny Pot Lane and Duck Street was just that - a hard slog into a very strong, bitter wind with frequent bursts of rain. This continued all the way to Grassington, so we were in single file sheltering behind the front man for most of the time. The two groups met up in Cobblestones café at Grassington, where Nick decided to call it a day and head home, reducing our numbers back to 10.

The faster group set off from Grassington a few minutes ahead of us, and after Kilnsey Crag they took the clockwise route around Littondale. The medium pace group decided that an anti-clockwise route might give us greater shelter from the wind, which resulted in the two groups meeting head on part way round, and therefore providing the perfect opportunity for a photo-stop. We then resumed our rides in opposite directions after agreeing to meet again for a second refreshment stop at the Cavendish Pavilion, Bolton Abbey.

Littondale, as ever, was a gem but it was over far too quickly - it would be worth doing 2 circuits of the dale to take it all in! We turned round in the village of Arncliffe at the head of the valley, and - Oh what joy - after 3.5 hours of cycling uphill into the wind, from there on we were propelled down Wharfedale all the way home. We retraced our route back to Grassington and then continued down Wharfedale via Burnsall and Appletreewick to Bolton Abbey where we merged with the faster group for the final leg of the ride. The sun came out, layers of clothing were shed, and at last I had completed a ride. Third time lucky!. I arrived home just after 6pm. 79 miles (door to door) at a medium pace of 12mph. Enduring the harsh weather in the morning had been worth it for the joys of the scenery and the easy ride home. Many thanks to Phil for leading the faster group. Eric



