

Sunday, July 20, 2014

Wheel Easy Ride Report 429

Short Ride

Sixteen riders turned up for the short ride today so we split into two groups and set off for Arkendale via Knaresborough, Goldsborough and Flaxby. The weather was warm and dry and we had a pleasant run down to Low Bridge in Knaresborough where we re-grouped, checked the route and set off for Goldsborough, then turned left off the A59 to Flaxby. Some lovely country lanes took us to Arkendale where we returned by the usual route to Knaresborough, through Ferrensby. At Waterside in Knaresborough, there must have been over a hundred bicycles parked outside the cafes so service was a bit slow but nothing can spoil sitting outside on a warm summer day, watching the world go by. But all good things must come to an end, as we had to cycle up the Cote du Starbeck to get back to Hornbeam. A lovely day, good company and eighteen miles cycled. Al D

Medium Ride

It had been sitting there, brooding, on the calendar since before Le Tour. And now it was here. The Escher Medium. You know the one, people walking up and up and up flights of stairs - forever. Twelve souls opted for the second of two groups, and for some Nibali-like climbing. We made our way out to Stainburn, and on to Fewston, without mishap. Then it was the Medium Category 3 climb up to Timble. Dennis, having made light of it, left us to head homewards. Then it was up to the top of the Wharfedale ridge - Category 2 - which we managed easily enough. We swept down the hill to Askwith and onward to Cockpit Farm, where Alison and Gordon left us, preferring to keep going. After a break in now-baking temperatures, it was eastwards, parallel with the Wharfe, which I confess I remembered as being essentially flat. Liz's memory proved to be rather better than mine. There's a testing little climb out of Otley, and another at Castley. My calculations suggested that, by the end of the climb after Kirkby Overblow we had climbed about 500 metres, but only descended 300. Hence the Escher Medium. A puzzle, to be sure. But, vertiginous climbs notwithstanding, a great day out, in perfect weather - OK, OK, it poured after Rudding Park - and brilliant company. Justin



Excellent Hilly ride through Timble and over to Askwith. Eleven of us in this first group and we set a fair pace today. Only Mark opted for the 15% climb up from Low Snowdon. We all took the 12%, that was enough. Coffee stop at the farm cafe before Otley, with the only toilets I've been in that have a bicycle track pump, then some great ups and downs (not hills) after. We maintained a good pace (just under 12mph for the whole ride ave) right back to Kirkby Overblow then divided to go home. I had to be back for 1.30 for some Rhubarb and strawberry crumble, which was just convenient as those big rain drops started just as I arrived. Hopefully my group got home before the rain. If not it was so hot and humid a good pre-wash shower should have been quite refreshing. Thanks for the company. Paul R

Med+ Rides

Five guest riders joined us from Burnley and Pendle CTC for a sunny start. Dave Siswick set off with a faster paced group and we followed behind with another group of ten riders all determined to enjoy the good weather. Dave Preston said he would keep us company to Ripon and then he would give his dicky hip a rest and return, but was the real truth that he had read the forecast better than the rest of us? It was lovely riding along the lanes to Snape and then we climbed up and over the hill to Masham for lunch in the square. Climbing up past Swinton Hall Harry decided it might be a useful B&B but having been persuaded that if you had to ask how much it would cost you couldn't afford it we headed ever upwards to the moors. By now the sky was getting black and Jill headed sensibly straight back leaving us to work our way through the lanes and to get very, very wet. Brief sanctuary was sought at Winksley Church, but we decided that we would be better dripping all over the carpet at Fountains Visitor Centre where we enjoyed tea and let the sun peak through. We arrived back a little late and survived 58 miles and a tropical downpour. We don't do anything by halves in Yorkshire! Martin W.







It was all going so well. Eleven like minded blokes battling on Northward, on a pleasant Sunday morning. Lively conversation, a couple of fastish climbs to get the blood circulating, good countryside and lunch in the open air at Masham. We were even ahead of schedule. You almost knew that things were going to disturb our day; and they did; and they came thick and fast. Paul's chain developed a problem hitherto unknown in the annals of cycling mechanical history; fortunately, he was able to continue in one gear after we'd all had a bit of a look at it.

Then it started to rain pretty convincingly, causing some of us to don waterproofs. This led to the group getting broken up by an unfortunate traffic light sequence. Torrential down pour followed, and after taking shelter for a few minutes my group was down to two!!

I never saw the rest of our happy band again. Oh dear.

To cap it all, the magnetic pull of Roecliffe to which I was subjected whilst passing through Bishop Monkton was too strong to resist and I abandoned our last team member to the elements.

I do hope all this doesn't mean blackballing from W-E!! Woe is me. Dave S.



Long Ride

10 of us assembled on Penny Pot Lane at the appointed time of 8.30am for Le Tour de Nidderdale - following the route of the Nidderdale Sportive (short course), which is a 65 mile course starting and finishing in Summerbridge. Our route, from Harrogate, would therefore be significantly longer. It is a challenging route involving 3.5 major climbs, which we will come to shortly. By the time we got to Hartwith, the group had self-selected into 2 groups. The 5 'fast boys' (Phil S, Mike B, Richard P, Peter J, Martin D, all familiar long riders) set off and we didn't see them again! There was a sporting chance that we might have caught them up before they left the Jervaulx Abbey refreshment stop, but we were 10 minutes too late. 'We' were the slower group proceeding at medium pace, consisting of Colin T, Trefor G, Sarah C, Monica W and myself. Our route took us along the main road to Pateley Bridge, and past Gouthwaite Reservoir to Lofthouse, our first major climb. Tough climbs are usually rewarded by a enjoyable descent, and the descent to Leighton Reservoir is right up there - very fast but you must also take in the fantastic scenery on show. We paused for a team photo as we crossed the bridge over the reservoir, and then on to Jervaulx Abbey for our first refreshment stop. The weather had been uncomfortably hot and humid throughout, and Sarah decided to return home via the low level route of Masham and Ripon to escape the heat. Our Tour de Nidderdale took us on to Middleham and the start of the second major climb up Coverdale to the infamous Park Rash. At the summit we were right under a very low, dark thundercloud, but amazingly we escaped to Wharfedale before it could drop its contents onto us. We stopped at Grassington for our second refreshment stop, and after the short climb up to the Burnsall Road, we could see the thunder cloud emptying its contents on the distant hills around Stump Cross caverns and Greenhow. Hopefully it would have moved on by the time we got

there. The third major climb is to leave Wharfedale at Appletreewick. We were still enjoying hot dry weather, and the scenery, as ever, with Simon's Seat in the background justifies the effort of the climb (see photo of Colin and Monica on the climb). The roads were dry in Appletreewick but by the top of the climb, and all way to Harrogate, were awash from the recent deluge. The final 'half' climb took us up to Stump Cross and Greenhow, followed by the long descent down Duck Street to Menwith Hill, and then Penny Pot Lane and Harrogate. We arrived home at 7pm, having completed 85 miles at an average speed of 11mph. Could we be the luckiest people in North Yorkshire, managing to escape the heavy showers that were all around us, and hit Harrogate three times? Well done especially to Monica and Trefor on their first Wheel Easy long rides. The fast boys had arrived home about 4.30pm. They had modified the route somewhat (i.e. taken some short-cuts to reduce the mileage and omit the climb from Appletreewick!!!!), so their mileage was a mere 79 miles at an average speed of 13.4mph. Such a shameful, devious ploy was rightly punished by getting caught in the downpour. Justice indeed! Eric W





