

Wednesday, September 24, 2014

## Wednesday Rides

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### Poddlers' Ride

Super hero and mountain goat, 41 year old Den Bulter, managed to rescue five cyclists from the Darley Pit this morning. In a dramatic rescue attempt Den Butler led the five confused cyclist up the precipice wall of Darley Pit before they disappeared into the depths of Thorncross and Pateley Bridge Devil's Country. They courageously clung to the sides of the vertical cliff and finally following in the wheel of the mountain goat reached the safe haven of Menwith Crossroads. Plucky holiday maker Jean Batison concluded that she had had a glorious time and she had had a wonderful ride despite the heartstopping adventure. A traumatised pensioner announced that she thought that the whole event had been a nightmare and they had been lucky to have survived the day. The lucky group were thought to be recuperating from their ordeal in a variety of ways in their home town of Harrogate. Report by Your local sports reporter, Caroline G



Twenty Poddlers started from Hornbeam with the weather promising to be fine and warmish, John led the route to take us safely across The Stray and over the Iron Bridge to the Bilton Greenway. Alan whistled merrily along the cycle path exclaiming 'I like a nice flat route' little did they realise they all were under a false sense of security.

Reaching Ripley I thought I would warn them up climbing up the steep cycle path to Clint Bank, no one had expired at this point. Turning right downhill towards Birstwith and then slightly uphill to Darley. We stopped to regroup and four were still away behind, but after trying to contact them, we realised they would be turning round at this point and the group continued on where Alison also decided she needed to head home. So all quiet on the Western Front no dissention everyone happy to go forth on to Thornwaite.

The views were spectacular as we cycled merrily along, then we hit the steep hill, everyone managed to get to the top and after a quick rest and count, no one had expired but there was a few puffing. Green How Hill road went vertically up to the left and most were relieved we went straight on pass it. After a little way along the very narrow road, dodging the Tesco and Asda vans, we turned sharply left and up a more gently climb to Green How Hill road. As we gathered I did give everyone an easy option rather than to do the loop round, but they all crossed the road

to a magnificent view of Thurscross Reservoir in the sunshine. This route I knew would test them and I wondered if the promise of a bacon butty was tempting enough. We all swooped down the hill and lo and behold we had to go up again. Cries of 'where is the bacon butty stop' was heard and 'you told us it was not far'. After crossing the A59 the vertical Shepherd Hill loomed in front and most pushed their bikes up, a few managed to cycle up. After some very steep downhill's and then very steep uphills, I was in danger of being thrown into Fewston reservoir. At last we arrived at the Fewston car park where I took the bacon buttie orders to phone my husband Pete to let them start the cooking as we were about 20 minutes away. Now I had to tell them unfortunately we have a little hill to go up to get to the farm shop. Riding across the Fewston embankment I thought it was best to stay ahead as we did a sharp left straight up Back Lane and still cries were heard 'were is the bacon buttie stop?' At last we arrived but unfortunately the manager who I had made the arrangement with had gone on holiday. My husband dived in to help the two beleaguered assistants and we were all fed and watered and now full of bacon butties the group decided Penny Pot Lane and direct home was the best route. I the leader felt it my duty or was it just prudent to wave goodbye to finish the ride and turned left for a lovely ride to Kettleasing, Birstwith up Clint Bank to Ripley and home along the cycle path. I hope they all had a good day out with a few ups and downs. Liz F





### **Wednesday Ride**

On one of those days when the sky looks more blue, and the grass looks more green than on an ordinary day, nine of us set off towards the Greygarth Monument, although we knew that John would return home early. Stray paths, Greenway, Ripley, to Risplith for an early coffee at GT's, still resplendent in Tour de France livery. Then to High Grantly, where we took a left on the little back lane, up, up, and up to Coal Hill above the tiny hamlet of Dallow. From Coal Hill we could clearly see the Greygarth Tower, but to reach it you have to drop down and climb back up on a singletrack road which has a sign saying "no passing places for one mile". We left the bikes to walk to the Monument and climb up the tower, which gave far-reaching views with Roseberry Topping as clear as anything. From the top of the moor is a fairground ride of a descent to Laverton, and for a change we took the road past the caravan park at Winksley Banks to Winksley village with its huge church tower, then Aldfield and Fountains for a second café stop. Home about 3.30 via Ripley and the Greenway. Apparently 40-ish miles, with some climbing, a headwind on the way out which helped us home. Some great views on a clear day, and even better, some new territory for some of us. Thanks to Tim for the photos. Colin T





### **EGs' Ride**

They always say that "the best laid plans of mice & men" etc and when Eric W. reported that Tykes Tea Room in Tadcaster was likely to be closed our deputy leaders planned ride had to be revised. So following a "committee meeting" of all present we decided to head for Beningborough for our first coffee break on our way to visit the new outdoor Velodrome in York.

Following the waitress's confusion whilst deciding who had ordered what and which spoon number belonged to which serving, and saying our goodbyes to Norman & Roy, the remaining seven headed into York on a cool but at least dry and sometimes sunny day eagerly looking forward to our first view of the new Velodrome. Peter J very kindly led us through the maze comprising the cycle paths through the University grounds and eventually we arrived.

The velodrome is sited off Heslington Lane next to the York Sport Centre, some distance off the main road and was unattended on our arrival. A brief look around raised a few questions not least of which was inasmuch there was no continuous centre handrail how the dickens does one start & stop without a major catastrophe?

We eventually found our way to the sports centre cafe for tea/coffee/toasties etc and duly refreshed set off on our return journey but not without Eric leaving a written comment in the "suggestion" book re. the absence of a safety rail.

The return journey followed the usual route via Millennium Bridge and the race course. Reaching the open road enthusiastic riding split the peloton which regrouped at the memorial on Marston Moor.

A more steady pace followed to complete our journey in Knaresborough eventually and finally completing for the leader 58 miles. Those from Harrogate may have broken the 60miles barrier! Dave W.



## Long Ride

You might think that repeating last week's route to Ripley, Masham, Lofthouse and Pateley would give the duty scribe an easier time – simply tweak the previous report and the job would be done. But, nothing is quite that easy! With the moody mists of last week replaced with clear blue skies, the climbs of the day were rewarded with wonderful views across the vale to uplifting sights like White Horse and Roseberry Topping and others with more utilitarian interest like Wilton Works (Teeside) and Eggborough power station. Fifty or more miles could be seen this week, compared to the 50 yards of last Wednesday.

Before all of this, eight starters picked their way through town to the Greenway and on to Ripley, past a tractor emptying a tank of something into the drain near the old Nidd bridge. Nearing Fountains, it was clear that the traveller family is expanding its occupation of the roadside and, I imagine, staying put for a while. Approaching the turn for the Visitor Centre, there was a brief contraflow, as John and Stewart headed back towards Richard L and Lesley for a route conference, the outcome of which was some free tea at the lakeside café at Studley, courtesy of the National Trust. An excellent scheme on many counts!

With the group split, I became a "poursuivant" hoping to get to Masham before Richard P, David R and Peter R had downed their coffees and beans on toast. En route there was a scary scene near Kirkby M when a horse became badly spooked by my slow-moving presence. A worried rider urged me to stop which I duly did, dismounting and laying the bike down, while she fought to control the horse. After a couple of unscheduled visits to the hedgerows the rider very skilfully reversed the horse past me, said her thanks and like me breathed a sigh of relief.

After the scare, tea and teacake in Johnny Baghdad's calmed things down nicely. On past Leighton Reservoir (see photo), the second phase of the ride up to Jordan Moss gave rise to the spectacular views mentioned earlier. With no mist to focus attention on just turning the pedals, the climb may have been tougher than last week, but the pay-off given by the views was worth the apparent extra effort. The run down to Pateley was as swift as ever, as was the service in Teacups. Fortified, the last phase began and, mercifully, the wind wasn't unhelpful in our ascent of Yorke's Folly. We were helped also by a considerate driver with pungent sheep in his trailer who waited for us to reach a passing place. Reaching Padside, Dave and Peter opted for the Menwith road, heading for Beckwithshaw, whereas Richard and I chose Thornthwaite and threw in another climb up Hardgroves Hill, following the tracks of earlier exploits by WE groups. Hampsthwaite, Clint, Ripley and the Greenway saw us back to Harrogate with 63 miles in the legs and 4200 ft in the heart/lung apparatus.

All of this shows that repeating a ride is not a failure of imagination but a deeper exploration of landscape and the pleasure of cycling through Nidderdale. Every ride is unique. Terry S

