

Wednesday, May 6, 2015

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers' Ride

My weather forecasters indicated that the previously predicted severe winds would be less tempestuous but that a delayed April downpour was to be expected mid morning. Not promising conditions, but a cunning plan was starting to hatch in true Baldrick fashion. The first Wednesday in the month, it is rumoured, the ladies of Arkendale provide refreshment for weary travellers until 11.30. The Poddlers could peddle furiously, with back wind to Farnham and Staveley, ready to pounce in the direction of Arkendale at the first hint of rain where we would feast on the refreshments to be provided. After a suitable period of self indulgence, whilst it "bucketed down" with rain outside the community centre, we would emerge into brilliant sunshine and calm air. What a plan, what was there to go wrong?

James, the only Wednesday Wheeleasyer present, addressed the assembly of Liz, bereft of any short riders, three or four long rangers, with bulging and twitching muscles, itching for the off and eight Poddler stalwarts. Liz rejoined the Poddlers and special dispensation was given to James to rejoin the fold. At Low Bridge we nearly lost Caroline as she started conversations with many gentlemen of a certain age. Eventually she was persuaded to stop photographing them and rejoin our peleton. It was nice to see Dave P back in action. The cunning plan worked a treat until we reached Copgrove. The skies were starting to blacken but there was not a drop of precipitation. The plan was abandoned! Perhaps we could get to Boroughbridge and home before it rained became the new plan. At Minskip Dennis, smelling dinner or the oncoming rain, decided that he was going to "push on". Gordon went with him. The rest of us struggled into the wind. We nearly made it back in the dry but not quite. Perhaps we should have tried to keep up with Dennis. Thanks for your company ... Arkendale another time perhaps. Max G

EGs' Ride

The diabolical weather forecast dissuaded many regular E.Gs from venturing out today. However we were extremely pleased to see Dave Preston had rejoined the fray, if only for a shortened ride. Eric, all toggged up in his full wet weather gear had unusually arrived early, yet again. (getting to be a habit!!). Dave S was seen to be sporting his full waterproof trousers, well prepared for what was to come. Even the usual WheelEasy group from Hornbeam were depleted but stalwart, Caroline was available to take the E.Gs group photo.

Heading off south into the wind for Morrison's, Wetherby, Dave P. encouraged the faster riders to form an advance group to minimise our effect on traffic though being on his slightly heavier winter bike our leader (Dave W.) forgot how hard some riders liked to dash off to the first "watering hole". Eric W., however helped enormously by pushing the wind and giving quiet encouragement, (thanks Eric, once again!). The forecasted rain held off a little but later made up for this.

Following our usual break to re-assemble, several riders decided to accompany Dave P. back to Harrogate, whilst the remaining seven aimed north to take advantage of the south westerlies. Initially we were intending to direct ourselves for lunch at the Village Hall in Helperby, (if it is still open) but the weather soon modified our plans.

Following a "tack" through Walton, Tockwith, Cattal and crossing the railway at Kirk Hammerton we "drove on" north past Queen Etherburger's, to Great Ouseburn.

Dan, who had cycled some distance ahead, taking two new members with him, unfortunately, managed to to "wrong slot", missing the turn off to the Dunsforths. Being too far in front, the remaining four had to make a quick decision to continue on the intended route, now for Boroughbridge in driving rain, and hope we would meet up there.

Arriving in the towns Market Square, we were pleased to see at least two riders awaiting. As a consequence of the rain, Ian, arriving before the main group had already decided to call it a day and cycle off home to Ferrensby .

The rest now headed towards Listers of Langthorpe, who kindly sheltered, our bikes in the shed at the rear with their classic Ferguson tractor, whilst thereafter feeding us with fine fair. The days conversations varied from the structural integrity of pitched timber roofs to should we put milk in the cup first or hot water, using the analogy of acid into water or the obverse. Thanks for that Dan. It's some years since any of us did chemistry at school!!!.

Having already ordered and been served his usual two courses Dan was encouraged to try Listers wonderful Black pudding, which, after handing around small samples to each of us, we could all adjudge was vey nice indeed.

Thoroughly refreshed but noting it was still raining, and gloves were still soaking, there was no enthusiasm for continuing further, so a collective decision was made to make our way home. The wind had eased a little but still the rain persisted. Skies seemed to be brightening but that might have been wishful thinking.

Notwithstanding the awful weather, at least we had the satisfaction of getting out and enjoying each one's company. Nearly 50 miles completed for those from Harrogate. Well done for showing such enthusiasm despite the conditions. Hopefully the next ride will be accompanied by brilliant sunshine. We can but hope. Dave W

It was not a good weather forecast.

Mostly Post Meridiem Persistent Precipitations, as indeed it did. However we had eleven EG's at Low Bridge, including a rebuilt bionic Dave P containing much metal, fortunately mostly Stainless Steel, so not too worried about rusting in wet weather. Lots of cheery greetings from Wheel Easy Wednesdayers, and a big hug from Caroline who very kindly took our photos, then away they went.

Right said Dave W, its Morrison's cafe in Wetherby, then play by ear, good call for a few including DP.

Small group split for the ride to Wetherby, the fast, the not so fast, and the sedate (its good to be back). Morrison's coffee still tastes good, but the chat was even better. After caffeine, El Supremo Dave W and six headed to Walton.

So Bob, Dave P, Norman and a recovering Eric heading for the ridge, Kirkby Overblow and home.

On the way out we were hailed by Helen of Wetherby, unfortunately at this time DP was "heavy breathing" up a hill at this time, so contact was not made by him. However, Eric ever the gentleman, reversed and made contact. Helen, my apologies, I owe you a hug. Approx 24 miles, weather poor, but fantastic to be out. A personal thank you to all riders. Dave P



Long Ride

For me the journey to Hornbeam began with a pleasing wait while Year Six cyclists from Oatlands Primary ventured out under supervision from their cycle trainers. Once at Hornbeam, it was clear that numbers were depleted, with many taking the weather forecast more seriously than the election polls. Although our initial goal was for Masham, it soon transpired that we were off to Arkendale for an early stop. Before then, we witnessed an almost deserted Bond End, caused by road works by the golf club – now there's a thought for traffic engineers to ponder! In time for the end of yoga, but too early for coffee at Arkendale, we pressed on at some pace to Boroughbridge and Tasty Snacks for a leisurely break, after which John S headed back home. The remaining three headed for Ripon and possibly Pateley, only to take an interesting diversion to look round the church of the unusually-named Christ the Consoler at

Skelton, created by the same architect who produced the church at Studley Park. Little consolation for us, however, as the heavy rain arrived by the time we left for Ripon. Morrison's won the three-way election contest for lunch ahead of Booths and Weatherspoons. By this time, Pateley had gone the way of Masham in our ride plan but Richard P led us for another dose of the "Knowledge", this time along Whitcliffe Lane. Rough in places, the track was passable on our winter bikes. David R took the direct route to Ripley, while Richard and I diverted to take a look at How Hill and, in passing, the NT cottages there – they do look very well done. Despite the gloom and the rain, views across to Roseberry Topping were to be had from the base of the tower. Ripley Church tea/cake stall completed the diversions for the day, after which it was a rapid trip along a mainly deserted Greenway to home and something warmer. A ride of just over 40 miles doesn't usually warrant three stops but the conditions dictated that there should be more to the day than miles in the legs. For me, the journey ended as it began, meeting Year 6 from Oatlands as they made their way home on their bikes. Terry S

