

Wednesday, January 6, 2016

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers Ride

A satisfyingly palindromic date, a less than satisfying weather forecast and actual weather. But anything that is not falling in stair rods could be seen as pleasant after the wettest December since recordings started in the 17th century. So laced with enthusiasm for this unfamiliar pastime three Poddlers' set off, stabilisers at the ready, for Wetherby via Pannal and Kirkby Overblow. En route we met an ex colleague and former niece, cycling in from Leeds to have coffee with a friend. At Wetherby we saw the collapsed retaining wall of the housing estate opposite the Police Station. By this time the rain had drenched us and the only thing to do was continue speedily back along the old A1 path to Kirk Deighton and Knaresborough. Here we admired a very full river Nidd and posed for photographic evidence in front of log and tree debris caught against the bridge arch. Anything to avoid the long hill out of Knaresborough, we all opted for the steep hill to Calcutt, and gentle rise of Forest Moor road or lane, and then to our various homes. A pretty foul day, a very jolly ride, and no-one needed their stàblisers. Thank you front marker, back marker and photographer royal. 24 miles of gentle paddling. CG





The Wanderers Endurance Paddle

Where to go when everywhere was saturated? I decided to go high, so Brimham Rocks it was. Michael of Kettlesing did say the weather was much better 'in town'. 11 set off, closely followed by the Wednesday Group. We graciously let them past at Ripley and lost Sir John to their group. We continued towards Clint and Burnt Yates. All fine, though the mist was a little mistier and the rain a little heavier. By the time we were heading up to Brimham, we were really 'in the thick of it'. However, we bravely persisted, watching the front riders fade into the mist as they got more than 40 yards ahead. Onward and upward - and then, the welcome right turn and a very damp swoop down past Rabbit Farm. At one point, a chivalrous David stood by the side of the road alerting everyone to a flood/gigantic puddle. Throughout the ride, Glynn had kept disappearing and then reappearing in a different outfit- a snorkel might have been sensible at this point. As we descended the weather improved slightly. At Ripley, the consensus was to speed home and get dry as soon as possible. Despite the conditions a fun 25 miles with 1500 feet of climbing and loads of cheerful banter. Alison N



Wednesday Ride



EG's Ride

It was a dark and dreary day at Low Bridge for the first EG ride of the year, but we had thirteen riders, a good turnout for such a day.

Out of that thirteen we had six "Daves", two Dave P's, two Dave W's, a Dave S and a Dave R, obviously all those years ago six Mums failed to get past the 4th letter of the alphabet, in their search for names.

The intention was to head for Wetherby (no not Morrisons) and down the cycle path to Thorp Arch Retail Park and its Cafe.

So it was straight on the B6164 to Wetherby before the weather got any worse (which it did), the riders splitting up in to small groups for safety and to prevent cafe shock.

The rain was very much "in yer face" causing three riders to return.

A warm welcome awaited the ten of us in the cafe, where we had our caffeine and calories, with our cyclists discount.

The bad road conditions would have had a serious effect on their customer numbers.

It was then on to Tadcaster via Wighill, rainfree to view the bridge and assess the road conditions in that area for our fellow cyclists.

The bridge was closed as expected, a thought was that it might now have limited pedestrian access but one look at the damage told us that this was out of the question (see photos).

The upstream side of the bridge and its collapse (seen all over the country) was obvious, however on the downstream side, some of our riders experienced in civil engineering and building picked out serious problems with one of the arches.

The large group in hi viz jackets were probably discussing all these problems, alongside which can be seen the flood marks on a building (see photo).

Then on to Bolton Percy through some road floods, all passable now with care, but it could be seen from the position of flood debris that it would have been over waist deep in some places.

On to Colton and in to Copmanthorpe via the Ebor Way to the Little Acorn Cafe, which was closed for redecorating "Damn", however a sharp eyed Eric spotted another little cafe called the Annexe, down a ginnel, how this feature is called or pronounced depends on what part of Yorkshire or the North you are from. No matter, it was nice and the staff very pleasant, and it is worth knowing about.

Then on to Askham Richard, Tockwith, Cowthorpe (still no rain) eventually the Fellowship of the Floods was dissolved at the B6164.

It had been a good ride of over 50 miles, with lots of laughs and some good one liners, which Dave S would not swap for all the sun in South Africa. Dave P.







The Lone Wanderer

Concerned about a "phantom" puncture and of not being able to keep up having put on several mince pies over the festive season I decided to set off along the advertised route to Brimham rocks some 15 mins ahead of the peloton. With luck and no return of the "phantom" puncture I would arrive at the rocks just as the peloton caught me up. Good progress was made to within a mile of the summit but then the road disappeared into the clouds - welcome the drizzle, cold and lack of view. I was reminded of similar conditions in 1964 when cycling across the North Yorkshire moors to Boggle Hole youth hostel. At the summit I waited for the expected peloton for five minutes but no one arrived so as I was getting cold I decided to get going again. Downhill is always good but with increasing rain, poor visibility and streams of water across the road caution had to be taken with the conversion of potential energy into kinetic energy. The deteriorating conditions now reminded me of our submarinic trip along the Trans Pennine Trail. By now all I wanted was to get home for a hot bath so I cold-footed it home. I never saw anyone from the main group, perhaps they passed me unnoticed in the fog or if they had anticipated the conditions would sensibly have chosen an alternative route. Max

Medium Plus Ride

The New Years Resolution to be more decisive worked well on its first day as James and Colin proposed a route out to Fountains Abbey and back via Boroughbridge and we were ready to go at almost the same time as the Wanderers! (Ed note- will it last?)

Eleven set off, ten regulars plus Terry who seemed to be the lone long rider (or should that be the lone ranger) who was happy to join us. We set off via the Greenway in convoy with the Wanderers just in front and it was a great to see so many (well behaved) cyclists on the move. At Ripley we forged ahead as several Wanderers took a comfort break and we set off up towards the Drivers corner and on to Fountains via Markington.

We pulled in for what was intended to be a comfort stop but with light rain and a reluctance to pass up a cafe stop a decisive group decision to take coffee was made. This was the right choice as the rain had eased off by the time we came out and were ready to set off.

Gia and Paul set off back the way we had come to continue their hard fought (so Gia says) Table Tennis Grand Series back at Chez Margolis.

The remaining nine set off through the Deer Park and were confronted by an amazing sight of the red deer herd setting off and crossing in front of them as they sped down the road (I actually didn't see it as I was a way in front and missed it but it was widely reported as true).

From there we made our way towards the Ripon Racecourse where, again, a decisive decision was made to push on to Boroughbridge as the weather looked OK.

In a rush of blood John Russell set a fast pace so we made good progress towards our destination and despite perhaps the need for a breather we did NOT stop at Listers Farm shop (although quite a few looked longingly towards it as we passed...) and on into Boroughbridge and straight out pressing on towards Marton cum Grafton.

Martins 3 Weetabix's had now started to kick in so he took up the charge and we pressed speedily (for us) on towards Knaresborough via Arkendale and on to Bond End where James and Phil sped home and left us to 'enjoy' the climb into Harrogate.

The group were still smiling (I think that's what it was) when we reassembled outside the Golf Club where Martin took the Bogs Lane route home and the rest made their way back to Hornbeam and other Harrogate locations via Starbeck High street.

A great first Wednesday ride of the year- we did not get wet, a good pace, great decision making and, as over the past ten years, great companionship and banter. 37 miles Kevin