

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Wednesday Rides

Poddlers Ride

Brimham or Bramham one letter different but a world of difference when considering a cycle route.....i or a.....i has hills and a head wind to start off with, a has head winds home, fewer long drags up, but a finish through Knaresborough. The sun decided it.....with i we would have glorious views with our hills.....something not seen for what seems like years. So four ladies eventually set off towards Brimham. The enthusiasm was such, we actually felt we could join what looked like a lost group coming from the wrong direction containing Richard and Terry Smith, not to mention a very large group of Wednesday riders, heading, I suspect, for Yofke's Folly. However the Greenway soon sorted us out and we headed to Ripley, Clint Bank, Burnt Yates, and the headwind coming from Brimham Rocks. Di pluckily decided, despite her clunking gears, not to turn back but continue and conquer Brimham for the first time. The other 3 ladies knew what was to come if they got to the rocks.....no not coffee and cake.....down hill for three or four miles, so we continued. The not eating equivalent to coffee and cake was wonderful and within eighteen minutes of leaving Brimham we were back in Ripley, where we recognised a familiar posterier, and were joined by Glyn who had been successfully searching the Dales for eggs. As we skudded lightly back along the Greenway we met Malcolm, zooming in the opposite direction on a road bike.....with we all suspected, a hidden denied motor aboard. Arriving back in Harrogate we all went our separate ways in glorious sunshine. Thank you front, back and sides markers for your company. 14,606 steps, 27 bike kilometres, and 82 floors.....As recorded by a Fitbit. CG



Medium Plus Ride

With a glorious day in prospect the Medium Plus group set off towards Pateley Bridge and Toft Gate Farm with the prospect of clear blue skies, great views and a chance to get in some hills without getting wet! However with quite a few people having time restrictions it was likely that some would turn off early.

Having used the Greenway and Hollybank Lane the group turned towards Birstwith where after a discussion an alternative plan was hatched and only 4 riders(Charlie, Colin, Sue C and Kevin) set off up the Dale with the others planning a route that would probably end up at Sophie's.

With no time restrictions and the sun having some warmth we crossed the Toll Bridge at Hartwith Mill and made our way into the wind to Glasshouses and then along to Bewerley before the walk/ride up Peat Lane where there was still some ice on the road and a sprinkling of snow on the verges.

Despite the climb being hard work it was well worth it with great views on either side and when we reached the top a great view of the top of Great Whernside in the snow and also a clear view of the White Horse.

Down to Toft Gate Farm for the roaring fire and refreshments and then suitably warmed we set off back to Harrogate via Duck Street with the wind behind us.

We turned off to Hampsthwaite, spurned a second stop at Sophie's and climbed up to Hollybank Lane and a return into town via the Greenway.

It was difficult to keep the smiles off our faces as it had been a real great day out with great weather, superb views and a few hills to climb. Overall a gem of a ride after all the poor weather has kept us at low level.

40 miles(ish), 2400' of climbing and 4 happy souls! Kevin



EG Ride

We had fourteen riders at Low Bridge in the sunshine, this had to be photographed, not for the riders sake as we are all past the good looking stage of life, but just to record the sunshine.

Nice to see Theo out on his bike again, best wishes from the EG`s Theo.

The destination was Morrisons cafe Wetherby via Cowthorpe, Rudgate and a variation via Thorpe Arch Trading Estate and cycle path or via Walton and cycle path.

We split in to a fast and a slower group as usual, for safety and comfort.

After caffeine and carbo loading, three riders returned to Knareborough, the remaining eleven up on to the ridge to near Kearby.

There the men`s downhill to Netherby, the heavyweight division being won by Dave (wonderwheels) Siswick and the lightweight division by Dave Watson.

Then on to Weeton and Castley, the road to Pool Bridge being still as "clarty" as it was on Sunday.

Then in to Otley there to wait for an EG who had to take a phone call, unfortunately the so called leader has a new phone which has the facility to detect if undesirables are trying to make contact and immediately switches itself off.

However contact was made and eleven riders met at the cafe, but Colin, Dave S and Nick could not wait to get at Askwith Bank and shot off, leaving eight riders to succumb to the pleasures of the stomach.

It was steady away up Askwith Bank, in single file, however a car that was aimed rather than driven overtook the peloton, but failed to see the other car approaching him, so swung hard left on to the grass verge in front of a rider, who very narrowly missed being hit by the car and a dry stone wall. The distance missed by was small but the effect large.

The tops were beautiful in the sunlight and had to be photographed, the swoop down from Little Armscliffe in the winter sun with a kindly wind was fantastic(sorry another photo).

The distance was between 50 – 55 miles with around 3,500 ft of climbing, this sorely tested one EG, but it had to be done before the return to the current winter weather.

Dave P





Wednesday Rides

Today February 3rd turned out to be an outstanding day to be out on the bike in glorious sunshine and countryside and with friends. The gathering at Hornbeam set the tone with much enthusiasm for rides setting off for Pateley, Brimham, Masham and Great Ouseburn. A ride with no rain? How could this be?

Colin and Kevin were hatching a plan to Pateley with a great café stop at Toft Gate Farm, John H was soon absorbed amongst the Masham ride while the rest of us ambled along the Greenway and through Hollybank Woods which looked magical with the sun filtering through the woodland.

At Clint we turned towards Birstwith where Colin, Kevin, Sue and Charlie ventured forth towards Peat Lane and Toft Gate Farm. The rest of us, John R, Jennifer, Sarah R, Paul T, Monica and Gia cycled along towards Darley where with John's encouragement we put in an extra loop, some decent climbing and somehow ended up at Sophie's in Hampsthwaite for our usual excellent coffee stop. The portions of coffee and walnut cake were VERY generous!.

Despite the temptation to return via the Greenway John suggested Birstwith Hall and Kettlesing and Pennypot Lane. Again ignoring the lure of a left turn John happily persuaded us all to turn right to The Sun Inn at Norwood and then home via Stainburn Woods and Beckwithshaw all nicely with a following breeze. Excellent day out 32 miles. Gia





Wednesday Wanderers Ride

A group of nine riders set off from Hornbeam on one of the best mornings we have had this year, sunny, no ice and only light winds. The plan was to arrive at Arkendale by 11.30 to have coffee and cake at the village hall. We knew we would have to be fairly quick so set off at a cracking pace with only a few short stops. Across the Show Ground and through Follyfoot to Spofforth where we met up with Paul who had been waiting patiently for us. Over the hill to Little Ribston and Walshford and then over the level crossing to Wixley. After Wixley, Gordon and David left us to return home and the rest of us continued through Thorpe Underwood. It was here that our plans started to fall apart. A strong unexpected head wind came from nowhere and reduced us to a much slower pace. We pushed on determinedly through Great Ouseburn but despite our best efforts it was 11.45 by the time we reached Arkendale. Fortunately Glynn had arrived earlier and warned them of our planned arrival so we were still able to be served. Only Paul who arrived last was unlucky that the last slice of cake had been eaten. The return via Ferrensby Farnham and Knaresborough was ridden at a much slower pace. A good ride at a faster pace than usual for our group. 34 miles, fairly flat. Andrew H



Long Ride

John H summed it up succinctly: where's the rain, then? This was a day to revel in and the 6 opting for long ride did just that. A temporary compass malfunction was quickly corrected by a HG resident and it was out to Ripley for a comfort stop. Here there was a glancing blow with the Medium Plus group and overtures were made to John but, loyal fellow, he stayed long for the day. Lesley and Richard needed to be back in Knaresborough for 2.30 so a fairly brisk pace was set with the intention of getting to Masham for coffee. Realising this was a bit ambitious so early in the season, Lesley and Richard headed off towards Ripon at Kirkby Malzeard, while the four remaining pressed on to Masham for an early lunch. Richard P spotted that the village shop in Kirkby is for sale – how great it would be for the new owner to offer a takeout tea/coffee/cake sideline, possibly along the lines of the sadly-missed Kirkby Overblow shop. There would have been six eager customers today. Past I'Ansons, where there was a hot dusty smell just like Redbush tea – a new line maybe? – we arrived in Market Square at 11.40 with the market bustling. Locals were overheard to say that previous markets had been rather thinly "stalled" but this was much better. A Bordar lunch over, the serious business of climbing to Lofthouse filled my thoughts: was the wind going to be too much of an overhead, despite the lovely sunshine? Headwinds certainly didn't help in the climb through the villages up to the Colsterdale turn, but after that the strong breeze settled into a cross-wind which, while not helpful, wasn't impossible. After lots of flat miles through flooded Dutch-master landscapes in recent weeks, the ramps up to the cattle grids tested us in various ways. We had seen snow on the tops from the Nidd viaduct earlier and wondered about road conditions, especially ice. On the climb to Jordan Moss we found the ice, causing some walking; I found out very quickly that pushing the Dawes up a 1-in-6 is harder than riding it and remounted as soon as I could. Ice and gradients were overcome: it was time for the summit photo, with snow (see picture). There was suggestion that we might add a fifth member, in the form of a snowman, but we would have been there the rest of the day! Our reward was the view from the top over to Roseberry Topping and a full parade of power stations along the Aire. Ice awareness slowed our progress considerably down Trapping Hill to Lofthouse, where the turn to Pateley signalled a tail wind – marvellous. Tea and well-deserved cakes in Teacups (just us and one farmer) set us up for the final climbs up to Brimham: were these the steepest of the day – it felt like it! Back to HG via Burnt Yates, Hollybank Lane and the Greenway, it was 4.30 by the time we hit The Stray and the heat had gone from the sun, but not the glad feeling of having been on a grand day out. In figures, it was c 58 miles with c 3800 ft of climbing, but they are not what we'll remember about this day. Terry Smith

