

Sunday, March 13, 2016

Wheel Easy Ride Report 515

Short Ride

Nine of us gathered in the upper car park to risk the Short Ride – an estimated 15mi with an extra 10 mi option for the hardy souls wishing to be superfit – in the event, Caroline, Dennis and Max. Welcome to Dave who is preparing for new knee, Sue O and Diane, who had been both unable to cycle for a while. We left Hornbeam via the cycle path to the Showground and thence to Rudding Lane and Follifoot. The skies were gloriously clear, the daffodils gorgeous and the birds sang as we hurtled to the outskirts of Spofforth and posed and pouted against a backdrop of BEER! Thirsts quenched, we continued to Little Ribston with Dennis setting a racy pace and the Grahams providing a continually changing back-marker role.

A coffee decision was made at the Brethren Meeting House gate and the three superfits took the extra option and, hopefully, cycled to Ripley to have coffee in what Caroline had established as an Ingleby bedroom – shiver me wheel spokes! The remaining six had refreshments at the Watermill Café. This was wonderful – we sat out on the upper decking and savoured the delights of a beautiful Spring day accompanied by some pretty yummy sconny scoans and cake! Cups were raised to Lynda, who has three more chemotherapy sessions ahead of her. She has been a very fine example of fortitude and grit – even throwing in her forthcoming (Summer) move to Oxfordshire.

As Low Bridge was closed, the ascent of Harrogate Road was unavoidable – Beryl having been declined. Ruth set a very respectable pace and we managed to reach the newly moved/erected seat and bus shelter without further ado. Three parted for the Woodlands return and Ruth and I cycled to Leadhall Lane via the Stray paths – ie the ones which welcome cyclists! Thank you all for lovely company. Sue Downes



Medium Ride

Just over twenty riders opted for the 35 mile ride to Kirkby Overblow, Sicklinghall, Wetherby, Thorner, Bramham, and back to Wetherby for coffee. Andrew and John kindly offered to each lead a group to ensure we had groups of seven or eight members. We welcomed Gia and Malcolm's nephews Jack and Avi who were having a weekend away from London. As both cycle in London I'm sure they would have been impressed by the lovely countryside and villages we passed through. After coffee in Costa we returned through Kirk Deighton, Spofforth, Follifoot, Rudding Park and the Showground. A lovely morning's ride with great company. Thank you everyone! Paul T.



Another Medium Ride

The day started well with hazy sunshine and light winds making it one of the best days for a long time. The medium ride split up into 3 groups and we were the first 7 riders to leave Hornbeam and set off through Burn Bridge and up to Kirby Overblow where we picked up another 2.

On down through Sicklinghall with the pace being somewhat limited by the amount of chatter going on at the rear. With the bridge closed at Linton we passed through Wetherby and along the A58 to Collingham using the footpath at the side of the road.

At Collingham we headed up Jewitt Lane and by the time we reached the top had merged with the second group of riders. At this point the groups re-formed into 2 different groups with 1 heading for Bramham and the rest of us following the planned route to Thorner and then back to Bramham. Everyone agreed that the scenery along this loop made the additional distance worthwhile.

From Bramham we followed the cycle path back to the A1 roundabout where we split into two groups. One followed the cycle path down to Wetherby and the second went down the bridlepath through the woods to meet up again at Wetherby.

In Wetherby we decided to have coffee in the café in the Shambles. Everywhere was very busy due to the good weather but we were lucky to find some empty tables. After waiting for a while, our order for tea, coffee, cakes, crumpets and bacon sandwiches was taken and we sat looking forward to them. We waited and waited and eventually our drinks arrived. We waited some more and then some more while all around appetizing plates of food were served. Eventually we suspected that something was wrong and in desperation asked when we could expect to be served. Shock! Horror! We were told that they did not have a food order for our table. We then had the choice of starting the whole process again or accepting toasted teacakes which could be ready in 1 minute. We took this option rather than risk it being dark by we got back to Harrogate. The 1 minute was rather optimistic but finally we were served and the teacakes were delicious after the long wait and made even better by the manageress cancelling the bill.

Leaving the café, well rested, fed and richer than expected we decided to follow the Harland Way to Spofforth. The path was surprisingly clean and dry after last week's rain. On through Follifoot and across the showground we arrived back in Harrogate after a very pleasant ride of about 34 miles in perfect weather. Andrew

Medium Plus Ride

Once again the Met Office got it right and we were blessed with a dry sunny spring like day with no wind and our journey over the moors was to the accompaniment of the curlew chorus. In the absence of a second leader, Richard and Alan kindly took a faster group off first and a more sedate six followed with me out to Little Almscliffe. Having safely negotiated the short section of the A 59 we took the gated road, where five got through the side gate before the main barrier decided to rise and so backmarker Justin dutifully closed the side gate only to find himself almost guillotined as the barrier came down again almost straight away. No harm done we progressed on Delves Ridge where we were overtaken by the biggest Chapter of Harley Davidsons ever seen together and must have taken several minutes to come past. Then down through Padside and over Foulshaw Moor to the steep descent of Yorke's folly into Pateley and Teacups café, where for some unknown reason an order for toasted teacakes produces three halves. However all very efficiently served and our slower group were able to catch up with the faster group and try and decide on the best way of tackling the next section of the route out of Wath. The democratic decision was to stick to the official route, despite Richard's dire warnings about the steep ascent and the hazard of deep drainage gully across the full width of the road. Such warning were well justified and it is not often one witnesses so many Wheeleasy riders getting off and walking. However the ride and views across the top made it all worthwhile. Having dropped into Fellbeck our route back took us towards Brimham and the lovely free wheel down Rabbit Lane and onto the Drovers where the group started to splinter and everyone made their various ways home. 40 miles on a lovely day with great company and for those who want the stats, we did 1140 metres of ascent and a similar amount of descent and burned off 2687 calories, most of which I put back on at Teacups. James G.





Long Ride

What was it that attracted an unprecedented 21 riders to participate in the Long Ride? Was it PCJ's magnetic personality, the thought of a Gentle Jackson/Easy-Peasy Long Ride? Unusually the group had to split into two with PCJ leading one, and Eric W leading the other. After overcoming an exciting time getting through Knaresborough the ride settled down to a steady pace and we all started to enjoy the relatively windless, sunny and dry conditions. We only had one puncture en route to Thirsk and this enabled part of the second group to reach Thirsk before us. After the refreshment stop at Thirsk it was onwards and upwards for the second part of the ride. Fortunately we had no further mishaps and continued to enjoy the scenery and the weather conditions. PCJ

Addendum.

After the ride PCJ was persuaded, against his better judgement, to have a pint at the Gardener's Arms, fortunately there is no photographic evidence of this event.



Spanish Ride

Wheel Easy Spanish Ride: Monica, David, Yvonne and Martin assembled at HPB Alfaix at the official start time of 9.30 but realising we were ahead of British Time by 1 hour we felt envious of the Harrogate members still tucking in to breakfast as we set off. The envy lasted for at least a milli-second as headed west in the direction of Sorbas under clear blue skies, little wind and warm sunshine.

This area inland from Almeria is arid and very much a desert with scrubland and canyons, a real wild west feel. It is the area where the spaghetti westerns were all filmed. Modern Spanish roads are pretty good however, and lightly trafficked, so we were soon heading for our first coffee stop at Sorbas some 15 miles away. David pointed out that Sorbas after 5 days on the saddle of a hire bike was aptly describing his anatomy if the "b" is omitted.

Coffee, tostados and jamon all consumed we set off on the Lubrin road heading north to complete a circuit back to Alfaix. A delightful rolling road in warm sunshine this was a treat as we soaked up the sun and climbed gently and then dropped into Lubrin for a tapas lunch. The town square was lively with youngsters practising some crazy dance and then we headed towards Bedar and the biggest climb of the day winding up over the mountain before a switch back descent in a surprisingly chill wind.

A drop down the sunny coastal plain at Los Gallardos raised our temperature as we headed homeward into a stiff headwind.

In old money 38 miles and nearly 4000 ft of climbing. Time for a British cuppa! Back to earth in Yorkshire next week for Yvonne and Martin, brrrr..... Martin W.





General Photos





