

Sunday, April 9, 2017

Wheel Easy Ride Report 569

Short Ride

Seventeen set off from Hornbeam in our merry band today. We split into two groups but reconvened at a number of places along the way. We welcomed three new riders, Lorna, Pat & Jill who were all happy to try the route & distance. We headed to Low Bridge, Farnham, Copgrove & along the bridle path to Roecliffe and Boroughbridge. Conditions were fabulous. Lovely views and no wind. Lots of jollity as we paused a few times to let riders peel off layers. Good to meet up with Malcom at Farnham. He kindly took our group photo. Bean Cafe in Boroughbridge coped well with our large group. All were seated outside and the cheese scones were a particular treat alongside interesting speciality tea! Refreshed we rode back through Minskip & Stavely, losing a few as we approached Knaresborough to additional loops & alternative routes home. Thanks to all for great company & hope to see the new riders out with Wheeeasy again. Nicky & Graham (24 miles)



Medium Plus Ride Helen's Group

The weather forecast had given a cast iron guarantee of temperatures up to 19 degrees C today so it was time to dig out the shorts, check they still fit and check for moths – although it is going to be a pretty terrifying moth that eats Lycra.

With the fast boys out of the way Keith and I split into neat groups of tenish, and set off briskly with a cheery "race you to Johnny Bagdad's". I was relying quite heavily on my Garmin today as I still get confused in the Bermuda Triangle of Grewelthorpe, Kirkby Malzeard and Galphay. Annoyingly the device was playing up at the start, giving daft error messages like "navigation error" and "unexpected item in bagging area" but with a bit of persuasion it sprang into life outside Ripon Cathedral whilst we had a comfort stop and striptease.

Sir John had left us at Farnham for other commitments which left nine of us comprising Gia, Dave S, Janet, Bianchi Bob (on something else this week), Colin, James, Charlie and Me. Dave did a solo Occaney freewheel race, so was automatically declared the winner and the rest of us just enjoyed the increasing warmth and sunshine and in no time at all we were at Snape for a group photo of riders with daffodils which, it has to be said, were looking very

much past their best – the daffodils that is. Keith's group caught up with us at this point and they were heading for the Arboretum for lunch, which took the pressure off the "race" to Johnny Bagdad's. On arrival in Masham, we were just in time to evict the Long Riders from the cafe and settled down for an excellent lunch. The coffees were a bit strong and Gia executed a mesmerising conjuring trick with cups, hot water and milk to get it just right – rather reminiscent of Paddington Bear – but it all worked out in the end and we all helped to clear up the mess.

Full of food we headed up through Warthersmarske and at the top we waved goodbye to Colin who was going right hand down a bit in search of a few more hills and moorland and we never saw him again. We continued south through Grewelthorpe, Kirkby Malzeard and Galphay with only one small kerfuffle on the route. On the outskirts of Ripon we waved goodbye to Dave S and James who were heading home to Roeclyffe and Knaresborough respectively and the rest of us unanimously followed Gia's suggestion of going up through Studley Park then down to Ripley and the Greenway, thus avoiding Knaresborough Hill – a good choice! In Ripley we paused for a chat and Monica and I attempted a Ride Leader recruitment drive on the grounds that if every member of Wheel Easy lead one ride the rota problems could be solved at a stroke! Leading with a buddy is always a good plan – and you can try delegating the ride report and photography to an unsuspecting person in the group to ease the burden. Always food for thought.

And finally, thanks to all for the entertaining company on the most summery day of the year. Better pack the shorts away now, temperatures are due to plummet tomorrow. Nice while it lasted. Helen T





Medium Plus Ride Keith's Group

My group of eight thoroughly enjoyed what felt like the first day of Summer, together with a quickly served lunch at Thorpe Perrow Arboretum – which was unusually quiet. The daffodils may have been past their best but it seemed that there were bluebells along much of the route and we had the delightful company of Curlews, Chiffchaffs, Yellow Hammers and Buzzards to brighten the day still further.

It was good to see Andrew back up North for a visit and to welcome a new Steve who has just joined Wheel Easy, having recently moved from Ripon.

I think we all found it a challenging ride at this stage in the season but it certainly encourages us all to get fitter to enjoy the coming months and all the rides and Away Days. I recorded 60.4 miles at a secret but respectable average speed. Keith T



Medium Plus Ride - The Fast Group



Medium Ride

Fourteen at Hornbeam for the medium ride on this beautiful April day, on which we saw (heard?) a swallow, the first of the year (or so Paul B said, anyway). We split into two groups and agreed to re-group at Stainburn Woods. Ashville and past the Singing Cat to Beckwithshaw and left towards Otley. Not only the cat, but Sally, too, was singing us along, and so she became our siren. Right up Norwood Lane towards Stainburn Woods, without any significant headwind. Even the wind turbines on Penny Pot Lane were struggling to turn. Somewhere along the way Paul B had joined us. We continued past Little Alms Cliff and on to the B6451, right and left and down to Swinsty and then Fewston reservoirs. Charlie reported that one of our Daves had broken a spoke on the dam wall, but when I went back to check he had disappeared, so I presume he had turned round and gone back (hope you made it back, OK, Dave, if that is indeed your name). Dave P and Max took the direct route avoiding Timble, whilst the rest of us hauled up the hill through Timble. At the cross roads we took a right towards Blubberhouses, while Dave P tried to remember the name of Beamsley Beacon, where he had hiked as a kid. No incidents crossing the A59 and then we started the long haul up Hardisty Hill. Max struggled a bit on his Colnago, but then it doesn't have very low gears. We turned right after Meagill Lane and started a long leisurely run down past the Menwith Hill Camp towards Meg Gate. We encountered lots of 'old' cars, Mk II Escorts, Hillman Imps, Minis, a Saab and even an Austin A30 with semaphore indicators, no less, and so on. They had stickers for 'Ilkley Jubilee Rally'. On down in the lovely sunshine to Sophie's for refreshments on the lawn outside. We decided on Knox for the route back to Harrogate. About 28 miles Joe



Long Ride

Well, a great day out in glorious weather, and let's have a lot more of same over the next 6 months!

The highlights:
We started as a group of 6; Eric joined us for 2 minutes and then left for another destination; Richard P joined us; Dan joined us at Masham; Richard P left us just past Masham; Trefor left at B'bridge. And then we were 5. I know they don't add up but the numbers were quite confusing!

The undulations to Ringbeck were hard work, but the downhills after there were great. And the downhill for the last 3 miles to Bedale, on a good surface, with few cars, and a tailwind

was an easy 22+ mph with little pedal power needed. Lots of Nova riders creeping past us on the climb to Brimham before they went off road on some track we were not aware of. On a sportive we thought. Near Sharow, we went off road as well, when Mr Garmin ran out of tarmac. A great footpath, worthy of one of Richard P's rides! At least 3 Wheel Easy ride groups meeting up at Johnny Baghdads in Masham - bikes everywhere, and 7 deep in our case. A heartfelt cry of "surely not....!" as I turned up a modest hill en route to Bedale. Discussions about handing out quinine sulphate for cramp on last week's Snowdonia ride; egg timer apertures; and sorting out rabbits and a noisy pheasant - all while Dan ate a full English at 3.30pm, with Glyn looking jealously on.... To be fair Dan had not eaten much during the day - again unusual! So, yes, an entertaining day out and on amazingly quiet roads! JohnH



