

Sunday, April 30, 2017

## Wheel Easy Ride Report 572

---

### Medium Ride

We set off, the second of two groups, on a chilly but dry day towards Ripley, Darley and three chevrons on the OS map. There was a rendezvous with the first group at Thornthwaite, by arrangement, and we ended up splitting into three. Groupe C2C went in search of more hills on the way to Pateley Bridge and beyond, before their tour next week. Groupe Blackham went straight up to Menwith Hill Road - the shortest route to Sophie's, in the best Wheel Easy traditions. Groupe Lesley, meanwhile, stuck to the advertised route, taking on the three chevrons on Thornthwaite Brow and My Love Lane. We came, we saw, we conquered - and then worked out the shortest route to Sophie's, eschewing the official route's suggestion of yet another hill after Tang. And then it was Knox and home. 28 miles, over 500 metres of climbing - most in the space of 4 miles - on surely the hilliest, but also the most scenic, Medium route. Many thanks to Lesley for leading, and to all for excellent company. Justin



### Medium C2C Group Ride

Well that was something special. Three of us wanted to do some hills in preparation for our forthcoming C2C ride. And we found them.

Final distance was 44.6 miles with a climb of 938 metres - probably more than we'll end up doing on the C2C. We left Hornbeam with 5 others who were destined to meet the rest of the medium group at Thornthwaite. Only one accident - someone who shall remain nameless (although it wasn't me!!! ) couldn't extricate themselves from their cleats quickly enough at the end of Holly Bank Lane. We checked and there was no damage to the road.

We then headed off up some fairly tortuous hills for the big descent from Yorke's Folly into Pateley and a welcome break at Teacups. Then to Wath and up the steep hill with the gullies across it. We would have liked to have made it all the way to the top but we had to stop and admire the views behind (see picture below). Then over the moors to Grantley, Adfield, Gypsy Lane and home.

We saw - fabulous views of Nidderdale and Gouthwaite; loads of wild flowers - wild garlic, bluebells, bullrushes in the ponds, honesty, anemones and some lovely white things. The birds were spectacular too - in particular the oyster catchers and curlews.  
Thanks to Liz and Fiona for their company. Steve W



### **Medium Plus Shorter Ride**

Medium Plus - Shorter Route. There were 12 of us for the medium plus ride today and we rode a shorter route missing out York. We headed into strong headwind all the way out to Beningborough but that was "money in the bank" because the return route with a following

wind was a blast. At Gt Ouseburn we briefly stopped at a rather impressive Morgan Sportscar rally then it was onwards into the wind. Aldwark Bridge on the outward route was jammed with traffic, caused by people timidly squeezing past a horse trailer. With the help of some Wheel Easy traffic management we got them sorted and we headed for lunch. Beningborough Farm Shop breakfast menu stops at 11.30 we were told rather frostily, so obviously 12 hungry cyclists doesn't warrant extending the hot rolls for another 10 mins. Extraordinary! When folks want to spend money you would think they would see customer service as the most important thing. Enough grumbling, the sun was shining and now with the wind on our backs it was great riding back up to Aldwark Bridge, then Whixley, and over the quaint level crossing where for the first time in living memory the big gates were opened up for us to cycle through. The route home was through Little Ribston. Martin W









### **Short Ride Report**

How lucky we are! El Butler leading the short group; glimmer of sun; a light wind; and crowds of people waiting in the top car park, anticipating a classic ride. El Butler was raring go and led an excited group of 20 plus out of Harrogate along the Beryl Burton and an unusual spin all the way down Watergate and Abbey Road through Knaresborough to the nature reserve and out towards Lingerfield and Scotton. At this point we lost Sue Threadgold who has met a runner.....and due to the inefficiency of the back marker she remained lost....my apologies Sue, now only 2 Sue s left. Onwards to Ferrensby, Arkendale, where Gordon and Allison flashed past in the opposite direction. When we arrived at the Blue Bell Pub, Arkendale (I think) we turned left, lost Darren W. on his first time out for a couple of years, sailed joyfully into Staveley on to Copgrove and nearly, if Geràldine had had her way, mountain biking through the Mountgarrett's garden. We reached the ford in the once beautiful valley, now covered with pig or cow pens which looked like a quickly built outdoor prison. At Ripley the Great El Butler bade us farewell...his lunch and Dorethy were calling. New Ian, Geraldine and Joe, and several others were not lured in by the smell of

coffee and gossip at the castle cafe and preferred to continue the El Bulter experience down the Greenway rather than decide if a seemingly disorganised Specialised would ever let Monica buy her new bike or if there would be a satisfactory out come of a Line of Duty. After a quick dash down the Greenway we disbanded and returned for a late afternoon of gardening, choosing a bike providing one was available or winning the tour of Yorkshire. Thank you Dennis for à brilliantly different ride....yes we are lucky. 30 plus miles taking quite a long time. CG

### **Medium Plus Ride**

Ten riders took part in the official Medium Plus ride with Eric W organising a Tour De Yorkshire Medium Plus Ride. With a steady easterly, south easterly wind the riding to York was going to be a bit if a trial. With several changes of front riders we made steady progress to Beningborough Hall. There was an overwhelming majority to give the cafe a miss, partly due to the number of cyclist already there, and head for Cycle Heaven. After an incident free ride to York, Cycle Heaven lived up to its reputation. With the promise of the wind at our backs for the return journey we set of to Harrogate at a brisk pace. We were not disappointed with weather conditions and arrived back in Harrogate in time to see the finish of the Tour De Yorkshire. PCJ



### **Long 'Tour de Yorkshire' Ride**

Today's calendar showed the Long Ride had no ride leader and no ride route, so I arrived at Hornbeam hatching a plan of cycling into the Dales to support Day 3 of the Tour de Yorkshire as it passed through Ilkley, Bolton Abbey, Burnsall, before turning south for Linton, Cracoe and Skipton. Precisely where to stop and watch the Tour was open for negotiation. Amazingly I had only one other join me - Phil from Knaresborough. Phil will be doing the 'Etape Caledonia' in the Grampians (81 miles and 3,924' ascent) in 3 weeks time and wanted plenty of miles and hills today in preparation. So we quickly developed the plan to maximise the miles and climbs: we would go to Grassington and meet the Tour route somewhere in that area. The weather forecast was spot on: the strong south easterly winds made the ride up Duck Street a breeze for us, and Greenhow to Grassington - always one of my favourite roads - was just superb with wind assistance making this faster than ever before (over 51mph on one descent!!!). Remarkably the roads were all deserted, making it an even more enjoyable experience.

At Grassington we crossed the River Wharfe and immediately turned left on the Burnsall Road, and soon joined the Tour route, where spectators were already in position. As the road hadn't yet been closed to traffic, we decided to press on to put in another 9 miles to Skipton, passing through Linton and Cracoe on virtually traffic free roads, and always getting cheered by the awaiting spectators. After crossing the Skipton by-pass, we had a glorious high speed descent into the town centre, with the crowds getting ever bigger and their cheers ever louder. We were the last cyclist to arrive in Skipton ahead of the race, and received a tremendous welcome from the huge crowd there. BRILLIANT! So good, in fact, I was all in favour of cycling back up to the by-pass to experience it all over again. I'm sure these will be the the loudest cheers Phil and I will ever receive in our lifetimes! What joy! Shortly after, the police motor cycle cavalcade arrived, officially closing the roads. The loudspeaker car announced there was a breakaway group 5 minutes ahead of the pelaton, and leading the breakaway was Pete Williams from Skipton, riding for One Pro Cycling. "Make sure you give him a real Skipton cheer!" was the command. Everybody did - even louder than the cheers Phil and I got!! A short while later the pelaton sped through - see photos of the pelaton arriving by the Castle and departing down High Street to the cheers of the huge crowd, all except for the man on my left in the photo (he must have been on a day trip from Lancashire!). When the excitement was over, we visited a café before setting off into the strong headwind for home via Embsay, Bolton Abbey, Beamsley, Ilkley, Otley, Leathley, Almscliffe Crag, again on deserted roads. I arrived home having completed 67 glorious miles through wonderful Dales scenery and 5,850' ascent. Phil would have done 76 miles when he got back to Knaresborough. Couldn't have had a better training session for his Etape Caledonia, and this was just pure joy from start to finish. Difficult to think of a better Wheel Easy day's cycling.  
Eric W



