

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Wednesday Rides

Leisure Ride

Martin recovering from flu, Maureen returning after illness and myself opted for a nice leisurely route from Hornbeam. We took the route through the showground and tip avoiding the traffic on our way to Knaresborough. Skirted Knaresborough via Abbey Road and Water Lane to Farnham and headed back via Linger field Scotton, Brearton, Nidd, Ripley and the Greenway. Cafe stop at the church in Ripley. From the Greenway we saw a white pheasant in a field and stopped to watch it's squaring up to a regular bird until they both disappeared into the crops. Mileage total approximately 24 miles. Jean B





Wednesday Wanderers' Ride

Only 9 of us today including Zoe, Carl and Brian who were new, but very welcome, to the Wanderers. The leader was in need of a flatter ride so we headed east to Kirkby Overblow via Burn Bridge, where a little further on we stopped for a photo with a backdrop of Wharfedale. On through Wetherby and passing 2 large cycle groups heading the other way we took the new cycle route to Walton and on to Rudgate Lane. The weather was glorious with low wind speeds though a little hazy now that we have been without rain for so long. From Cattal we headed into Kirk Hammerton and then over the A59 into Green Hammerton. These were new villages by bike for many of us. Between the two we had to ring a bell for a man to unlock the gates for us so we could cross the railway. Soon we were ensconced outside Tancred farm in the sunshine with hot drinks, bacon sandwiches and other goodies in front of us. Carl and Brian insisted on returning via the A59 though we did advise against it and suggested alternative routes. The remaining 7 had a gentle ride back via Thorp Underwood, Ouseburn, Arkendale and Farnham where eggs were purchased and Gordon was seen out on his bike. We hope he will be joining us again soon. Many of us were tired so Knaresborough was chosen as the quickest route home. About 40 miles, 1,440 feet climbing and average speed 10.1. Many thanks to Alison for back marking. Liz Pugh



Wednesday Ride

Fifteen of us, a good mix of Wednesday and Wanderers riders set off in very welcome warm sunny weather for an amble that would take in Wetherby for a cafe stop. Steve and John kindly shepherded one group which helped to keep the numbers down and our first gathering was at Almscliffe Crag reached by Brackenthwaite Lane and passing near the honey farm. The views, colours and warmth made this a welcome change to the chill of the last few days. On to Weeton and Dunkeswick and on to Wetherby via Kearby, all quiet peaceful lanes. In Wetherby we convened at the station car park which surprised those who wondered if this was a live station. A group headed straight to North Street Deli and the rest of us explored the new kiddies pump track just off the Harland Way. We stopped and sat outside at Pomfret's where we were well looked after and we had good fare. The two groups joined again, four went back to Harrogate via Kirk Deighton, four via Walton, Rudgate Lane, Cattal, Little Ribston and Spofforth and the rest set off for Whixley and potentially a second cafe stop. A great day out, 43 miles, nice to meet up with Helen in Wetherby. Gia



Wednesday Long Ride

Having at last lost the stiff easterly winds that had plagued us for a week, plus the bonus of wall-to-wall sunshine, all route options were open to the long ride this week. Opting for long and flat – that's distance rather than coffee - seven headed to Piccadilly to collect two more and to thrash out the final destination. This was Lakeside cafe and Boardman shop near Kiplin Hall, giving us the prospect of mileages in the mid 80s. Some minor argy-bargy with a cutting-in driver got us off to a unsettling start but once through Knaresborough the fine weather lifted the spirits and the joy returned. The customary comfort stop in Boroughbridge allowed us to share greetings with three gents doing the Way of the Roses in nice bite-size chunks. Arriving in a buzzing Thirsk well before noon, it was toasted tea-cake and similar fare to go with our drinks, all accompanied with welcoming banter from the staff, who clearly know what a cyclist needs! John S opted for a return home to prepare for the "Acorn" ride on Saturday, while the remaining 8 made doubly sure that the author did not get left behind on this occasion – such good friends. The scent from rapeseed flowers got stronger as the heat built up, but this was preferable to the overspill from a crop sprayer we passed on the way north – a good test of one's ability to hold breath and pedal hard. A puncture within 5 miles of lunch soon posed the problem for Richard P of using a standard stem valve in a deep profile rim. This brought out a fine team effort to huff and puff where necessary and get creative in problem-solving. It was well after 2.00 when Lakeside was reached and with 50 miles on the clock, it was looking like a late finish. But with the food good, the sunshine warm and the conversation mulling over the election, we weren't on our way home until 3.00. on the most direct route we could devise. In single file and at a brisk pace we ticked off the villages towards Ripon, halting briefly to pick up Richard S from the floor after a low speed argument with a dropped kerb. A very worried car driver behind him was worried that she was in some way responsible, but we re-assured her it wasn't. A brisk pace was re-established and Ripon was reached well before 4.45. Bishop M, Markington and Ripley was the preferred route for most, and then all, as we all saw the prospect of an 80 plus mileage duly achieved as weary legs (for some) tool us along the Greenway to town. Summer had arrived.

Terry Smith





EGs' Ride

We were a bit down on numbers at Low Bridge, actually eight riders, but the centre of attention was Bob Shears on his new electric bike. An elegant looking machine, with an excellent finish, these bikes seem to be improving all the time.

The first stop was to be Easingwold, and away we went in the glorious sunshine.

As expected the men's downhill to Occaney went to the favourite Dave (wonder wheels) Siswick, though Bob's electric was eyed as a contender. Due to some work to be done, "our friends electric" Bob left us at Boroughbridge, otherwise he would have paced us in to Easingwold.

In Easingwold the usual caffeine and calories were taken at TeeHee cafe, (see photo).

Sat in the square, in glorious sunshine, people watching, in the manner of "Cafe Society", this led to the divestment of garments (not a pretty sight), and Peter B yearning to be a Latin type, well he was wearing some Gigolo shorts. The beans on toast were very good, rating four beans on the Siswick scale of excellence i.e. the best in Easingwold.

Unfortunately after a phone home Dave W had to return home, Bill decided to go with him, but immediately punctured in Easingwold square, this was repaired under Dave S's supervision while we all waited, so Peter B resumed his exotic dreams.

Dave and Bill then departed and the rest of us (a famous five?) headed for Coxwold.

After Coxwold it was the metalled track to near Thorpe Hall then the climb to the ridge with all its fine views, on to Yearsley, then the fast descent to Brandsby and continuing a good pace to Stillington and Sutton-on-the-Forest, where the Sutton Park cafe was found to be open, so it was more of that "al Fresco", whoever he was (see photo) and a different subject of conversation. This meant we did not have to head south to Beningborough for afternoon tea so it was back via Huby, Tollerton and Aldwark bridge, stopping at Branton Green for a drink and a good old whinge about things in general, this continued at home when finding that we will now be charged for garden waste disposal, no doubt we will see the effect of this on our future rides.

An excellent ride in superb weather, excellent cycling conditions, a good mileage and the bronzed features of Colin, Dave P, Dave S, Peter B and Geoff. ?? Dave P.





Alternative EGs' Ride

Photo of Terry and Eric on tour at Lake Balaton, Hungary. We're hoping to remove jackets tomorrow! Eric



Our Friends in Hungary

The Wednesday Breakaway Group were on an Away Day in Hungary today around Lake Balaton and had a nice easy start with 50 plus mile relatively flat ride, but we suspect there will be hills to come. We enjoyed a dry sunny day, but with a sneaky cool breeze and two good stops for lunch and tea/ice creams. The food and accommodation are excellent, but the language is proving a challenge, although many of the Hungarians speak good English. All being well we should be back for next Wednesday. James G



Coast to Coast – Workington to Sunderland – 3 to 5 May 2017

The sense of achievement was enormous!

It's something I've always wanted to do – cycle the Coast to Coast. So when the chance came I jumped at it. "Can't be too hard. After all it's only 45 miles a day and only 3 days - easy". No thought about the elevations to be climbed. Don't be fooled – this is a very challenging ride.

There are other C2C routes which I don't know so this just relates to my experience.

Everything went very smoothly due to the expert planning by Al (maps and pulling everyone together), Liz F (transport and accommodation) and Maris (evening meals). I just went along for the ride and followed instructions as always.

The size of the group was restricted by the bike carrier which could take 12 bikes. They took us to Workington and picked us up at Sunderland 3 days later.

By custom you always go from west to east because that's the way the prevailing wind blows. Not this time! We had continuous strong wind – up to 25mph gusts – blowing against us for the whole 3 days. I haven't had to pedal to get down a hill before. That was compensated for by the wall to wall sunshine. The wind meant that we were late for our accommodation on both nights – both lovely B&Bs with secure bicycle storage: Acorn Guest House, Penrith and several guest houses in Stanhope.

Don't get me wrong. This was a fabulous ride. Great people and great banter – a lot of it unprintable. We learnt all about pelvic floor exercises, happy baby stretches (see photo) and what to do with baby butter (sorry no photo). Some of the hills were so steep they had to be walked up. The scenery was spectacular and the whole trip was worth all the training and hard work by everyone.

Total distance - 135 miles. Total climb – almost 3000 metres. Average speed on day 2 was only 6.5 mph!

If you get the chance, do it. But don't think it's easy. Your sense of achievement will be something to remember.

It's 5 days since we finished. My wobbly bits are still a bit crunchy and my crunchy bits are still a bit wobbly. But what a ride!

The picture below shows the whole team with half of Andrew missing. Lesson learnt – never pick a stranger off the promenade to take a photo for you. If you do, make sure the picture is what you want. Steve W







A Day out in the Strines - 6 miles Outside Sheffield - 9th May

The original ride plan was a simple there and back on Mortimer Road near Sheffield. Then, some googling found the Tour of the Strines Sportive..... This uses bits of Mortimer Road but has a route which looks like a pile of spaghetti - 54 miles, 22 named climbs with a profile like a saw tooth. And all within about 4 miles of Low Bradfield which is about 6 miles NW of Sheffield. And so to what turned out to be quite a unique ride:

Three of us, Andy Ackroyd, Dave Rang and myself set off from Low Bradfield in some trepidation at the route profile. It appeared to me, wrongly as it turned out, that the morning would be the hardest part of the day. The afternoon part proved to be somewhat tougher!

Great weather at 6C up to about 14C, minimal wind.

A beautiful area, with virtually no traffic, fantastic surfaces after major resurfacing for the TdY, great views, fast downhill, but many 12% and much steeper climbs. And some Dibbles Bridge-type hazards.

Never-ending road signs saying 'Bradfield 2 miles' because the route was up and down valley sides and a few ridges. We must have ridden 95% of the roads in the area.

So many reservoirs that we lost count. Or many views of the same ones perhaps.

A very welcome lunch stop at 25 miles in the Post Office cafe.

Followed immediately by a big climb topping out at 23% and then, after a brief respite, straight into another long, steep climb! Phew.....!

We went down another hill into a village and I missed a left switchback turn on to a tiny side road. After climbing back up to it we found it was just wide enough for a car, and it had brand new tarmac!

Mr Garmin was the only way to navigate the tortuous route, but even it gave up the ghost before we did! It got very confused with the spaghetti route and the constant turns, needing a reset. Then again. Finally, both it and we were worn out - although mountain goat Andy was definitely the freshest of us.

When we saw another 'Bradfield 2 miles' sign and the Garmin had one final wobble, so we decided to retire, well satisfied with the day, back to the cafe and a sit out in the sunshine.

Time to rest some tired legs!

So, a great day out in a beautifully compact area. Definitely one for those who like climbing. We'll be back.....John H