

Sunday, April 22, 2018

Wheel Easy Ride Report 620

Short Ride

Welcome to new riders Nicolas and Alistair who joined Margaret, Graham and myself for a 35 mile ride. The route was Hornbeam to Knaresborough low Bridge, Abbey Road, Wetherby Road, Chain Lane, Halfpenny Lane, Boroughbridge Road to Farnham, Copgrove, Bishop Monkton, cross A61 to Markington, Drovers Crossroads, Ripley and Greenway home. Cafe stop was at Grass Roots, formerly Cascades, delicious scones and pulled lamb sandwich taken. Rain appeared after the cafe stop but luckily didn't last too long and we soon warmed up for the last leg. Jean



Medium Ride Group 1

A beautiful spring day inspired 15 of us to tackle the Medium Ride, a somewhat different route to the one advertised. We made good progress through Burn Bridge to Walton Head Lane where we gathered our strength for the climb to Kirkby Overblow. Somewhere along the line the weather pulled a fast one on us as by the time we got to Clap Gate the temperature had dropped and lowering skies threatened rain. A brief stop at Sicklinghall afforded the opportunity for most of us to don waterproof jackets.

We were pleasantly surprised to arrive at Wetherby and the Gourmet Café still dry. Dan remarked that it was perfect timing as it looked like a shower was imminent. Fortified, we set off to Little Ribston into wind and rain which had all the makings of a soaking. Dropping into Spofforth though, the skies were already clearing and by Follifoot were dry again. The usual game of, "beat the lights at the bottom of the hill on Rudding Lane" resulted in the usual grumbling as, inevitably, they changed to red as we approached. Another failed cunning plan.

Farewells were made at the top of the Show Ground as friends made off to their homes after a pleasant ride. Thanks to all. Neil P



Medium Ride Group 2

Four of us decided to do the published route today and set off for Low Bridge. There, we picked up another three riders and then a fourth just outside Knaresborough. We had a very pleasant ride in the sunshine, through Arkendale and Marton cum Grafton till we reached Great Ouseburn when the cold front came over, the sun disappeared and it got a lot cooler. But it stayed dry till we got to Tancred Farm Shop. After a very pleasant lunch and chat, we put our waterproofs on and departed in fitful rain. By the time we got to Little Ribston, the sky started to clear, but there we separated, returning home by different routes. 35 brisk miles in good company. Al D.

Medium Plus Ride Group 1

One of the more unusual medium plus routes today. I led the faster group of nine riders round what felt like a training course. We were never far away from home. We made some minor modifications, so didn't bother with the unsurfaced forest track through Stainburn Wood, which is not pleasant or fast on road bikes. Instead, we climbed up Norwood Edge and then detoured via the cafe at the visitor centre at Fewston Reservoir for a half-way stop. Another minor modification was to go through the Forest Moor base cut-through and then it was the fast run to Hampsthwaite, interrupted by Dave Rang having a puncture. We only managed 54km but a fairly respectable 900m climbing by the time I got home. All agreed that if this route comes up again we need to add to it as it was a bit short, but a decent hilly workout nevertheless. Good company as usual and interesting weather compared to the forecast. The sunglasses and sunblock being somewhat incongruous! Michael I

Medium Plus Ride Group 2

Today we did Route 57 which was billed as 50 miles hilly. It was certainly hilly but only just over 36 miles. The ride included Kirkby Overblow, Leathley, Lindley, Little Almscliffe, Menwith and Hampsthwaite.

It was a lovely route whoever planned it. I led a group of 10 and we had just one stop for a photo and coffee at Sophie's.

It's a shame that the weather decided to break today. In parts it was wet and windy but we had lots of dry patches.

I had difficulty persuading some of the group that Stainburn Woods were nowhere near Stainburn. Once that was sorted we had quite a lot of hill to get to Stainburn Woods. The route includes a track through the woods which 6 of the group thought would not be

suitable for their bikes. They decided to take the road. The 4 of us who followed the track were pleased to find it dry and not hard work at all (we just had to walk about 20 yards at the Little Almscliffe end).

Once through there we cycled to the agreed meeting place at the end of Norwood Lane. It was easy after that and the cruise down from Menwith to Hampsthwaite was delightful. I hope everyone enjoyed the ride. Steve W



Medium Plus Ride Group 3

We were a group of seven, left after the fast boys and Steve Wright's group had set off. We had also decided to share the leadership. The route went via Burnbridge to Kirkby Overblow and then down to cross the A61 and through Dunkeswick. At this point the clouds had gathered, the wind had got up and it had started to rain. Mark's quote "The weather is great - is it?" Steve rang me at this point to say his group did not now want to stop for coffee at the Farm Shop near Pool and were refusing to go through Stainburn Woods! We agreed to go our separate ways. When I caught our group up the decision was that we would follow Alison up the hill to Huby and to go to Stainburn Woods from there as she knew the way. However, after we passed Almscliff Crag we were meant to turn right but Alison was at the back and Justin was leading and went straight on. By the time we caught him up we were nearly at Stainburn. At Briscoerigg Alison said "Is it left or right?" We chose the wrong option so in the end headed back nearly to Beckwithshaw before turning left up to Little Almscliff. Julie's comment was "Excellent navigating ..." and Collette's "the ride leader is taking us on a Magical Mystery Tour". Mike W wanted to know "where's the hills?". He did go to inspect the end of the track at Stainburn Forest and pronounced it unusable as it was covered in large pebbles. On the way up, we saw Peter from the Wanderers on a Sunday circuit with his wife and then again about half an hour later. If he wondered what we were doing so close to Harrogate at that time of day it is because by committee we "invented a route without going more than 6 miles from Harrogate. "By now the sun was shining and from Justin "I have a dream" (of bacon sandwiches) so we all headed to the Fewston Farm Shop and indulged. Then we navigated the A59 to Meagill Lane and through the Naval Base who must have Sundays off as the barrier was not raised. At the end we were confronted with the glorious vista of Nidderdale. There was no demur as we all headed down to Darley and on to Hartwith Toll Bridge. Then by default we took the longest route back suggested, which was

up Stripe Lane, past Brimham Rocks and the long downhill swoop past Warsill to Ripley. We did about 48 miles with 3473 feet of climbing but our average speed was extremely slow. Leading a ride by committee involves a lot of discussion on the route and everything else as well!
Liz P



Long Ride Report

They say Nature doesn't do any more work than is necessary; when one has to conserve every last gram, every final calorie to stay ahead of prey, predators or rivals in the gene

pool, every extra expenditure or unnecessary effort gives a disadvantage to the prospective suitor/diner/consumer - the same is just as true in the ruthless marketplace of commerce. They say that Nature abhors a vacuum too, which is why hoovers don't breed in the wild, thank God. Be that as it may, the obsessively lean, meticulously-honed fat-free examples of perfection in animal form that are the Riders of The Long Ride weren't going to expend any energy that didn't take them towards their goal. Side-quests were shunned, routes were stripped to bone, rucksacks were abandoned in the name of single-minded focus on getting home with a minimum of fuss. So much for Scar House Reservoir, then...

Much as the Island of Great Britain is defined by the myriad bays, rivers and estuaries that cut deep into its contours, Sunday's Long Ride was shaped by the weather; only seven brave men set off from Hornbeam into tropical warmth to the West, yet not one hour later the wind was savagely assailing, rain dampened resolves and ominous clouds were everywhere around (excepting the ones which turned out to be sheep.) Trevor and Peter J left us at Brimham before five ventured down the less than pristine Old Coach Road to Glasshouses, where Dan chose the riverside path (formerly the main road before landslip necessitated a rerouting) and we surged through Pateley only delayed by a roaming party of Blackfaced Herdwick. How Stean's new cafe did us proud, though Glyn was bemused on exiting the loo to find a coachload of visitors waiting; fortunately we'd got our round in before they'd arrived! If you've not visited since the Cafe's extension, it's well worth a visit; it now extends right across the gorge, complete with vertigo-promoting glass floor!

The sun was our friend again on emerging, blinking, into the daylight; though none took up the proposed extension to Scar House, preferring to get stuck straight into the daunting prospect of Trapping Hill. It's a beast, but the wind that we had fought now brought favour, as we were helped to the summit and helped rather more down the long descent to Masham. Without the Scar House detour, it was a little early for lunch, so Phil proposed detouring to Spa Gardens or Fountains; Dan's counterproposal of Dallowgill rang hollow in the air...

The wind never really let up, and making the most of its assistance where we could, we returned to base via Littlethorpe and Occaney, James M and Andy showing the rest of us up whose bolts had already been shot. I theorised that we tend to meter out our reserves according to the challenge we have ahead of us, and by skipping the Scar House Extension we'd put those energies into speed rather than distance; as it was, all were bushed by the top of Knaresborough Hill. Sixty-odd miles, a few thousand feet of climbing, not one wasted calorie. Daniel Hutton



