

## Ride Review:

Destination: **Bacup Loop/Ramsbottom**

Date: **January 10<sup>th</sup> 2016**

Written By: **Mark Bardsley**



Can I just say thank you to all that turned up today for the ride, there's nothing worse than organising something and nobody turning up. The weather gods were once again not on our side but a great turnout of 8 riders at the Arena (that's Middleton Arena Brendan) made it a good start to the day.

We had a great diversity of bikes on display from Robs new Norco (cracking looking bike) with disc brakes to my Halfords cheap and cheerful Carrea. Welcome to new riders Tom and John I hope you both stick with us for our future rides, hopefully we will have some epic summer rides ahead of us.

As we set off from the Arena the weather brightened up and we set a steady pace towards Rochdale with the speed around 15 mph before we started to hit the hills. A few of the lads started to drop off the back but great team worked meant nobody was left behind and we were soon back riding as one bunch.

John and Tom lifted the pace as we headed towards the snow-capped hills of Bacup, some of the roads around this area are horrendous and luckily we had no mechanicals or punctures. I don't think I've ever been to Bacup when the sun has been out, if it ever comes out in Bacup.

It was good to see Bury tandem club out with the visually impaired riders, I think I saw about 4 tandems and 2 singles well done to them all for such a great cause. Once we got through Bacup a couple of the lads fancied a brew due to the cold weather so we stopped off at our usual tea room at the bottom of the Rake in Ramsbottom for a warm drink and a photo shoot. I thought Dave was going to do a couple of reps up the Rake as we set off (I told him that would be just showing off) so he decided to lead us back towards Bury instead. Steve "the climber" Bradshaw then took over at the front setting a quick pace with Tom and myself sat behind him, luckily for us there was no hills so he couldn't leave us. For the new lads to the club Steve climbs like Nario Quintana, so be warned!

There was a lots of cyclist out today and most even let on to us which isn't the norm anymore, I don't know why but they look and ignore each other nowadays. (Note- Not everyone!).

Once through Bury we headed towards Heaton Park and then onto Blackley, Rob left us here to head off home (the misses have a job list for you to do Rob? ) and the rest of us headed up through the village and then on to the climb up Charlesdown road. Again we split up slightly but we were soon back riding as one group for the final miles back to Middleton. We went our separate ways the closer we got to the Arena and by then there was just Dave, Steve, Wayne and myself left.

By the time we passed through Middleton there was just Steve and myself so we finished we a little extra around Castleton before separating on the outskirts of Heywood. Well done to all today, a good ride in great company!

I'd just like to say a special well done to Wayne on his first ride of the year especially whilst still not feeling 100% and to Rod for covering the mileage he does in trainers. How the hell you climb the hills Rod I don't know. We'll done lads, brilliant! If the weather is fine next Sunday I'll organise another ride (unless someone else wants to) maybe towards Bolton, I'll even throw a few climbs in if you want!