

Ride Review

Date: 30th July 2016

Destination: Malham, Yorkshire Dales National Park - 97 miles

Written by: Dave Charlesworth



It was a very cloudy morning as Tom, Dave W, Tony, Mark and myself met at the Arena as arranged at 9.00am. Today's club ride was 97 miles from the Arena, so total mileage for the day was therefore expected to be just over the century. The route was a loop out to Malham, going a longer way round via Hebden Bridge and Oxenhope, then coming to the west of Skipton, before picking up the roads into the Dales. The return home was via Colne, Nelson and Burnley.

We set off just after 9.00am and continued with a steady pace to Hebden Bridge. The steep Oxenhope climb then followed, with 4.5 miles of riding uphill. After reaching the summit, the reward was then a steady descent to Oxenhope station where we decided to stop for a coffee. Steam engines are regularly used on this line, however, although a train did arrive whilst we were there, this was unfortunately a diesel.

After leaving the station it was on towards the Skipton area. We were all feeling a bit cold after getting back on the bikes and it took a few miles to warm up; the 19 – 20 degree temperatures suggested by the weather forecasters had clearly not arrived yet! Riding just west of Skipton, we continued along the A629 & A65. These roads are not very cycle friendly and it was good to turn off the A65 and head into the much quieter roads of the Dales National Park. Note to self – map these roads out for next time!

After a few miles of more hilly roads, we were soon in Malham. However, a quick check revealed we were one rider short, with Tony in sight a short distance down the road pushing his bike. Unfortunately he'd picked up a puncture on the final hill into Malham. Whilst at the café stop, Tony, with help from the other riders, set about replacing his punctured tube and a new one was quickly fitted. It was soon clear though, that the tyre was also damaged as the sidewall had distorted giving it an S shaped profile. A new tyre was the only option and as we thought about how to get one, Tony leaned down to his seat tube and like a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat, produced a new tyre; I knew that'd come in handy one day he said!

With a new tyre and tube fitted and all feeling refreshed after the coffee stop, it was time to get back on the bikes and start the return journey. The route home was initially along the busier A682, with us soon turning off to use the quieter roads towards Barnoldswick and onto Colne. Progress was steady, with some hilly areas; one very steep hill in particular at Salterforth was likened to The Rake in Ramsbottom and was certainly a challenge! Continuing on through Burnley, we then took the left turn onto the A646 and descended into Todmorden. Making our way back to the Arena via Littleborough, we then started to split up and make our way home.

The promised 20 deg temperatures never arrived, but thankfully neither did any rain. Everyone got home safely after comfortably passing the century mile marker. A great day out that was enjoyed by all and one we will no doubt repeat again in the future.