

Robin Park Tour de Wigan Ride

Due to overnight rain our Tour de Wigan ride from Robin Park consisted of only four riders, and setting off at 1030am in a stiff breeze we headed out along the canal toward Appley Bridge.

This stretch of canal towpath we knew would be wet and muddy in parts after the rain, but the views along the canal, with the pink of marsh willow and purple vetch lifted our spirits. After a short breather at Appley Bridge we crossed the borough boundary and continued towards our intended destination of Burscough Wharf, the track becoming drier and easy to ride. Out in the open countryside we covered the ground fairly quickly, passing cattle, horses and sheep grazing in luxuriant green fields. Changing towpaths at Parbold village we found ourselves surrounded by lines of multi-coloured canal boats, their occupants all calling greetings as we passed....did they really think we were part of the Tour de France!

The deeply rutted trackway demanded full attention, but we were delighted when we came across turf growing fields, the emerald green swathe as flat and short cropped as a snooker table...a magnificent sight, and someones future lawn!. On arrival at Burscough Wharf we found a musical concert, courtesy of the local School of Music, in progress in the wharf square, and this was the backdrop to our lunch break. Although the weather was very cloudy with threatening dark clouds, it did remain dry and warm and we were able to sit in the square and soak up its atmosphere.

Our return journey, with the breeze behind us, was uneventful, and we were treated to some wonderful reflective views of the trees and arched bridges in the still water of the canal. On our arrival back in Wigan we agreed that we had all thoroughly enjoyed the ride.