

From The Plank

Sunday morning in Leigh, sun was shining and birds were singing, yet another perfect day for cycling. Two questions remained unanswered; how many would turn out and where to go, only one way to find out, so for Harold along with Sheila once again for company, destination Plank Lane it was.

Arrived at the Bridge early once again (definitely Sheila's influence) to find 6 already there, including a couple of guests. Usual quick chat followed centred mainly around Joyce for some reason, her recent holiday, new front wheel and her cycling mishap earlier in the week, turned up sporting a nice big plaster on her right knee. Caroline's new look handlebars came into the conversation but still no decision as to a route. Sale Water Park was tabled but there were no takers (surprisingly) Eastbound it was to escort Sheila back to Butts Bridge, gave Harold chance to come up with a route along the way.

Wasn't on the ride and actual route taken is a bit vague, but here's the gist, Canal towpath to Marsland Green Lane (as if you couldn't have guessed) East Lanc's to Astley Green then Boothstown followed by Worsley and Monton via the Bridgewater Canal, leading to NCN 55 and the Old Station for the mandatory coffee stop. Usual good old chinwag about anything and everything followed before getting underway again Little Hulton bound. Hadn't got very far before Joyce had a bit of a moment, misjudged a wooden path edging and came off the bike, injuring her left knee in the process, matching pair of knees now. Back underway Little Hulton was followed by a series of roads back to the Gin Pit, planned route to Howe Bridge was closed so Harold was forced into a quick re-think. Revised route negotiated Bickershaw was the next port of call and the setting for Joyce's second mishap, caught her head on a low branch (no damage there then) lost control of the bike in the process and smacked her thumb against a tree, now that was painful.

Not far left to cycle, so patched up and determined to finish the ride Joyce continued on with the rest of them towards Plank Lane. Hat trick time for Joyce, felt the front wheel slipping from under her on a gravel path so a bit of quick thinking saw her jump off the bike to try and avoid any further injuries, just wasn't her day at all. Injury avoided this time, thankfully; Plank Lane couldn't come soon enough for her, a lesser person may have given up by this stage.

Nevison pub for a post ride beverage saw Ray & Joyce head for home along with our guests a rather tired looking Irene and her son Mark (hope they haven't been put off) this just left Harold, Caroline and Alan to savour a pint or maybe two before heading home themselves. 31 miles covered, the majority off-road (probably seemed like more for a certain individual) a nice mud free ride in glorious conditions, marred only by the unfortunate injuries sustained by Joyce. She obviously didn't like the new front wheel; need to get something sorted Ray, (either the wheel or Joyce, one is certainly out of balance)

Hospital visit the following day revealed a broken thumb, and a subsequent no cycling ban for a few weeks; just have to get the walking boots out instead. On behalf of everyone at WBCCC we wish you a full and swift recovery and look forward to seeing you back in the saddle in the not too distant future.