

A Lane To Anywhere

Despite the ever-changing forecast Sunday morning turned out to be very pleasant indeed. Got to Plank Lane, a tad early and was joined shortly after by our latest club member Keith, gave him the lowdown as we waited for further participants to arrive.

Six riders in total made the effort and after deciding on a route it was off along the canal Astley bound, (any guesses who was late!). Worsley and NCN 55 was the destination along with one or two of Harold's twists for good measure, not yet done a route with him that I could confidently say I'd done previously, don't know about anyone else! Marsland Green Lane was the exit point from the canal leading us to the East Lanc's cycle-path and onwards to Astley Green. Rode past the normal turning, using instead a farm track to take us back to the canal near Boothstown Marina for our onward route through Worsley to Monton. The farm track and towpath as you may expect after Saturdays rainfall were not in pristine condition, wouldn't be one of Harold's rides without a bit of mud. Keith made quite an interesting observation, when you encounter a puddle most people try to ride round them, but there's always a previous track left by someone running right through the middle, who makes them? Apparently it's Ray, straight through every puddle, no attempt at all to swerve round any, most unusual!

NCN 55 to the Old Station platform for elevenses was next up, bit of a steep climb initially and one or two had decided to walk, not quite sure what happened but Rays new bike fell over (without him on it thankfully) and had taken a bit of a battering, rear hanger had bent inwards and wouldn't allow the wheel to turn or change gear. Quick improvised repair was carried out (no he didn't kick it this time, saving that for Joyce for dropping it in the first place, perhaps). Whilst sorting out the repair, noticed he'd got some new mudguards on, that's why he'd been riding through the puddles! Mystery solved. Harold unaware of what had happened behind him had scarpered off into the distance, platform wasn't far away though and he couldn't go past that without stopping for coffee.

Group re-assembled, coffee and kit kat's consumed on we pressed towards Little Hulton, normal route back was not an option due to road works apparently, or did he just want to take us somewhere different? Little Hulton to Four Lane Ends, Atherton and Tyldesley all passed us by before skirting through Gin Pits and joining the canal again behind Bedford High School, certainly rode some new ground there Harold! Butts Bridge and Harold's cue to leave us, can't blame him for not riding past his back garden can you! Caroline joined him as well on this occasion, leaving the four of us to head back to Plank Lane and continue our separate journeys home. Rode back along the canal with Keith as far as Dover Lock leaving him flying solo back to Wigan.

Thanks Harold, great route once again. Thanks also to Caroline, Ray, Joyce and Keith for their company. Hope to see you again soon Keith (said he'd really enjoyed the outing, not that he could remember much of it, lost track after the first couple of turns) you're not alone in that respect Keith, believe me! Weather was very kind and held off for the whole ride, caught a few drops on the way home that's all. No doubt Harold will be plotting next weeks route already.

Same time, same place, next Sunday if anyone's interested!