



Budleigh and back 29 August 2009

The club had rounders and picnic rides to Plymtree, Clyst Hydon and Uplowman over the school holidays. These kept everyone in the cycling habit and fit for a long ride to Budleigh and back. With picnics packed, tyres pumped and a dry, bright day in prospect, a neat posse of 12 eager riders set off from the village hall.

We've met all kinds of things in the lanes on our rides: tankers, trailers, tractors, combines, walkers, horse riders, but never a pack of fox hounds – until today. And very well mannered they were too, on their way back to the kennels at St Andrew's wood after their morning walk. The picnics in our panniers must have been very tempting, but mercifully they resisted and trotted steadily past with their masters.



The earthy smell of autumn was in the air with some fields now tilled and sown after harvest but others caught in the trap of a cloudy damp August; wheat and barley still standing. The weather was perfect for us – bright but cool - and we made good progress along the ridge past Tale and Talaton and over the railway to Escot House for our first stop.



The Otter valley stretched out ahead and we were soon rolling past the Fairmile clock and round the back of Cadhay house. King's school looked strangely busy despite it being the school holidays and in the fields we could hear a marching band. The gate was open, so we rode in to investigate. A lorry load of percussion instruments, scaffold towers, loudhailers, flags and performers were whizzing around. We learnt they were from Cheshire, on camp for a week in Devon.

On past Tipton and Harpford and in no time we could sense the sea in the air. The grasshoppers were chirping on the sunny banks as we freewheeled down to Otterton before the last pull

up and along the river cliffs to the beach. Jackie Smith was waiting with treats and she was soon on lifeguard patrol as our now revived cyclists were running into the surf.

Packed and dried and after a quick puncture repair at Otterton we were soon settled in at Tipton cricket pavilion on the return leg. Elise and Ian Ellicott had the kettle on and in no time were handing round some lovely sandwiches, home baking, squash and of course gallons of tea. The watermelon was popular too. With close to 30 miles on the clock these last 10 miles would be the toughest after a long day in the saddle. But little Will Ellicott was determined to ride on - now refueled and refreshed after a game of football.

The last of Jackie's treats soon disappeared at Escot and while little Ed (the youngest member of the support crew – at 6 weeks) also had a liquid snack, Will settled into his new job as team photographer in the crew car. With a staggering 32 miles on the clock and at only 6 years old Will decided to save himself for the club's Quantock Challenge in October (24/25) and aim for Nether Stowey in a day.



If you would like to join Will and others on our Quantock challenge look out for our warm-up rides this Autumn – sometimes Saturdays and sometimes Sundays. Our website has the latest news.

www.kjcc.org.uk

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