

Okells Garden Centre Cafe, Duddon - 16th March 2016

A dull start to the day, but with a forecast of sunshine later on, it was enough to encourage twenty-four of us to put our trust in **Andy** to lead the way to **Okells in Duddon**. After we split into two groups with **John F** taking the second one, there was also a small third group led by **Brian L** taking a shorter route. There was some talk of **Andy** not doing the route that was on the email; **Andy** not sticking to the route (what's new) but in this instance it turned out very well.



Capenhurst Lane was the start, then along the cycleway towards the bridge to **Saughall**, but we turned away from **Saughall** and headed to **Mollington**. I was with the second group and **John F** lost the tail end of the leading group. We did an interesting bumble around some nice lanes eventually catching the leaders at the **A41 in Backford**. We went past the **Zoo** and on to **Mickle Trafford** turning right after **Morley Bridge** into some of the nicest lanes in Cheshire, made even better as the sun came out.

This must be a first at an earlier banana stop. It was observed that **Brian J** was having a leg massage - it's also been alleged he shaves his legs! It turned out it was a free one as **Sylvia** was the masseuse.

Kelsall can be - and is - a bit lumpy but **Andy's** course avoided any really steep climbs.

As we arrived at the venue **Bob and Jill** were about to leave - they had ridden from **Waverton**. I had my sandwiches with **Sue** who said how she and **Chris** had enjoyed their break in **Spain**, although on their return **Chris** sprained his leg and had to miss the ride.

I thanked **Andy** and joined **Brian L** and **Brian S**, **Julian** and **Ruth** for the return which left before everyone else, so am unable to report on the main peloton. **Brian L** took us through **Oscroft**, **Dunham Heath** and **Thornton-Le-Moors**, but just like the sirens calling to Jason and his Argonauts, the pull of the **Wheatsheaf** got stronger as we neared the **Port**, so **Brian S** and I and deserted the crew and headed for some real ale.

Sometimes I write about events that took place on the same date as our ride, I suppose you could describe it as re-cycling events. The oldest this week was **1872** when **Wanderers F.C.** won the first ever **F.A. Cup** beating the Royal Engineers 1-0 at the **Oval** in **Kennington**. In **1919**

the great **Nat King Cole** was born, and a bit later **Lee Dixon** and **Steve Pienaar** came along. **1968** saw a horrible event the **My Lai massacre** when between 347-500 men women and children were killed by American troops.

Last week it was **International Women's Day** and an American woman **Rachel Corrie** will be remembered for her bravery and ultimate sacrifice when she was killed by a bulldozer trying to prevent a **Palestinian** home from being destroyed. If our ride was a day later we could have worn some shamrock to remember **St. Paddy**, although he was **Welsh** and his real name was **Maewyn Succat**.

Chris Byrne