

Peel o' Bells, Holt - 9th April 2014 - A BRIDGE (not) too far

A good weather report helped to boost the numbers looking forward to the ride to Holt on the River Dee. We split into two groups with Brian Lowe leading eleven riders on the slightly shorter route through Huntington, Saughton, Coddington and Barton. Brian has a thing about going through places ending in 'ton, although to his credit, he won't be seen dead in Everton. The distance was 25miles.

Colin Bell led the other group also eleven riders. Since Colin finished playing for England and Man. City he's put on loads of weight, but never the less - he is a beast on the bike; in fact the day before the ride he went out to reccy the route but he got LOST. There's that word again we associate with Colin - he ended up doing 80miles - big respect Col.

I had not been to this venue before, but something rang a bell. It was only as we arrived I realised why, the pub was called no I can't go ahead with that one. Colin said if we average 15mph we should get there before the B team. We seemed to be riding so fast I thought we would be there before the pub opened. (I can't forget the look of amazement on the pilot's face as we overtook the very low airbus.)

Thankfully after a drinks stop in Waverton the pace eased up. Ray Hardman had discussed the route with Colin and Ray had suggested we don't go up Hart Hill, I think most of us were glad that Colin had a change of.....Dooooo.



The route was great, the sun was shining and Maria Miller fell on her sword, but that's another Tory; on through Coddington,

and **Handley**. The next surprise was when **Brian's group** came roaring towards us; this had the effect on **Colin** of putting the pace back up.

I'm sure that both groups were aware of the history of **THE BRIDGE** - that the **Roundheads** and **Royalists** had battled for days over the river crossing - and that was before the pub was there.

Holt / Farndon Bridge Crossing



The ride had now taken on a bigger challenge than **Man U** getting into **Europe**. The last three miles were a blur. Our group would cross from **England**, while the **Loweist's** would ride from the **Welsh** side, but **Colin**, like **Cromwell**, got his tactics spot on we crossed over without a pump raised in anger.

Bob Jill and **Tony** were about to have lunch when we arrived. **Brian's group** rode in soon after us along with **Mike Cross** and we all agreed the food was good.

After lunch

Some of **Brian's** group joined **Colin's** for the return ride, **Brian's team**



went through Clutton, Tattenhall and Pipers Ash as we headed for Kinnerton and Saltney. We got lucky in the lane from Saughall as the farmer was just removing the rope across the road to allow the his cows to cross for milking.

A smashing ride - I think Colin's undercarriage was a bit tender after his two days of exploits - but well done mate!

Chris Byrne